

*THE PRAYER*  
*WHICH BROUGHT*  
*A GREAT REVIVAL*

**A Book of Documents on  
the Second Great Awakening in the U.S.A.**

**Edited by  
Robert Evans**

**Preface by  
the Rev. Dr. Rhys Bezzant,  
Director of the Jonathan Edwards Centre, Australia.**

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**The project of publishing a new critical edition of the Works of Jonathan Edwards was first suggested by Professor Perry Miller in 1953. In due course, the Jonathan Edwards Center was founded, with the aim of producing a scholarly version of the “Works,” to be published by Yale University Press. Twenty-six volumes were duly published, and the results are now also available on line. A study centre has been established in the Yale University Divinity School where students, scholars and researchers can be helped by experts.**

**So far, seven other Centres in different parts of the world have become officially affiliated with the original Centre at Yale. The Rev. Dr. Rhys Bezzant is the Director of the Centre now established at Ridley College, Melbourne.**

**Further details of these activities are available on line.**

**I am greatly indebted to Dr. Bezzant for writing the Preface to this book, and for many other encouragements.**

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## PREFACE

At one level, this compilation of appeals to prayer and descriptions of praying, so energetically assembled by Bob Evans, functions as a resource for research, a one-stop shop for citations, a testimony to spiritual ecumenism. At another deeper level, however, this book represents a challenge to contemporary Christians, especially in the West, who rest content in their pragmatism, who approach church and its structures with merely functional aspirations. Sustained times of prayer are increasingly less common in church services, and weekly or monthly prayer meetings are the least well attended events in the life of the local church, if they are planned at all. By virtue of our technological prowess and organisational know-how, we approach each new day or our weekly gathering with confidence that our best efforts will suffice. Even if we do persist in interceding merely to make things happen or to get things done, we miss the joy of praying. We may well make supplications, but are just as unlikely to forget to give thanks or to repent of our sins. Doing business with God can appear to be so unproductive.

Jonathan Edwards, along with many of his contemporaries and successors, thought otherwise. In his exposition of Luke 11, Edwards taught that the practice of prayer was closely linked to God pouring out his Spirit and preparing his people for the world to come. He expounds Zechariah 12 (in *An Humble Attempt*) to suggest that the future to which both Jews and Gentiles are being called is a great assembly of prayer. He is confident that his prayers, coupled with those of his correspondents in Europe, will lead to the evangelisation of the world, and, not least for those of us in the Antipodes, Gospel proclamation in *terra australis*. Rather than being unproductive, praying ought to be the very heart of a life lived *coram deo*, with awareness of God's gifts and enjoyment of God's presence. How could life in union with Christ

empowered by the Spirit be conceived in any other way than through prayer?

But organise prayer meetings they had to do. For many of those committed to the surprising work of God in revival, praying was a means of grace bigger than the answered prayers themselves. Joining together at the same time, in different countries, with common burdens, gave visible expression to the international credentials of the church of God. Rather than a fragmented or dispersed community, international concerts of prayer demonstrated deeper unities than was otherwise obvious. Visibility and unity went hand-in-hand, in ways that have often failed Protestant churches, which prize independence, or purity, or the invisibility of the elect. Prayer meetings were a witness to the world! Perhaps less predictably, the concerts of prayer also encouraged assertive lay piety, and gave to those not called to be clergy a role and a responsibility. Clergy may have written the first letters of appeal, but it was frequently the laity who drew the movement together, giving them opportunities for service outside of the weekly church service. And frequently it was the women who took up the reins.

There were other unintended consequences too. What is most astonishing in surveying these isolated reports is the ways in which the surprising work of God animated a movement which endured. Whether it is that prayer meetings cultivate a vision for ministry, or provide the chance for the less experienced to take on new leadership roles, the evangelical cause found a bridge for faith transmission in these extra-ecclesial structures. Evangelicalism had the dynamism to promote the new birth, but it realised it needed new structures, which could act as midwives. Though the world after the American Revolution conceived authority in new ways and harnessed the life of the churches for new republican ends, the ‘advancement of the church’s peace and prosperity,’ as Edwards described the goal of the revivals, was intricately linked to its commitment to common prayer. Well may we aspire to these lofty outcomes – well might we thank God for

the men and women who appear in this volume for the example of persevering faith which they have left us.

Rhys Bezzant.

Ridley College, Melbourne.

September, 2013.



**PART ONE**

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**THE PRAYER LEGACY  
OF  
JONATHAN EDWARDS**



## INTRODUCTION

This book is a collection of historical documents, mostly from the United States, which traces the long-term impact of Jonathan Edwards's famous call for united, extraordinary prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and for the Revival of Religion, which he first published in 1747 in Boston.

The title of his book was *An Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth, pursuant to Scripture Promises and Prophecies concerning the Last Time.*

Edwards was building upon another call to prayer which had been issued by some Scottish ministers with whom he corresponded. Edwards wrote his book in support of this call to united, extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion.

Thirty-seven years later, another call to united, extraordinary prayer was issued by some Baptist leaders in Northamptonshire, England. Edwards's book prompted this call, and was re-published by them, in support of this effort.

The Second Great Awakening arose from this prayer movement. The prayer meetings commenced first in England around 1784, amongst the Particular Baptists and Congregationalists. They soon spread to other denominations, and became the basis not only for widespread revivals which occurred in many parts of England, but also for the success of the newly-formed Baptist Missionary Society, and then the London Missionary Society.

In the United States of America, the united prayer movement first appeared in 1792, and proved to be the basis for an even more effective spiritual movement of revival than had occurred in England. In this case also, Edwards's book was re-published, to help promote this prayer movement. The prayer

movement supported a long series of local and widespread revivals which moulded and changed American church life, and society, in many ways, for the next fifty years, and was the driving force behind the American foreign and home missionary movement. In certain respects, some of the effects of this Awakening are still felt today.

The Awakening became a world-wide spiritual movement, and its breadth is outlined in a book called *The Eager Feet*, by Dr. J. Edwin Orr.<sup>1</sup>

For much of the fifty years that the Second Great Awakening progressed in the United States, the prayer movement was generally known as the Monthly Concert of Prayer, and its acknowledged purpose was to intercede with God for the revival of religion, for the spread of the Gospel, and for the conversion of everyone in the world to Christ. Here we see the great prayer legacy of Jonathan Edwards.

The prayer meetings usually occurred at the level of the local and village churches or mission stations in the various Protestant denominations, mostly on the first Monday evening of each month. These meetings were called into existence in the main countries by District and State Associations, General Assemblies, and Annual Conferences.

This Great Awakening reached peaks of interest, activity and power in the years 1799 – 1805, and then in 1815, 1821, 1826, 1831, and finally in 1842, although many sporadic revivals occurred through all the years from 1792 to the middle of the Nineteenth Century. Great Awakenings also occurred in many of the mission fields.

The prayer movement was composed of several important aspects. The most fundamental aspect of this prayer movement was known up until about 1850 as the Monthly

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<sup>1</sup> J. Edwin Orr. *The Eager Feet*. Evangelical Awakenings, 1790 – 1830. Chicago. Moody Press. 1975.

Concert of Prayer. Other very significant aspects of the movement were also of fundamental importance, included the experiences of many people of agonizing, wrestling prayer, which prevailed with God. This collection of documents emphasises these two aspects of the prayer movement.

This prayer movement represented the major strategy of the Protestant churches around the world to bring spiritual revival to all the churches, and to make the whole missionary movement very fruitful in converting many to Christ. So much did this succeed that, one hundred years later, Dr. Arthur T. Pierson named his history of missionary work in the Nineteenth Century – “The New Acts of the Apostles.”

Regarding strategy, they prayed and relied upon God, and they did not rely upon themselves, or upon organisation, new techniques, gimmicks, and higher education, as we tend to do today, although they had good organisation, and some of them did develop new techniques. But they did not rely upon them. Turning to God was obviously far more effective and efficient than the more modern methods, as was demonstrated by these people in 1792 to 1842, compared to our own age.

I believe the history of the Monthly Concert of Prayer, and of other aspects of this great prayer movement, which led to the Second Great Awakening in the United States of America, provides the key to the reviving of the Churches today, just as it did in their day.

The basic pattern of the book is that its main section contains a selection of historical documents around the theme of the prayer movement, which displays its history, the evolution through which it went, and its very great usefulness. In a much smaller section of the book we see a little of the nature of prevailing prayer in those days. This was another hugely important factor which brought such blessings from heaven.

Many books have been published, and theses written, about the better known evangelists of this period. Asahel Nettleton, for example, exercised a very important ministry mainly in Connecticut, and Charles G. Finney's teaching and practice of prayer for revival was very valuable and influential, and there were many other lesser known men. This book, however, seeks to portray the much wider American prayer movement of which Charles Finney was only a small part, although he became the best known example of it.

In subsequent generations, Finney's teaching on prayer, found in his *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, had an enormous impact and following amongst Christian workers. These generations of people followed Finney, often without realising the depth and width of the prayer movement of which he was only a small part.

The sources from which these documents have been drawn are available in some major American libraries. In Australia, mostly these resources do not exist, and I have had to purchase original editions, microform copies, or versions which have been newly republished.

## CHAPTER ONE

### **The Beginnings of the Prayer Movement.**

#### **A Brief History – Prof. Samuel Miller. (1845.)**

[After introducing the subject of **intercession**, as a Christian duty, and, of **united intercession** by God's people in the face of special needs, Professor Samuel Miller, of Princeton Theological Seminary, outlined many instances when this kind of united prayer occurred in the Biblical story, and of the results which followed, as well as the instructions found in the New Testament which instruct us to take part in such united prayer. On this basis he proceeded to outline the history of the Monthly Concert of Prayer which prevailed in the Protestant churches around the world in his day. It is as follows:-]

It was a deep conviction of the reality and importance of these considerations which led to the commencement of that Concert in Prayer on the first Monday of every month which has been so long observed by a large portion of the Protestant churches in this country and in Europe, and which is a leading object of these pages to recommend to the attention and observance of those who profess to love the Redeemer's kingdom.

This plan of stated union in prayer for the revival of religion, and for the spread of the gospel, was commenced in the Church of Scotland, almost exactly one hundred years ago.

In the month of October, 1744, a number of ministers in Scotland, taking into consideration the state of God's church, and of the world of mankind, "did judge that the Providence of God, at such a day, loudly called such as were concerned for the welfare of Zion to united and extraordinary supplications to the

God of all grace, suitably acknowledging him as the fountain of all spiritual benefits and blessings in his church; and earnestly beseeching him that he would appear in his glory, and favour Zion, and manifest his compassion to the world of mankind by an abundant effusion of his Holy Spirit on all the churches; that he would revive true religion in all parts of Christendom; that he would bless all nations with the light of the gospel, and fill the whole earth with his glory.”

The authors of this plan, after seeking by prayer for divine direction, determined on the following method of carrying it into effect, viz: “To set apart such time on Saturday evening and Sabbath morning, every week, for the purpose before stated, as other duties might allow; and, more solemnly, the first Tuesday of each quarter, (beginning with the first Tuesday of November then next ensuing), either the whole day, or part of the day, as persons might find themselves disposed, or think their circumstances would allow; the time to be spent either in private praying societies, or in public meetings, or alone in secret, as should be found most practicable, or judged most convenient, by such as were willing to join in this service.” It was expressly understood by those who entered into this agreement, that they were not to consider themselves as rigorously bound to the particular days or hours specified, whatever their circumstances at the time might be; nor yet to regard those days as holy, or set apart by divine authority; but that specified seasons should be agreed upon, chiefly for the purpose of guarding against that indolence and forgetfulness to which all are so prone, and securing that concurrence and union in the divine exercise, which are so adapted to warm the heart, and to enlist the social principle in the best of all causes.

This original agreement was limited to two years. At the expiration of that time it was agreed to continue it for seven years longer. In the mean time, so many praying associations

were formed, and such a spirit of prayer for the effusion of the Holy Spirit, was excited and extended in various parts of Scotland, that the friends of religion were more and more satisfied that their agreement was both wise and useful. Nor was this pious union long confined to Scotland. A large body of ministers in New England concurred in the measure, and, among the rest, the venerable Mr. Edwards, then of Northampton, in Massachusetts, afterwards President of the College of New Jersey, and “whose praise is in all the churches,” laboured with no small diligence and zeal to recommend and promote the plan. There is reason to believe that this laudable concert in devotion, though slow in making its way, and though sometimes languishing, has never been wholly abandoned since the original agreement.

In 1784, soon after the close of our revolutionary war, this union in prayer received a new impulse, and commenced a new progress. About this time, also, it received another modification, as to time; being, for the most part, observed only once in each month, viz: on the evening of the first Monday. One church after another, and one religious denomination after another, not only in the United States, but in various parts of Christendom, fell in with it, until we may safely say, it now pervades the greater part of the evangelical world. Even in Asia, in Africa, and in the islands of the sea, when the first Monday of each month arrives, the voice of united prayer is heard, ascending to the King of Zion, beseeching him to pour out his Spirit on the nations; to revive his work where the gospel is enjoyed; to send it where it is not; and to hasten the conversion of a fallen world to God.

The General Assembly of our church has not only from time to time given its sanction to this monthly observance, but has, on various occasions, enjoined attention to it, in the most earnest and solemn manner; and, in the year 1830, observing

that many of the churches under its care manifested a diminution of zeal and punctuality in attending upon this service, the Assembly issued a Pastoral Letter, the main object of which was to call the attention of the churches to this important concert in prayer; to point out some of the mistakes into which many have fallen respecting it; and to urge renewed and solemn attention to it on the part of all the churches. It is evident from the language of this letter, that the Assembly regarded this subject as one of deep interest, and that they considered the falling off in its observance of which they complained, as an indication of the spiritual state of the church, deeply to be deplored. So far, then, as the sanction of our beloved church can go in regard to this matter, we have it expressed in all its length and breadth, and in all its deliberate emphasis.

A few years later, our General Assembly, observing that this service was again thinly attended, by many of our congregations, on the evening of a week-day, recommended to such of our churches as might find the change convenient, to attend upon it on the first Sabbath afternoon of every month, for the purpose of securing a more full attendance. Accordingly, in a number of churches, this plan has been adopted. Some other churches, while they yet met for prayer on the first Monday evening of every month, make the pecuniary collection which belongs to it, on the afternoon of the preceding Sabbath, when larger assemblies are ordinarily in attendance.<sup>2</sup>

### **Dr. J. Edwin Orr's General Account.**

As in England, local awakenings began in New England towns in 1791, like showers before a deluge not to come until

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<sup>2</sup> Samuel Miller. *Letters on the Observance of the Monthly Concert in Prayer: Addressed to the Members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.* Philadelphia. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 1845.

the Concert of Prayer opened the windows of heaven and poured out a blessing which could not be contained in the churches, rural or urban.

Moses Hallock, a veteran of the Revolutionary War, in 1791 engaged in evangelism at Plainfield, Massachusetts, and rejoiced to see a revival follow soon after.

About the same time, a weekly union meeting for prayer was being held in the vestry of the First Baptist Church of Boston, led by the ministers of First and Second Churches, influenced by the Union of Prayer among the Baptists in England. The vestry became uncomfortably crowded, and soon the main auditorium overflowed. Throughout the winter, despite the blizzards, the place remained crowded. First Baptist Church of Boston added 138 to its membership, and a larger number joined Second Baptist Church. At this time, all the Congregational Churches in Boston had succumbed to Unitarian persuasion – except Old South Church. Baptists truly felt that the awakening among them helped preserve orthodox Congregationalism in Boston.

There was a similar movement up country soon after. Edward Dorr Griffin, graduated at Yale in 1790, had studied under the younger president Edwards. Licensed in 1792, he returned to his father's home and found himself the only professing Christian in a family of ten. One of his sisters was his first convert. He began preaching in New Salem, provoking 'a revival of great power' and founding a new church. That was the beginning of blessing for him. He reflected: 'The year 1792, it has often been said, ushered a new era into the world. In that year commenced a series of revivals in America, which has never been interrupted...'

The growing concern for prayer soon reached its climax. In 1794, following the British example, Isaac Backus and Stephen Gano, and a score of other New England ministers,

issued a circular letter inviting pastors and churches to engage in a Concert of Prayer for spiritual awakening. Addressed to ministers and churches of every Christian denomination in all the United States, it suggested devoting the first Tuesday in January 1795 and once a quarter thereafter to public prayer until the Almighty deigned to answer their pleas for a general awakening.

Response was immediate, general, cordial, and earnest. The Presbyterian Synods of New York and New Jersey soon recommended the call to all their churches. Throughout the country, the Methodist Episcopal Church dedicated its time to prayer and fasting. Likewise, Congregationalist and Baptist associations joined in the intercession, and the Moravians and Reformed communities cooperated.

It was not until the Concert of Prayer in 1795 that the general awakening became noteworthy. It waxed strongest in communities most removed in influence or distance from Harvard and its Unitarianism.<sup>3</sup>

## **Strickland's Account – The Concert of Prayer starts in America. The “Circular Letter” – Call to Prayer.**

A group of twenty-three New England ministers, including Stephen Gano, of Providence, and Isaac Backus, of Middleboro, issued a “Circular Letter,” calling the ministers, and, through them, the churches, to pray for a revival. They had the precedent of two similar historic calls of the same character. One was issued by ministers in Scotland in 1746: a little later, the other by Jonathan Edwards. These calls entered largely into the kindling of revival fires in Scotland and in the

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<sup>3</sup> J. Edwin Orr. *The Eager Feet*. Evangelical Awakenings, 1790 – 1830. Chicago. Moody Press. 1975. pages 51 – 53.

United States. This Circular Letter contains the following interesting paragraphs, showing it was based on these former calls to prayer:

“To the ministers and churches of every Christian denomination in the United States, to unite in their endeavours to carry into execution the humble attempt to promote explicit agreement and visible union of God’s people in extraordinary prayer for the revival of religion and the advancement of Christ’s Kingdom on earth.

“In execution of this plan, it is proposed that the ministers and churches of every Christian denomination should be invited to maintain public prayer and praise, accompanied with such instruction from God’s Word, as might be judged proper, on every first Tuesday, of the four quarters of the year, beginning with the first Tuesday of January, 1795, at two o’clock in the afternoon, if the plan should be ripe for a beginning, and so continuing from quarter to quarter, and from year to year, until the good providence of God prospering our endeavours, we shall obtain the blessing for which we pray.”

This proposition for a nation-wide “Concert of Prayer” met with cordial response. This came because earnest souls believed the only hope of the church was in a revival from God. Dr. Green, of Princeton, replied: “The plan for a concert has my most cordial approbation, and I shall endeavour by all means in my power to carry it into effect. Our presbytery will meet in a fortnight from the present time, when I hope, if my life and health are spared, to lay it before them. I pray and hope that the contemplated union in prayer may be the presage of good.”

In the same way Bishop Elwine, of the Moravian Church, responded from Bethlehem, Pa., Oct. 9, 1794: “It was as though I did hear David call, ‘O pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper who love thee.’ We have the promise of our Lord that every two or three who agree to pray

for anything in his name shall be heard and their prayer granted. I can only answer for myself. I promise faithfully and regularly to appear before the Lord with my prayer, and will make my beginning the first Tuesday in January next and will continue so to do every first Tuesday the four quarters of the year, and will encourage my brethren to do the same.”

Theodore Hinsdale, moderator of the North Association of Hartford County, Conn., wrote a lengthy letter in response to the appeal. In this he said: “We are highly delighted with the piety and the design and anxious that success may attend the proposal. We, as an Association would with our brethren, in our respective associations of this state take up the matter and act upon it so far as to refer it to the general association of this state and by their commissioners to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America,... that such general measures be taken or adopted as may promise to give the proposed concert the most extensive diffusion.”

The Presbytery of New York and the Synods of New York and of New Jersey recommended the Circular Letter call to all their churches. They also called for a day of fasting and prayer. The Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church did likewise. In the study of the widespread revival which followed, one notes many allusions to this “Concert of Prayer.” The response was general among the denominations and their churches in all sections of the country. The church in the darkest hour of its night of declension had found the way out. Their feet had been placed in the pathway to prayer which inevitably leads to revival.

Bangs, in his *History of Methodism*, writes of this fact: “Solemn exhortation to the church followed, to be read from all the pulpits, and a day of prayer and fasting followed... The first Tuesday of every quarter was observed for this purpose, from 1796, to the close of the century. On the first Tuesday in

March, 1796, the Methodist Episcopal Church observed a general day of fasting and prayer for the same reasons.”

On the Western frontiers “Covenants were entered into by Christian people to spend the third Saturday in each month in fasting and prayer for the out pouring of the Holy Spirit and one half hour at sunset every Saturday night and at sunrise every Sunday morning for the same object.”

In the minutes of the Shaftesbury Baptist Association for 1795, the following item was recorded: “Item 13. Whereas, a number of well disposed people on this continent have agreed to unite in a general concert of prayer, for the outpouring of God’s Spirit, on the first Tuesdays of January, April, July and October; this Association, with heartfelt satisfaction, approves of the same. We, therefore, recommend the observance of said days to the churches which we represent. In this concert, we hope there will be no distinction of denomination but that all will unite in the love and fear of God.”

Thus the prayer movement was promoted, under associational leadership. The Districts, the Synods, the Presbyteries and the Associations led their respective churches into a great intercessory movement. It became general and led to a widespread revival.

There were little praying groups all over the country. A revival was in the hands of these intercessory minorities. In after years, Rev. E. Porter, D.D., of Andover, wrote a series of letters on revivals to the “Revival Association” of Andover Seminary. This was an organisation of students which met to study the history of revivals. Their leaders believed that “to cherish the spirit of revivalism in our seminaries is the direct way to multiply revival ministers.” Writing of The Great Revival, Dr. Porter tells of “Aaron and Hur Societies” formed in the churches to hold up the hands of the ministers through intercession. These praying people met prior to the Sunday

services. Groups of young men also met here and there to pray for other young men. Groups of parents met to pray for their children's conversions. The great need for God's help everywhere was driving loyal Christian people to prayer. Man's extremity thus became God's opportunity. With such an atmosphere a revival was inevitable. It met a national necessity.<sup>4</sup>

### **Keller's account of events in Connecticut.**

It is now in order to inquire more deeply into the origins of these revivals and to ask why they continued as they did for three decades. For many people of the time the answer was simple. The awakening, they felt, was the work of God, who moved in a mysterious way to revive drooping Christianity in Connecticut. Let one contemporary speak for the rest. "Thus the Lord, in his infinitely free and sovereign grace, hath remembered us in our low estate, when iniquity was abounding, and the love of many was waxing cold. When the enemy was coming in among us like a flood, the spirit of the Lord hath set up a standard against him. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."<sup>5</sup> Without being irreverent, one must scrutinize matters more carefully.

The determination of New Divinity ministers to do something about what they considered an alarming situation has been discussed. Since these neo-Edwardeans agreed with the Reverend Ammi Robbins, who remarked "that if God's people really desire he should grant them a gracious visit, they must humbly ask for it,"<sup>6</sup> in 1794 and 1795 there was state-wide

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<sup>4</sup> A.B. Strickland. *The Great American Revival*. Cincinnati, Ohio. Standard Press. 1934. pp. 44-49.

<sup>5</sup> From the Rev. Peter Starr's account of the revival in Warren. - *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Vol. 1. Sept. 1800. page. 101.

<sup>6</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Vol. 1. February, 1801, page 340.

consideration of a proposal, evidently originating with the Reverend David Austin and the Reverend Walter King, for concerts of prayer for revivals. [For example,] the Tolland County Association voted in October, 1795, “That this Association being anxiously impressed with the apparent decline of religion, unanimously agree to meet on the second Tuesday of each month, beginning with next November, for the purpose of special prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and for other religious exercises.” Other county associations took similar action, and in 1797 a general revival period began. Every effort was made to continue the revivals.<sup>7</sup>

### **“A Field of Divine Wonders” 1797 – 1802.**

In 1832, Edward D. Griffin famously wrote in a letter to William Sprague:- “About the year 1792 commenced three series of events of sufficient importance to constitute a new era. That year the blood began to flow in Europe, in that contest which, with short intervals, was destined to destroy the ‘man of sin’ and to introduce a happier form of society and the glorious state of the church. That year was established at Kettering in England, the first in the continuous series of societies which have covered the whole face of the Protestant world and introduced the age of missions and of active benevolence. And that year or the year before began the unbroken series of American revivals.

There was a revival in North Yarmouth, Me, in 1791. In the summer of 1792 one appeared in Lee, in the county of Berkshire [Massachusetts]. The following November, the first that I had the privilege of witnessing, showed itself on the borders of East Haddam and Lyme, Conn. which apparently

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<sup>7</sup> C.R. Keller. *Second Great Awakening in Connecticut*. Yale 1942, Archon Books 1968. pp.49-50.

brought to Christ about a hundred souls. Since that time revivals have never ceased. I saw a continued succession of heavenly sprinklings at New Salem, Farmington, Middlebury, and New Hartford (all in Connecticut) until, in 1799, I could stand at my door in Hartford, Litchfield county, and number fifty or sixty contiguous congregations laid down in one field of divine wonders, and as many more in different parts of New England. By 1802 revivals spread themselves through most of the western and southern States; and since that time they have been familiar to the whole American people.”<sup>8</sup>

“The scattered sprinklings of 1792, however, were far removed from the torrential outpouring of revival in the late 1790s, when the revival spread from house to house, church to church, village to village. Young and old, parents and children, males and females, farmers and merchants, rich and poor – all types of people were caught up in the ground swell. By the turn of the century, Hartford and Litchfield counties [Connecticut] were awash with revival.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> W. B. Sprague. *Lectures on Revivals*. First publ. in U.S.A. in 1832. Banner of Truth edition. 1959. Griffin’s letter appears in the Appendix, pages 151 – 152.

<sup>9</sup> David W. Kling. *A Field of Divine Wonders*. The New Divinity and Village Revivals in Northwestern Connecticut. 1792 – 1822. Pennsylvania University Press. 1993. pages 2 – 3.

## CHAPTER TWO.

1798 - 1820

### **The Beginnings of the Revival in Norfolk, Connecticut, 1799.**

About five years past, the concert for prayer proposed to be observed quarterly, and which was attended in many parts of the land, was also set up here, and the members of the Church with some others attended. These seasons appeared to be solemn, and were animated and encouraging to numbers of God's people. But nothing special appeared respecting a revival of religion, until Jan. 1799, when it was noticed that our religious assemblies were more solemn and attentive. The religious people about this time hearing of some revival of religion in two or three towns in the vicinity; and having before this heard of the work of God at a further distance, were induced to hope and ardently to pray that we might have a gracious visit also.

Although no special instances of awakening, as yet, appeared to take place; there is reason to conclude that numbers of God's dear people in secret, as well as in a special way, did most earnestly plead at the throne of grace, that the Lord would get glory to his name in reviving his work among us, and in infinite mercy send his holy Spirit to arrest the progress of thoughtless sinners, who were in the broad way to eternal ruin. Soon it was whispered among some of our serious people, that one and another in this or that part of the town were in trouble and very serious. Our congregation on the Sabbath became more full than ordinary and very solemn indeed. In February and March, the attention became so general that it was thought proper at the desire of many, that religious conferences should

be set up. They accordingly were, in four and sometimes five different parts of the town. A public lecture was also appointed to be preached every Thursday, and became a matter of course through the summer and into the autumn; so that there was no need of warning; but when the day came, the house was filled with people almost like the Sabbath. Ministers from abroad were generally procured to preach on these occasions. And they were undoubtedly, by the blessing of God, a means of promoting the work, of instructing and edifying young converts, and guarding them from errors and intemperate zeal.<sup>10</sup>

### **The Great Revival in Kentucky – 1800.**

On the eve of the nineteenth century, notwithstanding the increase of ministers and churches, the prospect was sufficiently gloomy to appall both the Christian and the patriot, through the operation of the causes already enumerated. The population of the State advanced with incredible rapidity, and soon outstripped the supply of the means of grace. Worldly-mindedness, infidelity, and dissipation threatened to deluge the land, and sweep away all vestiges of piety and morality. The rising generation were growing up in almost universal ignorance of religious obligation. The elder church-members were gradually dying off, and were replaced by no recruits from the ranks of the young. Except a little Goshen here and there, the shadow of night was gathering over the land. At this juncture, when hope was ready to expire, an unlooked-for and astonishing change suddenly took place. This event was the GREAT REVIVAL of 1800, so called from its wide extent and influence; and which, after all necessary allowances for the

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<sup>10</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume 1. February 1801. pp. 312 – 313. by Ammi R. Robbins. [The full account is much longer.]

disorders which deformed it, was, beyond controversy, attended by signal benefits.

This extraordinary excitement is styled the Revival of 1800, because its most remarkable development occurred during that year. A preparatory work, however, had been going on for some time previous. The zealous labours of the Virginia missionaries, and others of the younger clergy, were not without some effect, and there was yet a remnant in the land, that had neither bowed the knee to Mammon nor Thomas Paine. Besides these scattered and limited instances, an unusual attention to religion had been awakened in the south-western section of the State, in what was known as the Green River country, and the Cumberland settlements, a year or two previous.

This excitement commenced in the Gasper River congregation, and extended thence to the congregations of Muddy and Red Rivers, in Logan County; all, at that time, under the pastoral charge of Rev. James McGready. Mr. McGready was one of the Sons of Thunder, a Boanerges both in manner and matter, and an uncompromising reprove of sin in every shape. The curses of the law lost none of their severity in falling from his lips; and, like Mirabeau, the fierceness of his invectives derived additional terror from the hideousness of his visage and the thunder of his tones. He had left a congregation in Orange country, North Carolina, but a few months previous, in consequence of the odium which his unsparing censures had drawn upon him from the ungodly. Some of his former hearers having removed to Kentucky, and forwarded him an invitation to become their pastor, he resolved to accept the call; and accordingly arrived in the Fall of 1796, being now about thirty-three years of age, and full of fiery zeal. It was not long until the effects of his impassioned preaching were visible. Regeneration, faith, and repentance were his favourite topics;

and an anxious and general concern was awakened among his hearers on the subject of experimental religion.

[This concern was followed by a period of apathy in 1798, owing to the advent and influence of another preacher who ridiculed McGready's message.]

Among the means adopted by this zealous pastor to stimulate his flock, was a written covenant, binding all who appended their signatures, to observe a *Monthly Fast*, a *Twilight concert of prayer*, and a *Sunrise concert*. The Twilight concert has been often renewed in late years in the West, and has been a very popular measure in seasons of revival.

The summer of 1799 witnessed a renewal of the excitement, which did not, however, partake of the transient character of the preceding years, but continued to grow and deepen until it reached its height, in 1800 and 1801. In the words of Mr. McGready, it exceeded everything his eyes had ever beheld upon earth, and to which all that had preceded was but an introduction, as a few drops before a mighty rain.

Its first manifestation occurred during a sacramental occasion at Red River, in July [1800], which was attended by Mr. McGready, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Hodge, and William McGee, Presbyterian ministers, and John McGee, brother of the last named gentleman, who was a Methodist preacher. The public services were animated, and tears flowed freely; but nothing special was noticed until Monday. While Mr. Hodge was preaching, a woman, at the extreme end of the house, unable to repress the violence of her emotions, gave vent to them in loud cries. During the intermission which succeeded the services, the people showed no disposition to leave their seats, but wept in silence all over the house.

Such was the state of things when John McGee, the Methodist, rose in his turn to speak. Too much agitated to

preach, he expressed his belief that there was a greater than he preaching; and exhorted the people to let the Lord God omnipotent reign in their hearts, and to submit to him, and their souls should live. Upon this, many broke silence, and the renewed vociferations of the female before mentioned were tremendous. The Methodist preacher, whose feelings were now wrought up to the highest pitch, after a brief debate in his own mind, came to the conclusion that it was his duty to disregard the usual orderly habits of the denomination, and passed along the aisle, shouting and exhorting vehemently. The clamour and confusion were increased tenfold; the flame was blown to its height, screams for mercy were mingled with shouts of ecstasy, and a universal agitation pervaded the whole multitude; who were bowed before it as a field of grain waves before the wind. Now followed prayer and exhortation; and the ministers found their strength soon taxed to the utmost to keep pace with the demands of this intense excitement.

[The most famous occasion of this kind occurred on 6th August in 1801, at another sacramental occasion held at Cane Ridge, where the church was under the pastoral control of Mr. Barton Stone. The number of those present was estimated by various people at between 8,000 and 20,000. It was an evening meeting, at a camp meeting-style gathering. One of the ministers present described the events of the meeting by saying they “were amazed and glorified God, saying, we never saw it on this fashion.”]

They were taken by surprise, but, far from cavilling, they hoped that this sudden and extensive religious movement would prove of a solid and salutary character. Even the spasmodic convulsions, the falling down, and sudden convictions, they regarded with interest. These good men had long mourned the deep declension of the Church, and had trembled at the triumphant ascendancy of Deism, rabid and

intolerant, and they almost hoped that – inasmuch as the days of miracles were past, yet nothing short of a miracle could save religion, - Providence was pleased to permit these strange spectacles in lieu of miracles, to arrest attention, and thus gain access for the power of truth. In the truth alone they placed their final dependence, as the means of conversion. Nothing, in their view, could supersede evangelical truth, though other things might prepare the way for its reception.<sup>11</sup>

**[Ed.]** The Kentucky Revival spread into the surrounding States, created what we now call the Camp Meeting movement. It also created a major transformation of society and church life. International visitors around that time said Kentucky had become the most Christian country they had ever seen. It was mainly the Methodists who capitalised upon this revival, and who seemed best able to handle the emotional, hysterical and psychological extremes which appeared in the movement. It was followed by many other revivals in later years. This revival still affects us in the 21st Century.

The 1800 revival subsided by 1805, but there were many other revivals in the following years. The Camp Meeting movement was one of the main features in this period of American history in the middle states.

The Concert of Prayer attracted a lot of attention in the Southern States, as well as in the West, and produced a great many local revivals there.

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<sup>11</sup> Robert Davidson. *History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of Kentucky*. New York. Robert Carter. 1847. pages 131 – 140.

## **Rev. Elisha Macurdy. 1802 Pennsylvania**

[The following is part of a description of a revival - from a biography of the life of the Rev. Elisha Macurdy, by the Rev. David Elliott.]

About a month before the commencement of the revival at Three Springs, the concert of prayer was held in the congregation. The meeting was very thinly attended. Mr. Macurdy's mind was much burdened, and he took occasion to express to those present, the painful feeling which he had, in relation to the low state of religion among them. His remarks seemed strongly to arrest the attention of the people, and as he proceeded, his own feelings became more lively, and his hopes began to revive. It occurred to him, that it might be productive of good, if the members of the church would unite in a mental or secret concert of prayer at some fixed period, for a revival of religion. He, accordingly suggested, that fifteen minutes of every Thursday evening, at sun-setting, be employed, by all the members of the church, wherever they might be, in special prayer to God, for the outpouring of his Spirit, and the revival of his work. The suggestion was favourably received, and the subject appeared to make a deep and strong impression on the minds of those who were present.

On the next Thursday, the usual concert of prayer was observed in the church at Cross Roads. Mr. Macurdy was present. The subject of the special concert, which he had suggested to the meeting at Three Springs, pressed itself strongly upon his mind. But he had some fears about presenting it here, lest it should not meet with a favourable reception. During the progress of the meeting, however, and while making some remarks, founded on the fifty-ninth of Cowper's "Olney Hymns," - "O for a closer walk with God," &c. - he embraced the opportunity to refer to the subject. This he did, by cautiously enquiring, whether there would be any

impropriety in the members of the church agreeing to spend a short time on that, and the subsequent Thursday evenings, in a concert of secret prayer, for a revival of religion? The question was no sooner submitted, than old Philip Jackson, the praying Elder, rose to his feet, and exclaimed, "Take the vote! Take the vote!" Mr. Macurdy, without regarding the call, proceeded with his remarks. At the close, however, he responded to it, and said he would put the question, and he wished those who were in favour of the proposed concert, to signify it by rising. The whole assembly arose, without a single exception. The concert was accordingly observed.

On the Sabbath preparatory to the administration of the Lord's Supper at Three Springs, which was appointed to take place on the fourth Sabbath of September, an unusually large number of people attended. In the morning Mr. Macurdy lectured on Malachi 3:1-5, "Behold, I will send my messenger," &c. In the afternoon, he preached from Joshua 24:15, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." While reading the text, uncommon solemnity pervaded the assembly. The preacher himself felt awfully solemn. He read the text a second time. The point to which he directed his efforts, in the treatment of the subject, was to bring his hearers to a decision, by showing them that they were shut up to this necessity – that they must either choose to serve God, or they must choose not to serve him. This fearful alternative, he pressed upon them, with much earnestness and solemnity. At the close of his remarks on this point, he stood silent in the tent, from which he had been addressing them. As he paused, the people, who had been scattered over a considerable space, gathered closely around the tent, as if in expectation of something farther. Observing the enquiring expression, with which they gazed upon him, he resumed his discourse, and with solemn emphasis, said, "God

and you must decide this question; and I now call upon you to give in your decision to God!”

Immediately, and unexpectedly to him, - for he assured the writer that he had no intention to call the people up – the whole congregation rose to their feet, evincing very deep concern. Under these circumstances, he addressed them farther, assuring them, that God was a merciful God, and if there were any among them who had not chosen him as their portion, they had still the opportunity to do so. And, again, he put the question, “Will you now give in your decision to serve the Lord your God?” This was the occasion of greatly increasing the anxiety which already existed, and many, unable to stand, fell back upon the benches, which were used as seats.

In the midst of this intense excitement, he dismissed the congregation, and returned home. The people themselves, after he had retired, appointed a meeting for prayer, to be held in the evening, which was attended upon with great interest. “About fifty persons continued upon the ground, appeared unwilling to go away, and spent most of the night in social worship.”

On the Thursday following, which was observed as a fast, preparatory to the administration of the Lord’s Supper, more than usual solemnity prevailed throughout the services. A prayer meeting [was] appointed to be held in the evening, at the house of one of the Elders. A number of persons proceeded thither directly from the church. Mr. Macurdy followed towards evening. Before the commencement of the religious exercises, while walking near the house, and revolving in his mind what he should say to the people, he heard cries of distress, in a plot of woodland, which lay in the vicinity. Supposing them to be the cries of persons under concern about their souls, he asked one of the Elders to go with him, that they might ascertain the facts. Upon their arrival at the place, they found two young women, who had retired to the woods to pray,

prostrate on the ground, in deep distress in relation to their eternal interests. “Their cries for mercy were very affecting.” After some conversation with them, they were taken to the house, where a large crowd of people were assembled for worship. There, they were very powerfully affected, and cried out, on account of the pungency of their convictions. This, however, did not interfere with the services of the evening. These proceeded without interruption, and so imperceptibly and rapidly did the hours pass away, in prayer and exhortation, that before the people were aware of it, the morning light dawned upon them. The whole night was spent in religious exercises.<sup>12</sup>

### **Beginnings of the Revival in Fairfield, Long Island. 1807.**

The Rev. Heman Humphrey was ordained March 16, 1807, Rev. Mr. Miller, his former pastor, preaching the sermon. His ministry in Fairfield continued about ten years.

He felt it his duty, immediately after his ordination, to establish a weekly prayer meeting; but as no member of his church was willing to lead in public devotion, he began by privately collecting a few of the more pious and gifted members, agreeing with them that each person of the little circle should lead in prayer at each of their informal meetings. In this way a few of them gradually gained sufficient confidence to assist in public meetings.

The discipline of the church was also restored. “Cases were taken up and disposed of very harmoniously. There seemed to be a common desire to purge out the old leaven, and to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.”

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<sup>12</sup> David Elliott. *The Life of the Rev. Elisha Macurdy*. Published by the Author. 1847. pages 60-64. The revival continued for two years. The account of it is much longer than what is included here.

In forming his plans of labour, he resolved to preach two carefully prepared sermons in the meeting house each Sabbath, and to deliver an extempore lecture each week in one of the “out-districts” of the town, taking the districts in rotation. This method he found very satisfactory, as affording his people and himself the benefit of both the more elaborate and the freer discourse.

His pastoral visitations were also, after the first three or four years, systematized; public notice being given from the pulpit, each Sabbath, of the district he would visit in the ensuing week; the very day when he might be expected by any particular family being specified. By this method he generally reached all the members of his parish, and held religious services with all the families of his flock, as he went “preaching and teaching from house to house.”

These methods appear to have been fruitful in promoting the spiritual life of the church and the conversion of souls. There was, however, for some time, no revival. Mr. Humphrey and his more earnest parishioners mourned and prayed over “the desolations of Zion.” “Our prayer was in public and in private, ‘O Lord, revive thy work.’ And we were not alone. The Association to which I belonged was led to the inquiry, ‘Lord, what wilt thou have us to do?’ A monthly concert of prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit was agreed upon. The pastors went forth, ‘two by two,’ upon a visit to all the parishes of the district. The report at the next meeting of the Association was discouraging. In most places the concert was thinly attended. There was nowhere a noise or shaking among the dry bones. The question went round – Shall the concert be continued another year? The vote was unanimously in the affirmative. The year wore away like the preceding, without any special token of the Divine presence: our faith was again put to the test. Should the concert be continued? No

one was ready to give it up. We agreed to make more special efforts to rouse the minds of Christians in our several parishes. This condition prevailed for three or four years. We were ready to ask in our despondency, ‘Are the mercies of God clean gone for ever?’ ‘Will he be favourable no more?’ At length the set time came, and the heavens poured down righteousness. Eleven of our seventeen parishes shared more or less in the blessing. Our mourning was turned to rejoicing, and we were ready to say to one another, ‘What hath God wrought! Lo, this is our God. We have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.’”

In Fairfield the revival began suddenly in the Academy, the pupils of which were mostly under fourteen years of age. It soon extended throughout the parish. “It was a new thing in Fairfield, and ‘marvellous in our eyes.’ The church was very much strengthened, and the revival changed the face of things in many of our leading families.” Owing to the peculiar conditions which had so long existed in the congregation, and in accordance with the practice of the day, none of the converts were admitted into the church until after a ‘probation’ of several months. Every human test of conversion was applied, and the younger converts were long subjected to catechetical instruction. Who, while reading the history of this revival, can fail to think of Elijah upon Carmel, praying, and then sending his servant to the outlook, that he might scan the brazen horizon as it bent to the cloudless sea – praying and looking for the cloud seven times before the first indication of rain was seen? Also, how, when at last the cloud rose upon the west, it spread

like magic over the sky, and broke in torrents upon the thirsty land?<sup>13</sup>

### **Connecticut Evangelical Magazine and Religious Intelligencer. 1809.**

To the Editor of the *Connecticut Magazine*;-

While our nation is unhappily divided on political subjects, an increasing spirit of union among Christians of various denominations demands a grateful acknowledgement. Union of heart necessarily produces union of effort. Every proposal which tends to promote this most desirable unanimity should be hailed with peculiar delight by every friend to the Redeemer's cause. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift a standard against him." Blessed by God, he has always lifted a standard, to which many are seen repairing. Blessed be his holy name, that he is putting a praying spirit into the hearts of his people; for he has told us the accomplishment of his gracious promises to Zion stands connected with fervent prayer. "Yet for this will I be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." In this view of the subject, my heart is peculiarly interested in concerts of prayer. I think them admirably calculated to unite the hearts of Christians; and reflecting on the promises annexed to prayer, and particularly united prayer, they must be deemed an omen of good to the Church. With these sentiments, permit me, sir, when I read in your Magazine for February, the resolutions of the Evangelical society, and an invitation to their brethren in Christ, of every denomination, to unite with them in a concert of private prayer. Surely everyone who knows the way to the

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<sup>13</sup> *Memorial Sketches – Heman Humphrey and Sophia Porter Humphrey*, by two of the Humphrey Children. Philadelphia. J.B. Lippincott and Co. 1869. pp. 54 – 56.

throne of grace will rejoice in the opportunity to unite with thousands of fellow Christians in ascriptions of praise to the great head of the church, for his goodness to the children of men. Surely every praying soul will unite their supplications for the continuance and increase of divine blessings. Such were the emotions of my heart. I fondly hoped the concert would speedily be adopted in all our churches.

Expressing to a friend my approbation of the plan, I was answered, “you will not rise early enough.” I felt the full force of this tacit reproof. The worldling will arise early, and sit up late, merely to gain a little of this world’s good – and will not the Christian rise to pray? Will not the Christian relinquish a little morning indulgence for the sake of enjoying communion with the eternal source and centre of all good? How does one moment of intimate communion with the Triune Jehovah infinitely transcend all the enjoyments which the world can offer its votaries! Thus was I encouraged; I still feared lest a habit so confirmed, and which I had hitherto deemed necessary to my daily comfort, would deprive me of a participation in this favourite object. I did not resolve – my resolutions have too often convinced me that their strength is very weakness – I sought divine aid – with grateful humility let me add, it was not denied. I joyfully accepted it as an answer to the prayer, with which I retired to rest. They who know the worth of prayer will believe me when I say, I would not exchange one half hour spent in this manner for all the morning slumbers of my life.

For the encouragement of those who are slaves as I was – I can say, I have ever since been able to break the bonds of sloth with comparative ease, to take up “the staff of self denial” without repining. “I can do all things through Christ strengthening me.” May all who unite in this concert be enabled to persevere in it, until they are meetened for that society, “who have washed their robes and made them white in

the Blood of the Lamb; who are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.”

It is cause of deep regret to me that this concert has not, at least in this part of the country, excited that lively interest I so ardently wished. I know that in some instances, it has been considered as exclusively intended for the society whence it originated. Now, sir, I have only to solicit one word from you in favour of a general adoption of it – which will have more influence than all I have said or can say; entreating your indulgence for the liberty I have taken. If in any way you can render this letter subservient to the glorious cause which I profess to love – be pleased, sir, to make use of it what you think fit.

Yours, PHILA.<sup>14</sup>

### **Panoplist and Missionary Magazine for 1815. Concert of Prayer.**

It is known to the religious public, that the first Monday evening in every month is observed, as a season of special and united prayer for missionaries, by many Christians in Europe, by some in America, and by the missionaries, their families, and congregations, in Asia and Africa. That the number of pious persons, who regularly unite in this concert, should be as great as possible, is certainly desirable. Christians will do well to consider, whether they can spend that evening more usefully in reference to their own spiritual improvement, or more beneficially to the cause of Christ, than by swelling the multitude of those, who are then with one heart, though in far

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<sup>14</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine and Religious Intelligencer*. Volume. Two. June, 1809. pp.235-237. (A different Concert of Private Prayer for the work of the Evangelical Society was proposed on pages 77 and 78 of this volume of the CEM and RI.)

distant places, and in different languages, earnestly beseeching their heavenly Father to send His Gospel to the heathen, and cause it to be received by all nations.

It has been contemplated by some pastors and members of our churches to establish a concert of prayer for our nation, now suffering under great calamity; a concert in which the pious should intercede for our guilty land, confess our national sins, and supplicate a return of peace, a reformation of morals, and a general revival of religion.

Why cannot all these objects be united in one concert, to be held at the time above mentioned? That the objects are important no one will question; that they are such as all Christians can join in promoting, is equally clear. The thought of concert in prayer is peculiarly pleasing, and tends powerfully to excite devotional feelings. Should such a plan as is here hinted at go into operation, the topics can be arranged in some such manner as the following; viz.

1. Prayer for the heathen;- that missionaries may speedily be sent into all the unevangelised regions of the earth;- that a great and effectual door may be opened for their labours;- that they may be faithful and laborious men, suitably qualified for their situation, and largely endowed with the spirit of Christ;- that all, who have the direction of missionaries, may have wisdom to discern the fittest places for their immediate action, and zeal to discharge their duties without wavering or fainting, and with steadfast faith in Christ, as the great Patron of missionary exertions.

2. Prayer for our own country;- that peace may be speedily restored, and, if restored speedily, that it may be followed by proofs of national gratitude;- that the effect of public calamities may be a thorough reformation;- that the Sabbath may be kept holy, profaneness and other immoralities cease, all charitable and public-spirited designs proper, the

means of grace be diligently used, and the renewing, refreshing, and sanctifying influences of the Spirit be generally experienced.

3. Prayer for all ministers of the Gospel;- that they may be strong in faith, fervent in prayer, unwearied in labours, and wholly given to their work;- that their numbers may be increased in proportion to the exigencies of the churches and of the world;- that, for this purpose, great multitudes of pious young men may be educated and put into the ministry, in every Christian country, and every other country so fast as it shall become Christian, till the number of evangelical laborers shall be adequate to the extent of the harvest;- that all the true shepherds may be known and received by the flock, while all wolves in sheep's clothing are also recognised and shunned;- that all blind guides may be convinced of their blindness, and apply to Christ for spiritual sight;- and that all faithful servants of Christ, however separated at present by unessential differences, may cordially unite in the same great labor of love.

4. Prayer for the rulers of every nation;- that they may fear God and hate covetousness, and resist the ten thousand temptations by which they are beset;- that they may lay aside sloth, ease and indulgence, and apply themselves laboriously to promote the real and permanent good of their subjects;- that they may discard foolish national jealousies, and perceive that the highest prosperity of any nation is perfectly compatible with the highest prosperity of every other nation;- that they may know and feel, that elevation to public office is not desirable on any other account than as furnishing the means of usefulness;- that they may live mindful of the account which they must render to God for all their opportunities of doing good;- and that the people may joyfully submit to all the laws and recommendations which are calculated to promote their best interests.

5. Prayer for all men;- that the vice and ignorance, the injustice and violence, the hatred of the truth and love of falsehood, which deform and pollute this guilty world, may be universally forsaken;- that God would speedily interpose and deliver mankind from those tremendous evils, which have converted the earth into one vast field of blood; and that Christ may be hailed from the rising to the setting sun, as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

That all the above mentioned topics may be part of the daily and weekly supplications of the people of God admits not of a doubt; but I am not therefore convinced that such a concert, as is here contemplated, would be useless. On the contrary, I believe it would powerfully tend to awaken in Christians a juster feeling of their duties and obligations, than they have generally experienced hitherto.

A. B.<sup>15</sup>

### **Concert of Prayer.**

It is known to the writer of these lines, that the proposal for a *Concert of Prayer*, which was stated and explained in the *Panoplist* for January, p. 19, has been received by many Christians, both ministers and private members of our churches, with great interest. A similar proposal had been communicated by letters to a considerable extent; and I have the pleasure of stating, that a large number of churches will commence the observance of this concert, on the first Monday of the present month.

Since the proposal above alluded to was made public, it has pleased God, in the abundance of his mercy, to restore to us

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<sup>15</sup> *Panoplist and Missionary Magazine*. Volume Eleven. January, 1815. pages 19 – 20.

the blessings of peace. On many accounts this is a most joyful event; but the Christian will not fail to acknowledge it to be pre-eminently desirable, as it opens the world to missionaries, and to all benevolent exertions. It will be a very pleasant and profitable part of the exercises, at this concert, to return thanks for so signal an interposition of the divine favour; and to offer earnest supplications to God for his Holy Spirit, that Christian may be inclined to engage heartily in the great work of the Lord.

The world never saw such a period before. Twelve months ago the whole Christian world was engaged in a most violent and unprecedented war; now the whole Christian world is at peace. After wars of so violent and desperate a character, as were those which have ceased within the year past, it is reasonable to expect a period of quiet. The world is exhausted by war; it indispensably demands a season of rest. May we not confidently hope, that, in answer to the united prayers of his people, God will cause pure and undefiled religion to prevail; that he will extend his church in a manner never before paralleled; and that the pacific dispositions inculcated by the Saviour of men will gain such influence, as that the present peace shall remain inviolate for ever. It is not too much to affirm, that if Christians, comparatively small as their number is, will discharge all their duties actively, thoroughly, and perseveringly;- if they will pray, as they ought to do, when they consider the efficacy of prayer, and the want and miseries of their fellow men; if they will live, as they ought to do, when they reflect on the great privilege of leading others in the way of immortal life, by the power of a good example;- if they will labor, as they ought to do, when consulting the interests not of themselves merely, but of their country, the world, and all posterity;- the issue will be transcendently glorious, the world will be reformed, and renewed, and all men will come to the

knowledge of the Gospel, which *is able to make them wise to salvation*.

March 3, 1815.

A. M.<sup>16</sup>

## Reports on the Revival of 1815

1815 was one of the peak years for widespread revivals through this period. Reports about these revivals appear in the first volume of the *Religious Intelligencer*, as we shall see. Also, there are many reports in the *Panoplist*, volumes 11 and 12, for the years 1815 and 1816, as well as in Joshua Bradley's book. This decade was also one of the main periods through which the evangelist Asahel Nettleton was most active in many parts of Connecticut. His career provides a most interesting study of revival movements, based in the Calvinistic New England theology that prevailed at that time. While the General Assembly provided a long list of places where revivals occurred in their *Narrative*, part of which is included below, the main parts of the country where revivals occurred was in New England, and in upstate New York. (see the Bibliography for details of these publications.)

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<sup>16</sup> *Panoplist and Missionary Magazine*. Volume Eleven. March, 1815. pages 92 – 93.

# RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

## VOLUME ONE.

1st June, 1816 to 24th May, 1817.

### Presbyterian Report about the Revival of 1815

*Narrative of the State of Religion, within the bounds of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church; and of the General Associations of Connecticut, of New Hampshire, of Massachusetts Proper, and of the General Convention of Vermont, during the last year.*

A view of the operations of Divine grace in our churches during the past year, clearly demonstrates, not only that God is “ever mindful of his covenant with his people,” that he will not forever hide his face from the children of his love, but also, that “the time, even the set time to favour many parts of the American Zion has now come.”

By the last General Assembly, it was recommended to the churches to join in “*monthly concerts of prayer*,” to unite in earnest supplication for the speedy coming of the kingdom of the Redeemer, and for the extension of the triumphs of the Gospel of Christ. This recommendation has met with a very general attention, Christians of *other* denomination than our own, have cordially united with us in this interesting service. God has been entreated of by his people; - he has heard their prayers; - he has answered their petitions, and blessed their souls.

Several conversions to God, in individual cases, and several revivals of religion in societies, may be traced to these seasons of social prayer. In many places, “devout and pious FEMALES” have formed themselves into praying societies, and

obtained in the discharge of duty – comfort for themselves, and light, and direction to others.

The state of the church during the last year; its growth, and prosperity; the zeal and diligence of its members; the outpourings of the Spirit of God; the conviction and conversion of multitudes, who have hitherto been “dead in trespasses and sins;” the language of “praise which has burst from the mouths of babes and sucklings;” these have been of a character calculated to excite the strains of holy gratitude, and to cause us to exclaim, “These are the Lord’s doings, and wondrous in our eyes..”

In passing from south to north, the General Assembly find in most places a decent and respectful attention to the ordinary means of grace:- and in some – a special work, and extraordinary outpouring of the Holy Spirit. (a long list follows.)

From Massachusetts Proper, we learn, that the concert of prayer; the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures and religious tracts; the propagation of the gospel among the destitute in our own country, and in pagan climes; and the suppression of immoral practices; are objects, which are cherished with great fervour and success! And we would record with joy and gratitude, the numerous and animating revivals of religion, which have blessed many of the congregations in the counties of Hampshire, Hamden and Berkshire, and other parts of the state, and which have introduced hundreds into the bosom of the Christian church.

The General Assembly learn with pleasure from the delegation from the General Association of Connecticut that attention to religion in that quarter, exceeds anything of the kind, which has ever before been witnessed. About one sixth part of the whole number of towns in that state have been

visited in an *extraordinary* manner, and multitudes have become the subjects of a lively hope. There, also, Missionary, Bible, Tract, Moral, and Praying Societies, are numerous and flourishing.

*At a meeting of the General Association of Connecticut, at New Haven, June 18, 1816 –*

The Committee appointed to prepare a summary account of the state of religion, from the narratives given to the Association, made a report, which was accepted, as follows:

The day of Millennial Glory will be a season of great joy and triumph to the Church of God. Then will be realised, more than ever before, that the gospel of the Grace of God in Christ Jesus is alone capable of securing the happiness of men. The prospects of individuals, societies, and nations living in peace and love, as an effect of the gospel when universally embraced, is most animating to the friends of Zion; and every approach toward that period, in the diffusion of gospel light, and in the application of Redemption to the souls of men, is an event interesting, important, and greatly to be desired. Does not the dawn of this glorious day begin to appear? Does not the rising light betoken the near approach of the Sun of Righteousness? Do not the increasing exertions of the pious and charitable of all ages, descriptions, and denominations, and the present shaking of the religious and moral world, announce the coming of the desire of all nations in his Kingdom? During the past year, “the Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad.” In giving a view of the state of religion, as it was reported by the various District Associations, and the other ecclesiastical bodies in connection with us, we perform a duty most pleasant. A year like the past, so distinguished for extensive revivals of religion, exempt from disorder, has probably never been witnessed in this country. We present not

a solitary town or village, refreshed by the dews of divine grace; not a few churches and societies where the Lord has made bare his arm in the suppression of vice, and in the vindication of the truth; not a few souls here and there, one, converted by the grace of God: but many, very many, villages, towns, and cities, in almost all parts of the United States, from Georgia to Maine, and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, which have experienced a work of the Holy Spirit; and thousands of souls have tasted and seen that the Lord is good and gracious. But we pass to a more particular statement. (again, a long list follows)<sup>17</sup>

## VOLUME TWO

### 2nd June 1817 to 30th May 1818

#### **Pastoral Letter to the Churches from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.**

To these efforts in behalf of the cause of Christ join fervent, united PRAYER. We need not remind you, brethren, that all Zion's blessings come down from her King and Head; and that he *will be inquired of* by his people to do for them that which they need and desire. We are persuaded that all those periods and churches which have been favoured with special revivals of religion, have been also distinguished by VISIBLE UNION AND CONCERT IN PRAYER. – We entreat you, brethren, to cherish this union and concert. We especially exhort you to pay renewed and more solemn attention to the MONTHLY CONCERT IN PRAYER, recommended by a

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<sup>17</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume One. 8th June, 1816, pages 42 – 47, and 29th June, 1816, pages 72 - 73.

former Assembly, and so generally and happily observed. Has not the Saviour promised, that if any two of his people agree as touching anything which they desire, He will grant their request? What blessings, then, may we not hope will be shed down upon the Church, when the thousands of our Israel are found bowing together, before the throne of mercy, saying, *for Zion's sake, we will not hold our peace, and for Jerusalem's sake we will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth!*<sup>18</sup>

**State of Religion in Massachusetts Proper – General Association of Congregational Churches.**

In most of our churches, the monthly concert of prayer is constantly observed, and regarded as a very precious and animating season. [a small part of a much longer report.]<sup>19</sup>

**VOLUME THREE.**  
**6th June, 1818 to 29th May, 1819.**

**State of Religion in Vermont.** – from the Report and Pastoral Letter of the General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian ministers in the State of Vermont.

The fruits of the numerous revivals of religion, with which we have been favoured, have been such as to evince that the work has, indeed, been of God. The state of morals has been greatly improved, vice has been put to the blush, and, in many remarkable instances, infidelity has received a fatal shock. Increasing attention has been paid to Sabbath Schools

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<sup>18</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Two. 14th June, 1817. page 40.

<sup>19</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Two. 11th October, 1817. page 321.

and to the instruction of children in the great principles of virtue and godliness. The minds of men are enlarged and their hearts are warmed with reference to the glorious object of evangelizing the world. More strict regard is given to the Concert of prayer, attended in some places with contributions for the support of foreign missions. Numerous societies are formed contributing in various ways, but with similar views, to the same noble and blessed design, the extension of Immanuel's kingdom. This spirit of evangelical benevolence appears particularly among females and young men. May their example provoke many to Emulation, who have not yet engaged in the good work.<sup>20</sup>

### **Missionary Collections.**

To the Editor of the *Religious Intelligencer*.

Sir,- Permit me through the medium of your useful paper, to suggest to ministers of the Gospel and others, the propriety of taking up collections for missionaries on the first Monday evening of every month. This practice has been adopted in some places, but I believe by no means generally. Let Christians reflect a moment what a fund might in this way be obtained for the advancement of our Redeemer's kingdom at home and abroad. As I have not, in my power, the means of making an accurate calculation of the number of congregations that unite in this concert, I can merely conjecture from the information I possess. On a moderate calculation, however, I presume that there are not less than *five hundred* throughout our country. Should each of these have a collection, at least one thousand dollars per month would be received, which would be more than sufficient to defray all the expenses of our missionaries in India, including schools, translations, etc. And

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<sup>20</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Three. 4th July, 1818. page 72

what can be more suitable than to accompany our fervent petitions for the universal spread of the Gospel, with some portion of that abundance which a gracious God has given us, and which through his blessing might be the means of rescuing thousands, yea, millions, from Idolatry, and of teaching them the only way of salvation. Let Christians then be united in this object, and let them use their exertions to accomplish it wherever the concert of prayer is held, and without doubt, the “blessing of those that were ready to perish will come upon them.” Philanthropos.<sup>21</sup>

### **Narrative – from the Synod of Geneva, New York,**

The Synod considers the state of their churches to be, on the whole, more prosperous than in former years. Their numbers have been zealously multiplied, in new settlements, and Missionary labours extended; Pastors installed over churches, and houses reared for public worship; on which they acknowledge the special smiles of heaven, rendering a degree of efficiency to their feeble efforts; and also in many instances, the copious effusions of the Holy Spirit. The monthly concert of prayer, was generally observed with interest. And Sabbath Schools generally instituted, and extensively useful. [This was followed by a long quotation from the Report, giving locations and details of the revivals in the various Presbyteries.]<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Three. 4th July, 1818. pages 77 -78.

<sup>22</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Three. 17th April, 1819 page 741.

**VOLUME FOUR.**  
**5th June, 1819 to 27th May, 1820.**

**General Association of Connecticut.**

The General Association of Connecticut held their Anniversary Meeting at Lyme, during the second week of June. We shall soon give the Report of their Proceedings at length; at present we make a few extracts.

The aspects of divine providence, however, which beam light, strength, and comfort upon the church within our limits, are to be noticed with gratitude. Among these, is the *monthly concert of prayer*. These seasons of fellowship, and united aspirations of devout souls for the prosperity of Zion, are observed in most of our churches. In many of them collections are made to promote, by appropriate means, the Pre-eminent object for which the prayers are offered; and we call upon the churches to persevere in this primary duty – for these things are good and acceptable with him, whose council shall stand, and who will do all his pleasure.

[Also spoken of at similar length are Sunday schools, the school for heathen youth in Cornwall, the asylum for the instruction of the deaf and dumb, the Connecticut Education Society, the Domestic Missionary Society, the Missionary Society of Connecticut, the American Bible Society, and weekly and monthly publications to disseminate religious intelligence.]

Revivals were also reported in New Fairfield, Haddam, East Hampton, Ashford, Colchester, Eastford, Westford,

Winsted, Middle Haddam, Stafford, Vernon, Bolton, Trumbull, Thompson, South-East and Derby.<sup>23</sup>

### **Journal of the Rev. Mr. Poor, at Tillipally. (India.)**

6. This evening at the monthly concert I related to those present the substance of the information recently received from America. We make use of narrations, showing the exertions of females in our native country, to rouse the attention of females here, and to show them that they are not destined to live and die in ignorance; but that it is their privilege to attend to the most important concerns. (this is a part of a much longer article.) from the *Panoplist*.<sup>24</sup>

### **From the General Association of Connecticut.**

The past year has not been marked with those signal tokens of divine favour which have distinguished preceding years. With few exceptions, there has been a suspension of the special and powerful operations of the Spirit of God. (However, a good list follows of good results.)

The general concert of prayer is universally observed in the churches of this Association.<sup>25</sup>

### **From the General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian Ministers in Vermont:-**

Conferences and Prayer Meetings among Christians are well attended; and it deserves to be especially noticed, that female associations for prayer are numerous and increasing.

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<sup>23</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 10th July, 1819. pages 88 – 89.

<sup>24</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 28th August, 1819. page 201.

<sup>25</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 16th October, 1819. page 312.

The monthly concert is very generally attended by Christians; and with increasing interest.<sup>26</sup>

### **Narrative of the Synod of Tennessee.**

In most of the churches from which we have information the concert of prayer on the first Monday of every month has been punctually observed by a few individuals; in some by more; but too generally neglected, even by the majority of professors. While this is the case, we cannot expect those gracious answers of prayer in the copious effusions of the divine Spirit, by which God signalizes and rewards churches that are ardently and unitedly engaged to call down his blessings upon themselves, and the people around them. The punctual attendance of all professors on these interesting occasions, to the extent of their opportunities, as well as on Sabbath days, would be of great effect to bring the congregations to the house of prayer, and thus more within the reach of the saving influences implored. This prayerful cooperation with the thousands of God's children in the four quarters of the globe, is earnestly recommended to all under our care, as one of the surest methods of promoting the success of the gospel and the enlargement and edification of the church. (Family prayer is then spoken of.)<sup>27</sup>

### **Narrative of the State of Religion in the Synod of Ohio.**

The concert of prayer, catechetical instructions, and other voluntary associations of a religious nature, have been generally attended to; and are the means under God, we may attribute a considerable accession to the communion of the

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<sup>26</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 16th October, 1819. page 313.

<sup>27</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 20th November, 1819. page 393.

church. Some solicitude has been expressed, in various places, for the Confession of Faith, and for that description of preaching which ascribes the salvation of a sinner to the sovereign grace of God exclusively.<sup>28</sup>

### **Missionaries at Elliott – after visiting New Orleans.**

On the first of February we arrived at Elliott, where as you may well suppose, we met a welcome reception. It being on Monday, we collected in the evening to unite our prayers in concert with the millions who were praying at that time for the upbuilding of the Redeemer's kingdom. O happy thought! that friends in Christian lands, however remote on earth, may daily, yes, hourly, meet at the throne of grace to supplicate God's mercy for each other. This idea is peculiarly soothing to my feelings, when I recollect how many friends dear to me as my own soul, I have parted to see no more till I meet them at the awful tribunal of heaven. (part of much longer letter.)<sup>29</sup>

### **Proposal for a Concert in Extraordinary Closet Prayer.**

The monthly concert for social prayer is among the most favourable tokens of the near approach of the latter-day glory of the Church. For all the great blessings connected with the Millennium, the Lord will be inquired of by the house of Israel. Before a nation can be born in a day, Zion must travail in agonising prayer, as well as in other most spirited exertions to spread abroad the knowledge of the one true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. The prayers of God's people will be of the greatest importance towards hastening the day of Zion's prosperity in two ways:

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<sup>28</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 27th November, 1819. page 410.

<sup>29</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 18th December, 1819. page 459.

First; their prayers are prevalent. The God of Zion is a prayer-hearing God. In the second place; the prayers of the people of God have a most powerful tendency to promote their sanctification, and thus to prepare them to shine as lights in the world. And what one thing is more necessary to bring forward the long wished-for day, than an increase of holiness in the disciples of Christ? Growth in grace will do more than growth in numbers, to prepare the church for the Millennium. In view of the great importance of prayer to promote sanctification in the Church, and to bring down blessings on our fallen world, we cannot be too thankful to God for putting it into the hearts of some to propose the monthly concert, and for disposing some many to fall in with the proposal. I would now call the attention of the praying family of Christ, to an additional proposal. It is this:- that every Christian should endeavour to devote one evening in each week, in those weeks when the monthly concert does not occur, to closet prayer. As the social concert is fixed on Monday evening, it is proposed to take the same evening on the week for the secret concert. And as there is a great number of people who cannot attend the prayer meetings which are held on the first Monday of the month, it is suggested to them whether it would not be desirable that they should, if not prevented by something more than ordinary, consider that evening as sacred to devotion. There is no doubt but that much of that prayer which will avail to bring forward the glory of the Millennium, will be breathed out in the closet before Him who seeth in secret. The closet is a favoured place to wrestle with the Angel of the Covenant. In this sacred retreat there is no fear of man;- there is nothing to prevent the child of God from pouring out his whole heart before his heavenly Father. By this proposal for a concert of secret prayer, on a particular evening of each week, I would not intimate that Christians do not pray every evening: but can they not devote

more time to this important duty? If they were ordinarily to devote one whole evening every week to secret devotions, would it not lead to advance the work of grace in their own soul? Would it not greatly increase the cloud of incense before the mercy-seat? And would the earth, to its utmost ends, feel the influence of this concert in the prayers of those .... waiting for the kingdom of God:?<sup>30</sup>

### **A Revival Starts in a “Monthly Concert of Prayer” Meeting.**

Among the rich variety of religious intelligence communicated through the medium of the *Recorder*, the work of the Holy Spirit, in special revivals of religion, hold a conspicuous place.

In all the triumphs of the Cross, displayed in the effectual operations of the Spirit, upon the hearts of sinners, the faithful ministers of Christ will thank God and take courage, the languid groans of private Christians will be revived, and the friends of Zion will rejoice together in view of the rising glories of the rising glories of the kingdom of our Immanuel.

Wishing to hear public testimony to the work of divine grace among the people of my charge, I shall attempt to give a brief statement of facts, touching the special work of the Spirit of God since my connection with this people. Should you think them worthy of a place in your paper, you are at liberty to insert them.

At the commencement of my labours among this people, the whole number of professing Christians were less than fifty. Although at this period, religion seemed to be in a low state among us, yet, the professed people of God, appeared generally to possess in some good measure, the spirit of the Gospel. –

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<sup>30</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 18th December, 1819. page 464.

They were enlightened into the great doctrines of salvation from the clear and faithful exhibition of truth in my predecessor.

Nothing remarkable occurred during the three first years of my ministry. We had some to weep over the desolations of Zion, who were not strangers to the duty of prayer. About the month of December 1813, there appeared to be some excitement among professed Christians. Symptoms of a glorious work of divine grace, began to make their appearance. These symptoms, be it spoken to the praise of divine grace, did not vanish like the morning cloud. The raised expectation of the people of God, was, in some measure, realized. God heard their prayers, appeared in his glory, and made bare his arm for the salvation of souls. About forty were added to the church as the hopeful fruits of this revival. The good work was followed by a state of lamentable declension. Becoming weary in well doing God left us to reap the fruit of our folly.

The second season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord and the power of his Spirit, visibly commenced at a monthly concert of prayer, March, 1816. This work commenced in an unexpected and surprising manner. It was a season of extreme moral darkness. With a few exceptions, the visible people of God were like the bones in the prophet's vision, motionless. The men of the world had set up their standard, and unfurled their colours. Vain and ungodly amusements were multiplied. To all human appearance, we were swiftly ripening for ruin. But, as if to manifest, in a most conspicuous manner, the riches of divine sovereignty, and to give convincing proof that God can work with or without means, the Holy Spirit was sent down like rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth. We had such a season of refreshing as can never here be forgotten by the saints.

Although there was no remarkable characteristic in this work, to distinguish it from many others, yet, all classes and descriptions of men, from the venerable old man, down to the child, seemed to be more or less affected by the work.

Subsequent to this season, as fruit of this revival, about seventy were added to the church.

We have the pleasure of recording another special work of the Holy Spirit, during the past winter. This glorious work made its appearance about the first of December, 1818. From the commencement for nearly two months, the work progressed but slowly. The people of God were exercised with alternate hopes and fears. While some began to grow discouraged, others manifested the determinate resolution of good old Jacob, when he wrestled with the angel of the covenant. We were not yet prepared for so rich a blessing as God had in store for us. Sometime in the month of January, the work became powerful. Throughout the limits of the town, an alarm was excited among the ungodly. Men and brethren, what shall we do, was the simultaneous enquiry.

In the course of a few weeks, a considerable number gave pleasing evidence of having passed from death unto life. Seventy or eighty have indulged a hope. Between fifty and sixty have already united with the church. Some of almost every age have been made hopeful subjects of this work. There is, however, a larger proportion of those in advanced life, found among the hopeful converts, in this late work, than is usual in revivals of religion. Eight or ten between sixty and eighty, have indulged the pleasing hope of being born again by the efficient power of the Holy Spirit.

During the late work, a spirit of special prayer was very manifest in the saints. Among the fruits of this good work, family worship holds a conspicuous place. We now find an

altar for God in very many families, which, previous to this revival, lived without hope, and without God in the world.

I am thoroughly convinced, from actual experiment, that much good results in seasons of revivals, in visiting from house to house, and in conversing with individuals, upon their spiritual concerns. By looking into particular cases, we may learn more accurately what is their peculiar state of mind, and be better able to direct truth to the understanding and conscience. This course has been adopted, more especially in the late revivals, by my brethren, in this vicinity of towns, in which God has so gloriously displayed the riches of his grace, with great success.

The doctrines which have been blessed in this and in the neighbouring towns, to the salvation of so many souls, may be styled the doctrines of the reformation. The entire depravity of human nature, absolute dependence, regeneration by the special agency of the Spirit of God, the preservation of the saints, the unchangeable nature of the divine government, the atonement, the electing love of God, future rewards and punishments, as well as the indispensable nature of repentance, faith, and the holy life, are some of the leading doctrines which have been constantly held up to view, and urged upon the consciences of men. In short, we have insisted upon the doctrine of salvation by grace alone.

Samuel Ware.

Ware, Massachusetts. December 16, 1819.<sup>31</sup>

### **Revival in a Sabbath School in Lewis, New York.**

It will ever refresh the hearts of Christians to hear of the wonderful works of God, in the conversion of their fellow-men.

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<sup>31</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 8th January, 1820. pages 506 - 507.

When the powerful energies of this spirit are displayed in renewing the young and blessing them to Christ, the worth becomes more deeply interesting; such a display of his grace has been witnessed this past winter in Lewis. I commenced teaching a school in that place, about the first of December last, and soon after a Sabbath School was instituted. A general attendance of the youth was requested. Nineteen attended the first school and recited; thirty-six the second, and forty-two the third. They were from six to twenty-six years of age. The number of scholars soon increased to between eighty and ninety. At this time a general stupidity on the subject of religion prevailed; and for some time after, no particular seriousness was discovered on the minds of any. On the contrary, all appeared thoughtless and unconcerned, with regard to the eternal destinies of their souls. Opportunities were sought and improved, for conversing with them individually; and they were exhorted to give an immediate and solemn attention to the subject of religion. The compassion of the Saviour, and the guilt of neglecting his invitations of mercy were set before them. All this they seemed to regard with cold indifference. Not far from the middle of December, there were some tokens of approaching good. A general and increasing anxiety to read the Scriptures was very manifest; and they appeared to listen to religious instruction, with uncommon interest. – Some individuals began to be thoughtful. The first Sabbath in January was a solemn day. A sermon was addressed to Christians on the importance of a revival of religion. All were attentive. The monthly concert of prayer was held the next day at evening. Some of the youth present were affected. Tuesday morning I went into the school house, and found several scholars in tears. Others came in soon after, apparently in great distress. The cause was soon apparent – it was a deep conviction of sin. This day will long be remembered by all who

witnessed this interesting scene. At the close of the school, every remaining doubt that a work of God had commenced among these youth was removed. They were then told that the Holy Spirit was evidently operating on their hearts; and entreated, as they valued their future and eternal happiness, not to “grieve the Spirit.” This declaration seemed like a shock of electricity, reaching every heart. They appeared unwilling to depart; and when they were told it was necessary for them to return to their homes, they went away with great reluctance. The following day they returned still more solemn. In the afternoon, when I entered the school, I found them in different parts of the house, reading their Bibles. The sight was affecting. It had been objected to the Sabbath School, that it would interrupt their other studies. To remove this objection, they were prohibited from reading the Bible in school hours. They now came, entreating that they might read it, adding, “we can read nothing else.” This request was cheerfully granted; and there was soon reason to rejoice at the effect. The more they read the Scriptures, the more pungent were there convictions of sin, and the more earnest their desire to be delivered [from] its power. While reading, they were frequently observed to weep with the greatest agitation of mind. Several came to the Sabbath School on the following Sabbath, who had not been in the school during the week. When they saw the distress of their companions, they began to inquire, “Does not this subject involve us also?” Four of them were struck with powerful conviction. The seriousness continued about twelve days, when it began to decrease; and there was less visible anxiety about eternal things. Fears were entertained that the rich blessings, which we had anticipated, would be lost. But our prospects soon began to brighten. Two individuals, who had been for sometime under pungent conviction began to rejoice in their Saviour, and to express their astonishment that

they had been so long blind to all the excellencies of His character.

Conferences soon became crowded and solemn; and Christians were animated and ardent in their addresses to the throne of grace. A meeting was appointed for the express purpose of conversing with those who were enquiring. At this meeting unusual solemnity pervaded every countenance. All were silent as the house of death. It was evident that the Lord was there. At the close of the meeting, those who requested the prayers of the Christians were requested to rise. The request was no sooner made than all unanimously rose. Another meeting was appointed for the same purpose, and instead of the solemn silence, which prevailed at the former, sinners labouring under the horrors of an awakened conscience, wept aloud. Nothing was said to excite passions; but a deliberate address was made to the understanding. When the exercises were closed, not an individual left the house until they were told, it was their duty to keep seasonable hours. Then they said, "How can we go away without an interest in the Saviour? Do pray for us [or] we shall perish." One who had resisted all the previous invitations of pious friends, and remained thoughtless amid the general concern, was arrested while going to this meeting, and led to see the awful depravity of her heart. She remained three days in the deepest anguish, when she was brought to rejoice in her Saviour. The number of hopeful converts was soon increased to sixteen, from twelve to twenty-three years of age. This work of the Lord was not exclusively confined to children and youth. Those more advanced in life, were brought to lay down the weapons of their rebellion, and join in the song of redeeming love. There are now thirty-five, who are rejoicing in the hope of a blessed immortality, twenty-seven of whom are members of the Sabbath School. Others are enquiring for the way to life. Those who have hope give very good evidence of

a change of heart. Twenty of them have recently been received into the church. The work is at present confined, principally, to two school districts which are united to the Sabbath School. Although not extensive it is very general. Almost every house has been visited with seriousness; and it is to be hoped that the Lord has yet many rich blessings for that people.

A Friend of Sunday Schools.<sup>32</sup>

### **Contributions at the Monthly Concert.**

The following extracts from a letter of a Correspondent deserve a careful attention.

1. The only object of these contributions is to support Foreign Missions.

2. To be paid to a treasurer, or, in his absence, to a Receiver.

3. The treasurer keeps a book with every contributor's name, (if returned,) and the sum contributed; and reports at every concert.

4. As often as *ten dollars* are in the treasury, remittances are made to the Treasurer of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

5. Every person, who is willing and thinks it proper, as it is a public charity, is requested to return his name with the contribution

6. The very least, as well as the greatest, contributions will be thankfully accepted: but every person is desired to consider how much it is his duty to contribute to this object monthly, in view of his circumstances, his engagements, his duty to support other objects, the benefits he receives from God, whose steward he is, the perishing condition of the heathen, and the glorious prospect of doing eternal good to thousands.

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<sup>32</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Four. 6th May, 1820. pages 770 – 771.

*N.B. If any person cannot attend the concert, he can commit his contribution to a friend.*

Every man, woman and child may consider that one single cent a month will be twelve cents a year – 100 such contributions will be \$12 a year – 100 of 2 cents will be \$24 a year. – 100 of 3 cents, \$36 a year, - 100 of 6 and a quarter cents, \$75 a year – 100 of 12 and a half cents a year, \$150 a year. - Who is not able to give one cent a month? Who would be the poorer for giving 12 and a half cents a month?

This, Sir, is the plan, proposed by a committee of our church for contributions at the monthly concert, and which was yesterday read to the congregation from the pulpit. The first contribution has exceeded fifteen dollars.

I cannot flatter myself that we shall collect as much every month as we have this; because one has put in \$5, to make one dollar a month from the commencement of the year. But I do cherish the hope that we shall send ten dollars every month.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> *The Panoplist and Missionary Herald*. Volume Sixteen. July, 1820. pages 325 – 326.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

**1820 – 1829.**

### **Religious Intelligencer.**

#### **VOLUME FIVE**

**3rd June, 1820 to 26th May, 1821.**

#### **A Good Omen.**

##### **United General Prayer Meeting at New-York.**

This meeting, (for the outpouring of the Spirit, on the city of New-York,) was attended by a large number of persons of different religious denominations, on Tuesday afternoon, April 3rd. The Rev. Mr. Ellis president, and the Rev. Dr. Spring, and the Rev. Messrs. Williams, Labagh, and Ballatine, took a part in the solemn and interesting exercises.

The Committee of Arrangements (which at present consists of one member from each of the following denominations, viz; Associate Reformed, Baptist, Dutch Reformed, Episcopal, Methodist and Presbyterian, had prepared a summary of highly animated accounts of revivals of religion in different parts of the country, which was read by the Rev. Mr. Ellis. Dr. Spring then read a letter received by the Committee from New Haven, Conn., and followed it with a short address, of which our limits will only permit us to say, that it was solemn, eloquent and impressive, and commanded the most serious attention. A short address was then made by the Rev. Mr. Ellis. They both dwelt much on the necessity of importunate prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our city, the specific object of the meeting. The meeting was

concluded with singing and the benediction was pronounced by Mr. Ellis. Among the audience we were pleased to see a number of clergymen of different denominations.

*Christian Herald.*<sup>34</sup>

### **First Monthly Concert at the Sandwich Islands.**

Monday, May 1. United in observing the monthly concert of prayer for the first time on heathen ground. Settled the question with respect to sending two of the brethren to Atooi, to accompany George, explore the island, and perform such business as circumstances may require. Unitedly implore a blessing on their enterprise, and, commended them to the grace of God.<sup>35</sup>

### **Union for Prayer.**

One of the pleasing indications of the prevalence of pure religion, at the present day, is the harmony that prevails among Christians of different denominations. Their meetings we understand have been well attended by ministers and others of the different denominations of Christians. A meeting for this object was introduced in this city a few weeks since. The first meeting was composed of Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians and Congregationalists. The fourth meeting, which was holden in the Methodist meeting house, was crowded to overflowing, and hundreds were unable to get in; and the meeting stands adjourned to one of the Congregational meeting houses. We sincerely hope that no sectarian views and feelings will ever intervene to hinder our prayers. We shall make no comment at present, but subjoin the following excellent Tract on this subject, which we copy from the London Jewish Expositor. It

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<sup>34</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Five. 21st April, 1821. page 767.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

will be read with additional interest by many, when they learn that the Rev. Wm Ward, who lately visited this country, is the reputed author.

## **Hints for the General Union of Christians for Prayer, for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.**

In the present day, a day which, for obvious reasons, may be called a day of trouble, of rebuke and of blasphemy; and yet a day which, from the advance of true religion, shines with many a ray of bright hope and earnest expectation; - in such a day, in which hope and fear thus alternately prevail, one great question ought to occupy the mind - How to overcome the evil, and to extend the good; how to confound the work of Satan, and to enlarge and establish the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Many are the attempts now making for this purpose. Societies are in active operation to suppress vice, to reform our prisons, to afford a refuge for the destitute - to provide an asylum for the penitent - to educate the young - to circulate the Holy Scriptures - to evangelise the heathen - and to promote Christianity among the Jews. Each of these institutions has its peculiar excellence, but they are all limited in their object and in their effort. No one great and extensive plan has yet been adopted, which may, at the same time, effectually benefit ourselves, our families, our country, and the world at large.

The aim of this paper is humbly to suggest a plan, not to disparage other benevolent attempts, but to give life and vigour, and energy to them all. The plan is this:- **to unite all sincere Christians in earnest prayer for the general outpouring of the Holy Spirit.** This will meet the full extent both of our wants and of our desires.

The limits of this paper require brevity; but if the Scriptures are examined, the following truths will be clearly

seen; viz: That no human effort is of itself sufficient to change the heart of man, or to build the spiritual temple of the Lord. God employs men as instruments, but he is himself the great agent. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God only giveth the increase. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.

That the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit Jehovah, the third person of the ever-blessed Trinity, is infinite in power; that with him nothing is impossible; all hearts are open to him, and all creatures subject to his will. That, exclusively of his almighty power as God, in the economy of our salvation, he has undertaken offices which are fully sufficient to secure the most extensive blessings. He convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He takes away the stony heart, and gives an heart of flesh. He assists in prayer, and acts as a teacher and remembrancer. He guides into all truth. He glorifies the Lord Jesus, and sheds abroad the love of God in the heart. He also has a boundless treasury of every requisite to accomplish his purposes; for he receives of the things that are Christ's and shows them to his people; and in the Lord Jesus we know are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." The Holy Spirit, therefore, has only to exercise his office, to pour out gifts and graces from the inexhaustible fullness of Christ, and what man by his efforts can never attain, the Eternal Spirit can immediately accomplish. The same power which, on the day of Pentecost, effected the conversion of three thousand unbelieving Jews under one discourse, can convince the most prejudiced, and change the hearts of the most obdurate of the present day. When he makes bare his arm, the mountains will flow down at his presence, nations will be born at once, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ.

Whilst the sacred Scriptures thus acquaint us with the power of the Holy Spirit to effect these great objects, they afford us every reason to expect this aid whenever general prayer is made for its exercise. The prophecies clearly show that days of great blessedness are before us, and that these days will be preceded or accompanied by a very large effusion of the Holy Spirit. The prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Joel, plainly predict this effusion, while Ezekiel confirms these predictions by the most striking emblems. Who can read the remarkable vision of the valley full of dry bones, and the interpretation given of that vision, without being convinced that the Holy Spirit will yet exercise his office in a very remarkable manner? So powerfully, that those who are now as a multitude of dry bones, shall stand up as a great army of true believers. The divine oracles at the same time assure us, that it is answer to prayer that this blessing will be bestowed. It was not till the prophet had said "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live," and the life-giving Spirit came. In another prophecy, also, after promises of great mercies, it is added, "I will yet be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." Such is the connection between the gift and prayer for its bestowment. So much is this the order in which the Lord grants his mercies, that he has promised not only to pour out a spirit of prayer and supplication upon his people, but to lead them to excite one another to this exercise; for thus it is written, "The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts; I will go also." And when prayer is offered, God declares, "Before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

Without, therefore, entering into the question as to the exact period of these glorious times, we have every reason to believe that whenever prayer is generally made for the

outpouring of the Holy Spirit, this unspeakable blessing will be afforded.

Could we find any instance in which the Lord has refused to hear the prayers of his people, even when praying solely for their own deliverance, we might be discouraged; but when he has from the beginning heard their cry, and saved them, we may rest assured, he will answer our petitions. That which is now desired, is for his own glory, for the attainment of that object for which the Lord Jesus shed his precious blood! For at what time will he see the travail of his soul and be satisfied? Is it not when the Holy Spirit, taking his great power, and exercising his mighty energy, shall so bless the earth, that multitudes of every nation, tribe, and tongue, shall bow to the name of Jesus, and confess that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father?

The earnest supplications, therefore, of every sincere Christian for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; and his unwearied efforts, by the divine blessing, to excite a similar earnestness in others, are particularly desired. For the reader attainment of this object, the following Hints are respectfully offered.

1. That all ministers should seek a deeper and more abiding conviction of their own personal need of the divine influences of the Holy Spirit, both for their own growth in grace, and for success in all parts of their ministerial labours; that, under this conviction, they may be led to more earnest secret prayer for this blessing.

2. That they should, like Daniel and his companions, unite with their brethren as opportunities offer, in private social prayer for the general outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

3. That they should preach upon the various offices of the Holy Spirit, that their congregations may be more practicably acquainted with his important work in our salvation.

4. That in their general discourses, they should more habitually honour the Holy Spirit, by intreating his divine aid, and ascribing their success to him.

5. That in large towns a weekly lecture should be set apart for the above purposes.

6. That in the prayer-meetings which are now held by different denominations of Christians, special prayer should be made for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

7. That all Christians should be invited to set apart individually *an hour, from seven till eight o'clock, on the Sabbath morning*, for private prayer and meditation upon this subject; their prayer may include the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon themselves, their family, their ministers, their congregations, their country – all ministers of true religion, all societies formed for doing good, the heathen and the Jews.

8. That all heads of families on *Monday evening* should intreat the same blessing in their family devotions.

9. That all Christians should read the Scriptures with a view to a more intimate acquaintance with this subject.

10. That they should mention it to their religious correspondents at home and abroad; each Christian using his utmost ability to make thus union for prayer as extensive as possible.

11. That religious periodical publications should be requested to aid the design; and that this paper, if approved, should be reprinted, and other tracts written and published.

12. That whilst Christians offer their prayers in simple reliance upon the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, they should accompany them with deep humiliation for their own sins, and for the sins of their country, and for the sins of the whole church; and aim in their conduct to walk in love with all Christians, to be watchful against grieving the Holy Spirit, and in all things to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour; remembering that it is written “The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that *Jesus was not yet glorified.*”

Several ministers, and many private Christians, have already begun to act conformably to these Hints; and it is hoped, as means are now using for drawing the attention of Christians in all parts of the world to this subject, that by the divine blessing, thus union for prayer will ere long, become general.

Such an union can not be contemplated without feelings of the most exalted pleasure and bright expectation. It is an union, in which no party spirit is raised, no principles sacrificed, no private feeling hurt, no doubtful question agitated, no funds required. It is an union of piety and love! Each Christian may associate in prayer with those of his own more immediate communion, at the same time he may unite in heart with all who are seeking the same object. The poor may assist as well as the rich; the invalid, unfitted for active exertion, may, in this way, aid in building the spiritual temple; whilst those who are at the most remote distance may meet together at the hour of prayer.

It was among the last petitions of our blessed Lord, that all who believe in his *might be one*.

Christian Reader! Let it be your desire to be thus united! Trust simply. Pray fervently. Expect largely. Watch soberly. Wait patiently.

Surely, I come quickly: even so come, Lord Jesus. Amen!<sup>36</sup>

## VOLUME SIX

2nd June, 1821 to 25th May, 1822

### The Great Revival of 1820 – 1821.

This revival constituted one of the peak periods during the Second Great Awakening. The revivals began with a number around Albany, New York, associated with the preaching of Asahel Nettleton, beginning with what happened when he went to Saratoga Springs to recover his health, and spreading to a number of other towns in that area, plus also to Union College near Schenectady.<sup>37</sup> These revivals were written about by Nettleton himself, which was unlike most of the others in which he was involved.

There were other revivals around this time in Eastern New York, for example, in Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties, including one in the town of Adams, in which Charles G. Finney was converted (in late 1821 or early 1822).<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Five. 26th May, 1821. pages. 841 – 844.

<sup>37</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 23rd and 30th June, 1821. pages 66 and 88.

<sup>38</sup> George W. Gale. *Autobiography*. Published privately. 1954. page 173 and following.

The General Assembly reported in their *Narrative*, that these revivals were “such numerous, extensive, and blessed outpourings of the Spirit of God during the past year, as the Assembly has never before had the opportunity to record.”

But the greatest impact seems to have been felt in Connecticut, where the General Association reported that 84 of their 207 churches had experienced revival at this time. Particularly affected were the districts around New Haven and Hartford. This did not include, of course, the blessings which came to the Baptists, Methodists and Episcopalians in that area, as well. Revivals also occurred in Berkshire county, Massachusetts. [Ed.]

### **Narrative of the State of Religion, (Presbyterian Church. U.S.A.) in part.**

The General Assembly have now under their care sixty-two Presbyteries; fifty of which have sent up annual reports of thirteen hundred churches within their respective bounds.....

The monthly concert of prayer is generally attended through the Presbyterian Church, and the other churches connected with the General Assembly; and it is found that this extensive union of prayer for the influences of the Holy Spirit upon the church of Christ, and the gospel of salvation, appears to be attended with the special blessing of God.

Additions have been made during the last year, to the churches from which reports have been received, of seven thousand one hundred and eighty six souls. To many of these the Lord manifested himself, not in “the great and strong wind, which rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks,” but in “the still, small voice.” They were the fruits of the ordinary operations of the Spirit in the word which, though not called revivals, afford a gradual accession to the church, of such as we trust shall be saved, and for which we owe to God our gratitude.

But the most of that number are the fruits of such numerous, extensive, and blessed outpourings of the Spirit of God during the past year, as the Assembly has never before had the opportunity to record. These have been experienced in the Presbyteries of Rochester, Ontario, Cayuga, Onondaga, Otsego, Oneida, Troy, Albany, Columbia, Hudson, New York, Jersey, Newton, Philadelphia, Grand River, Portage, Lexington and Lancaster, and in the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. (More details then follow from many of these Presbyteries.)<sup>39</sup>

### **Presbytery of Albany. (Parts of news about Nettleton's revivals.)**

Stillwater. The glad tidings of God's grace to the sinners of Pittstown Hollow, had a very awakening influence on God's people in Stillwater! where minister and people gave themselves to prayer, publicly, privately and secretly. A concert of secret prayer was held at sunrise on Sabbath mornings, and very generally observed. They cried unto the Lord, and he hearkened and heard them, and granted, in his own time their whole desire.

Results:- The monthly concert is well attended and the church offers its alms with its prayers. At every concert they make a collection for the benefit of foreign missions. They have a Bible Society, and have recently formed a Female Cent Society, consisting of nearly three hundred members, who charge themselves with the entire education of one poor, pious young man for the gospel ministry. The Bible Class and Sabbath Schools are well attended.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 9th June, 1821. page 24.

<sup>40</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 30th June, 1821. page 68. Also, Reuben Smith. *Recollections of Nettleton and the Great Revival of 1820*. Albany. E.H. Pease. 1848.

## **The State of Religion in the Congregational Churches in Connecticut**

The committee appointed to compile an abstract from the reports of the several district associations on the state of religion within the limits of the General Association of Connecticut, and the several ecclesiastical bodies connected with it, respectfully submit the following report.

There are in this state 207 Congregational churches and societies; a very large proportion of which are at present supplied with regular pastors. Upon 84 of these, God has, during the past year, poured out his spirit, and hopefully translated about 5,000 souls out of darkness into his marvellous light. This abundant shower of divine grace began to descent nearly a year ago. Some of the first drops of which fell upon the favoured city of New Haven. The cloud which was at first no bigger than a man's hand, shading and refreshing the souls of a few Christians mourning their own barrenness, and the widespread waste around them, soon expanded over the whole town reaching the neighbouring villages, overshadowed counties, and is now making its progress to the utmost borders, resting over us in majesty and mercy.

In attempting to discover the immediate causes of this remarkable awakening, in the special efforts of ministers and Christians, we are stopped and baffled. The members of the last General Association returned to their respective charges disheartened and fearful. Whilst we ponder upon the forsaken and drooping state of Zion, and at a loss what should be done to regain the presence of our grieved and injured Lord, suddenly he was in the midst of us. We are therefore to recount with adoring gratitude, the fruits of his sovereign and gracious presence rather than to boast of the efforts of human action.

Among the characteristics of this revival we deem it important to notice in the first place, its unity. It is the same in the country as in the city – in the district school as in the college, and among the aged and young, the moral and amiable, the vicious and violent, the speculative believer, the formal professor and the infidel. A description of one conversion or of one parish, is, with a few unimportant variations, a description of all. So entire is the unity and sameness of the operations of the Spirit in this awakening, that ministers from distant towns entered immediately into the work in places where they were strangers, without embarrassment to themselves [or to the awakened.]

Secondly, its power and rapidity. So powerful and overawing is the presence of God in this work, that no... opposition has appeared. Those who have not been directly influenced, have looked on with astonishment and awe. Many have beheld their nearest and dearest relations, their neighbours and companions pass from death to life with a peculiarly touching expression of sadness in their countenances because they were passed by.

Thirdly, its purity. We have not heard of disorder or violence. Notwithstanding the great diversity of age, natural temperament and education of the awakened and the frequent and crowded meetings, no tumult or outcry has occurred.

Fourthly, its continuance. The subjects of the work do not yet appear to decline from that warmth of gracious affection and energy of desire for larger measures of knowledge and grace which they exhibited at the time of their hopeful conversions.

Fifthly, its influence in elevating the Christian character both of ministers and churches. Ministers have preached plainly and boldly. Their faithfulness however, has been

without asperity, and their courage has been joined with meekness.

This awakening has given a new impulse to all the operations of Christian benevolence in our state. New hopes are prompting new undertakings and expectation is awake.

Yale College has also partaken of the special presence and mercy of the Great Redeemer. (one of many revivals in that institution.)

Finally, Brethren, the days of 1740 have returned with brighter lustre.<sup>41</sup>

### **Monthly Concert** (from the *Boston Recorder*.)

Mr. Willis:- The interest which has been excited, and the obvious good which has resulted from the publication of a little piece on the proper manner of conducting the monthly concert, in the *Recorder* for December 16th, 1820, prompts the belief that you will still be willing to consecrate a small portion of your paper to the furtherance of this great object. While such facilities are offered, and so much still remains to be done, a benevolent heart can hardly be quiet, without making further effort to render this meeting such as it was designed to be, and such as it ought to be. Without reflecting at all on the veracity of those associations of ministers, who, in their reports, state that this meeting is generally well attended, we may state as fact, that the monthly concert such as it was designed to be, is really known and attended but by comparatively few. Lamentable and inevitable as it may appear to the good people in your vicinity, it is certain this meeting is not generally much better attended, much more interesting, much more profitable than the common meetings on other days; and of course, not much different from them. This fact is ascertained by personal

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<sup>41</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 7th July, 1821. pages 90- 92.

observation, as well as by intelligence communicated. The writer has attended with many churches in different parts of the country. The meetings are, in general, all of nearly the same character; so that by giving a view of one, which he attended, a totally correct view will be given of all. At this there were four clergymen present. The house was filled as usual. Much was expected. But the exercises, though good, must have disappointed any one who expected to have united in supplicating the quickening influences of the Spirit on the church and on the world. Those who led in these exercises, appeared to feel what the Rev. Pastor of an adjoining parish, on the same evening, expressed, that the object of the meeting was to pray for a revival of religion first, and principally in that place, and then in other places.

In the exhortation given by one minister; in the statement concerning the religious feeling in the city, given by another; and in the prayers offered by the other two, there was nothing except the cold allusion to the Jews and the heathen, which is heard in every prayer, to lead our minds beyond the bounds of the city. While returning, though I could cheerfully concur in the general remark, we have had an excellent *conference*, I could not suppress the emotion of regret, that these Christian could not participate in the expansive, benevolent, holy joy which warmed the hearts of their brethren in Boston and vicinity, who at the same time were retiring from a *monthly concert*. Nor is the desire yet extinguished, that they and all the churches may be induced to know and improve the same means, that their meetings may be equally blessed. These means are simple, easily improved. Instead of praying, first and principally, for a revival in our own parish, and then in other parishes; at this season let the prosperity and extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, at once fill our souls: let success of the Bible and Missionary Societies, the means by which it is

extending, in turn be the burden of our prayer. The hearts of Christians will then be enlarged, ennobled. Instead of a didactic discourse, or practical exhortation, let the mighty revolutions take place in the moral world, let the enlargement of Zion, as it appears in the formation of every new benevolent society, in the establishment of every new mission station, and in every revival of religion, be portrayed in proper colours. The hearts of Christians will expand with benevolence, will burn. And instead of retiring as from a conference, let us first like Cornelius, afford a passport to our supplications, that ours also may be the blessed assurance, “thy prayers and thins alms are come up for a memorial before God.” Then, too, will the hearts of Christians revive; and they will hope and feel that the kingdom of the Lord is indeed coming.<sup>42</sup>

### **State of Religion in Massachusetts.**

(Part only of the Extract of the Narrative presented to the General Association of Massachusetts.)

On former occasions it has been our delightful task to record the mercy of the Most High, in numerous accessions to our churches and multitudes of souls redeemed from the bondage of sin, and brought home to God through faith in the Saviour.... Amidst all our discouragements, we find not a little, in the situation of our churches, and the tokens of divine favour to Massachusetts, to strengthen our confidence in the protecting care, and promised grace of Him, before whom the prayers and the alms of his children, ascend, as a sweet and perpetual memorial.

The monthly concert of prayer is generally observed within our limits, and in many instances, in all parts of the

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<sup>42</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 1st September, 1821. pages 222-223.

State, is accompanied with a charitable collection: Sabbath Schools are common, and extending more widely their salutary influence; the benevolent objects of the day receive increasing patronage; and the profits of merchandize, of mechanical skill and of female industry, are consecrated to the cause of Zion – to the education of pious youth for the ministry, the instruction of the ignorant, and the salvation of the world.<sup>43</sup>

**North Carolina.** Narrative of the State of Religion within the Bounds of the [Presbyterian] Synod of North Carolina. (part).

The monthly concert for prayer has been generally established, and is well attended. It is pleasing to discover so general a disposition to encourage this meeting; to see, throughout our churches, so great an anxiety to unite with the thousands of Israel on the same evening, in praying for the prosperity of the redeemer's kingdom. May the united supplications of God's children, bring down upon his Zion the blessings which they desire.<sup>44</sup>

### **Sandwich Islands.**

At the Monthly Concert, in Park Street Church, Boston, it was stated that a letter had recently been received from Mr. Bingham, addressed to Dr. Worcester, dated Woahoo [Oahu], July 6. King Tamoree continues very friendly to the mission; he is very desirous that some of the Missionaries should visit the Society Islands, and open a correspondence with King Pomare. He offers to fit out a brig for that purpose – and the Missionaries think that important benefits would result....<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 22nd September, 1821. pages 267 – 268.

<sup>44</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 27th October, 1821. page 344.

<sup>45</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 16th February, 1822. page 604.

## Poetry.

### The Concert of Prayer.

“Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant.”

Say, what are those columns of smoke which arise,  
From the wilderness upward they move,  
Majestic and grand, how they darken the skies,  
Which unfold to receive them above.

These pillars of smoke thus ascending above,  
Shedding fragrant perfume through the air,  
Are the off'rings of Faith, and the incense of Love  
From the Church at her Concerts for Prayer.

From the four winds of heaven these odours ascend,  
Though between them the wide waters roll –  
In the vials of heaven, all happily blend,  
And are answered with peace to the soul.

But numbers alas! who profess to believe,  
Refuse by their presence to share  
In the blessings and comforts that Christians receive  
At the grand monthly Concert for Prayer.

The foregoing lines remind us of an observation of a pious old Indian woman, who was long in the habit of going to a populous town to market, early in the morning. When she got to the top of the hill, in view of the town, she said it always made her think of the prayer of Christians. “I see one smoke come up out of this chimney, and another smoke out of that:

and when they get up a little ways, they all mix together and make one great cloud.”<sup>46</sup>

### **Presbytery of New Castle.**

(Report to the General Assembly.) The monthly concert of prayer is observed in many congregations: but in general does not attract that share of attention which its importance demands. A few congregations, however, pay it solemn attention, and attest the sincerity of their prayers by simultaneous alms.

But the most agreeable intelligence they received was the outpouring of the Divine Spirit on some of their congregations. In the congregation of Centre an uncommon spirit of prayer prevails and a pleasing accession was last year made to the communion of the church. While in some other congregations not an individual layman can be found to lead in public prayer, the pastor here finds as many as fifteen who are willing to assist him in leading the addresses of Christians at a throne of grace.... (several others also)<sup>47</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 23rd March, 1822. page 688.

<sup>47</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 27th April, 1822. pages 759 – 760.

**VOLUME SEVEN**  
**1st June, 1822 to 24th May, 1823**

**State of Religion within the Bounds of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.**

[After discussing many aspects of the ministerial shortage in many parts of the USA:- the Report continues:-]

It is truly gratifying to learn, that a very earnest desire is felt, and a laudable zeal shown, to obtain the Gospel ministry in these destitute parts of our land. Many of the followers of Jesus offer up to him their fervent prayers, that he would send among them faithful labourers: and Sabbath day schools, and Missionary, and Education Societies, have been in some places established. In some instances, the destitute congregations persevere in maintaining public worship; and there is an increasing attention to the means of grace. We have heard, too, with pleasure, that in many of these destitute places of our land, ministers have frequently gone forth, two or three at a time, and preached, and visited, and God has greatly blessed their labours.

But, we turn to contemplate more pleasant subjects. It cannot but be gratifying to the friends of the Redeemer's kingdom, to learn, that with few exceptions, the statements which we have received from the different Presbyteries represent the interest of religion to be on the increase.

Infidelity is scarcely anywhere openly professed. The churches are generally walking in peace. There is generally an increased attention to the public ordinances of worship; and many new congregations have been organized, and new churches erected throughout the country. Several of these have been built in regions, where but a short time since was nothing but a waste wilderness uninhabited by civilized man.

The monthly concert of prayer is generally observed. Bible classes and catechetical instruction of youth, are still continued with the most beneficial effects. Baptized children with their parents, have in many instances been convened, and, reminded of the solemn obligations imposed upon them, by the baptismal covenant. Praying Societies are very generally established. Sabbath day schools are very numerous and flourishing, and thousands of youth who probably would otherwise have grown up ignorant and vicious, have by means of these institutions been instructed, and fitted to make useful members of society.

But we have not only to rejoice in the general increase of the interest of religion. There are also special reasons for thankfulness. On many of our congregations God has been pleased to pour out his Spirit, and to grant them times of revival and refreshing. [Here followed a VERY LONG LIST.]<sup>48</sup>

### **General Association of Massachusetts.**

It may be remarked in general, respecting the Associations within our bounds, that the monthly concert is attended and collections taken up; - Sabbath schools are instituted and weekly conferences held; - and the various charitable objects receive increasing patronage, from contributions, and from the avails of female industry, and of missionary fields. The Theological Institution at Andover, is in a very prosperous condition, and contains 132 students. May it continue to enjoy the smiles of heaven.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Seven. 8th and 15th June, 1822. pages 25 and 40.

<sup>49</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Seven. 28th September, 1822. page 278.

## **Rev. Enoch Pond's New Book. 1824.**

On many occasions, comments had been made of possible ways in which the Monthly Concert of Prayer could be made more interesting, and a number of suggestions had appeared about how this could be done. This was not only a problem for the Monthly Concert meetings, but also for many other prayer meetings which were held, in churches and in private homes. For example, at some Monthly Concert meetings, nobody could produce any recent news about missionary activities, or had news about a revival to report. Also, there were many prayer meetings run by groups of ladies in the church, where a minister was not expected to be available or present.

The Rev. Enoch Pond made a decisive step to help overcome this problem. He published a book of modest-sized missionary addresses, specially designed to be read at a prayer meeting, and in particular at Monthly Concert prayer meetings.<sup>50</sup>

The book contained twenty lectures. The titles of the lectures included several on the missionary work of Saint Paul, several were on aspects of prayer, and on the cruelty practiced in aspects of heathen culture. One was on the fact that the spiritual health of churches on the home front is important for mission work overseas. One was on "The way to be rich is to be liberal," while another was on the opposite side – "Idolatry among Christians." One was on the mission to the Jews, as viewed at that time. Several were on the future eternal state, emphasising that the heathen needed to hear the Gospel in order to believe. This book was widely used and appreciated.

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<sup>50</sup> Enoch Pond. *Short Missionary Discourses, or Monthly Concert Lectures*. Worcester. Dorr & Howland. 1824.

Mr. Pond was the Congregational minister of the church in the village of Ward, Massachusetts.

## **VOLUME EIGHT**

### **7th June, 1823 to 29th May, 1824.**

#### **The Number of Revivals Reported in a Poorer Year Period.**

We copy from the *Boston Recorder* the following statement respecting revivals from Sept. 1st, 1822 to Sept. 1st, 1823.

“Before making the statement proposed, it will be useful to make one general remark, which is calculated to confirm the authenticity of the statement. In collecting the intelligence there has been almost a complete coincidence between the current accounts, published in Religious Newspapers, and those official documents, which were not published until some months later. This undesigned coincidence must be regarded as strong confirmation of the correctness of the whole.

In the *Congregational and Presbyterian Churches*, the number of revivals reported, from 1st Sept, 1822, to 1st Sept. 1823, was, in the different States as follows: In Maine, 5; in New Hampshire, 9; in Vermont, 16; in Massachusetts, 36; in Rhode Island, 1; in Connecticut, 19; in New York, 45; in New Jersey, 20; in Pennsylvania, 30; in Delaware, 10; in Maryland, 4; in Virginia, 22; in North Carolina, 2; in South Carolina, 3; in Georgia, 10; in Kentucky, 1; in Tennessee, 1; in Louisiana, 1; in Ohio, 2; Total, 237.

In the *Baptist Church*, the number of revivals reported was as follows:- in Maine, 5; in New Hampshire, 3; in Massachusetts, 11; in Rhode Island, 3; in Connecticut, 5; in

New York, 10; in Virginia, 6; in North Carolina, 32; in South Carolina, 5; in Georgia, 7; in Kentucky, 14; in Ohio, 2; in Illinois, 3; Total, 107. (sic.)

In the *Methodist Church*, - in new Hampshire, 4; in Vermont, 5; in Massachusetts, 8; in New York, 8; in Virginia, 20; in South Carolina, 2; in Georgia, 3; in Tennessee, 2; in the District of Columbia, 1; Total 55. (sic.)

In the *Dutch Reformed Church* – in New Jersey, 8.

The whole number of revivals, as given in the *Recorder*, is 407. The *Carlisle Miscellany*, in an article published before the statement in the *Recorder*, considered the number of revivals, the last year, as about 400, and the number of hopeful conversions as about twenty-seven thousand.<sup>51</sup>

## VOLUME NINE

### 5th June, 1824 to 28th May, 1825

#### Monthly Concert.

Monday, January 5.- This evening we are again called to the exercise of prayer in the Monthly Concert. The blessings needed by this heathen tribe are sufficient to awaken all the powers within us to cry to God. But this people are as the drop of the bucket compared with the millions who are sitting in darkness. We would bless God for the encouragement he has given us to “cry aloud and spare not, and give him no rest.”

On the two intervening Sabbaths Mr. Chapman preached to the Indians in their native tongue, at their encampment near the mission house.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eight. 7th February, 1824. pages 574 – 575. [The arithmetical problem is in the original.]

<sup>52</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 3rd July, 1824. page 65.

## **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

At the United Monthly Concert at Boston, on Monday evening, the 5th inst., Mr. Evarts, having just returned from his journey, gave a very interesting account of the state of religion and civilization among the Indians on our south-western borders. During his absence, he has visited all the stations among the Cherokees, and most of those amongst the Choctaws. He states that among the former especially, the progress of true religion had surpassed the most sanguine expectations of the friends of missions;- that among the Indians at Brainerd, Haweis, High Tower, Carmel, Willistown and Creek Path, there have recently been cases, more or less numerous, of serious inquiry, as well as hopeful conversion;- and that even those who cannot be ranked in either of these classes, seem in general to be desirous of obtaining additional religious information. One man is mentioned as having come nineteen miles to ascertain which was the Sabbath; for he and his friends, he said, had determined to keep it.

*David Brown.*- It was expected that this interesting youth would have gone in company with Mr. Evarts as far as the Cherokee Nation; but on arriving at Washington, it was thought expedient for him to remain there for a few weeks on account of business of interest to his Nation. He then set out for the Arkansaw, where his father now resides. At the last accounts from him, he was passing down the Ohio.

*Choctaws.*- The Choctaws are much behind the Cherokees both in point of civilization and religious instruction. There have, however, been several instances of conversion among them, and they are beginning to make advances in

civilization. The same means, will doubtless affect the same result among them, as among the Cherokees.<sup>53</sup>

### **Sabbath School Concert.**

We understand the American Sabbath School Union has set apart the second Monday evening in each month, as the time for a general concert of prayer for a blessing on Sabbath Schools.

Nothing we believe has tended to promote the great benevolent objects in which Christians are engaged at the present day, more than the universal observance of the Monthly Concert of Prayer. It has given a new spring to Christian exertion, and called down blessings upon their efforts. It has increased the faith of Christians, and taught to show their faith by their works. The information imparted at these meetings, and the prayers which are offered, are usually confined to the cause of Missions, the distribution of the Bible, and the prosperity of religion generally, while Sabbath Schools have been overlooked as a secondary object. "These ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone." The circulation of the Bible, the cause of Missions, the distribution of Tracts, and Sabbath Schools, are all aiming at the same great object, and when united form a mighty engine, which the powers of darkness cannot resist. If either of these institutions has a preference, it must in our opinion be given to Sabbath Schools. It claims priority on account of the numbers engaged. There are in this country and in Great Britain more than a hundred thousand Sabbath School Teachers, who are engaged as missionaries in the regular instruction of more than ten hundred thousand children. Without their aid the Bible would be of little use to thousands who are there taught to read. In

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<sup>53</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 17th July, 1824. page 109.

these Schools the foundation is laid for thousands of missionaries who will go to carry the Bible and proclaim salvation to a perishing world. Then let parents and children unite with Sabbath School Teachers in the monthly concert for prayer. Implore a blessing on their labours of love. Invoke the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Sabbath Schools, and the world will soon be converted.<sup>54</sup>

### **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

**Bombay.**- A letter was read from the missionaries at this station, from which we learn that, in the publication of the Scriptures, they have received timely aid from the Bombay Auxiliary Bible Society. New Editions of several portions of Scriptures were needed, and some of them had been commenced. Genesis was half completed, in an edition of 2,000 copies.

Mr. Hall, under date of May 29, writes, that, having put their School Report into circulation, a friend, high in the Company's service, and altogether unsolicited, appended to it a subscription paper which was shortly returned with an amount of 1700 rupees subscribed. Governor Elphinstone headed the list, with a donation of 300 rupees [130 dollars]. The missionaries pursued the suggestion to some extent, and increased the subscription to 3000 rupees, or \$1300. In consequence of this assistance, it was determined, as soon as practicable, to establish eight or ten schools, in addition to the twenty-six already organised.

**Ceylon.**- But the most animating intelligence which we have at present – the most animating we may say, which has ever been transmitted from the East - is communicated in a letter from Mr. Garrett at Bombay, who had just received letters

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<sup>54</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 16th October, 1824. page 312.

from Jaffna, in the island of Ceylon. He writes that *all the stations there have been favoured with the merciful visitations of the Holy Spirit and that SIXTY OR SEVENTY NATIVES HAVE RECENTLY GIVEN EVIDENCE OF A SAVING INTEREST IN THE MERITS OF THE REDEEMER. Others are inquiring what they shall do to be saved.*

*Cherokee Mission.*- Mr. Finney, missionary at Dwight, speaks of the schools at that station as being in a high degree prosperous. He says, he never saw, at any place, in any country, more interesting groups of children than are assembled there. They are manly – docile – quick of apprehension, - mild – and in every respect lovely. Of eighty scholars, not more than six are unable to read in the New Testament. Several of them are pursuing study of English Grammar, Arithmetic and Geography. – On the first Sunday in May, two Cherokee women were baptised and admitted to the Church. Three others sustain a hope, and others still are anxious. A recent letter from Mr. Butrick, dated at Carmel, Cherokee Nation, remarks that, with few exceptions the Cherokees who were admitted to the church at the several missionary stations, during the late revivals, live like humble and devoted Christians.

*Boston Telegraph.*<sup>55</sup>

### **Sabbath School Concert. (New York.)**

From the *American Sunday School Magazine*.

We are happy to learn that the Sabbath School Concert was observed in many places on the second Monday of last month. We hope that it will be regarded by the teachers and friends of Sunday schools generally throughout the United States, satisfied that no other meeting can be more important, or have a higher claim on their attention; besides, we can conceive

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<sup>55</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 16th October, 1824. page 316.

of none which will be more deeply interesting, if the exercises are conducted in a proper manner. In this city the meeting was held in the Session Room in Cherry Street, and although the evening was unpleasant, there were upwards of 400 present. Appropriate hymns were sung, several teachers were engaged in prayer, one addressing the meeting, and another stated several facts, some of which he read from the October number of the *Sunday School Teachers' Magazine*, published in New York.

He remarked that, of all the evangelical ministers in Great Britain, two-thirds had become pious in Sunday schools, and that "nineteen-twentieths of the missionaries who have gone forth from thence, have been such whose piety had been ripened in the labours of the Sunday schools, or those there taught whose early acquaintances with the Scriptures had been impressed upon their infant minds, with that winning patience and love, which in maturer years it had been the joy of their souls to cultivate and practice."

In the city of New York, more than one thousand teachers and learners have been received into the church in the course of seven years. In December, 1821, a report of the five schools of St. George's Church stated that one hundred teachers and learners had been added to the church in the three preceding years. The same report remarks: "But the most triumphant record of Sunday school annals is the heart-cheering fact that in 53 schools, no less than 501 teachers and learners have been brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus; made a public profession of their faith, and been added to the churches – a success that will bear comparison with the most successful efforts of any missionary labours yet recorded."

The number of schools at that time was 87, containing 1004 teachers, and 7185 scholars, only the above 53 had any records of these interesting facts: from these data we may venture to assert, that deducting two-thirds from the total of

teachers (being the usual average of those who are pious,) one fifth of the whole has been received into the bosom of the church, or in the ratio of two out of every class for the short period of five years. This subject is vast – it is worthy of investigation; it invites the solemn, the earnest inquiry of all Christians, of every *minister of the gospel*. If these facts are so, let those who ‘love the Lord Jesus in sincerity,’ appeal to their own hearts, and say, *what shall be done for Sunday Schools?*

“It should be remembered, that some of the most devoted and diligent missionaries of our day have kindled their pure zeal in a Sunday school, and, amidst its salutary discipline, have been ripened for ‘labours oft, for perils, for weariness, and watchings, with hunger, thirst, and fastings,’ the assured portion of the faithful missionary.”

You have all heard (said he) of the indefatigable and pious Dr. Morrison, the celebrated missionary to China. About twenty years ago he went forth from the Sunday school to convey the gospel to the Pagans of China; and in that short time has translated the whole Book of God into that difficult language, besides preparing a complete Dictionary of the Chinese and English languages, thus opening the way for the diffusion of Chinese literature and the easy qualification of future missionaries; and Morrison asserts that the Sunday school prepared him for those useful labours which occupied him in the cause of Zion.

By means of Sunday schools, “not only teachers and learners are brought into the family of the faithful, but the various influence, through the personal intercourse at the homes of the children by pious teachers, has a most salutary effect on the parents, who are by such means influenced to attend the house of God; to read the Scriptures, and to have every kind of pious reading put into their hands from Sunday school and tract societies. A family, a whole neighbourhood, have by these

been added as pious members to the church. – Abundant instances of such successful; influence, derived from Sunday schools, are to be found in their “short and simple annals.”

A superintendent of one of the schools in New York reports that: “24 of the scholars and 25 teachers have been added to the church to which it is attached. Of another school it is stated that 30 (the whole number of learners) have become pious, and are now connected with the church. In a revival that took place in 1822, the greater part of the subjects of it were from the Sunday schools. In one instance 98 out of 100, and in another, 27 out of 35, of the candidates for communion were, or had been, Sunday scholars.”

In reference to the success of the National Institution, the seat of which, by common consent, has been fixed in this city, he remarked that, since the last meeting, he had seen it stated in the papers that the Male Sunday School Society of New York, having 57 schools, had become auxiliary to the American Sunday School Union; that many schools embraced in the Oneida County Union, New York; and also the New Hampshire State Sunday School Union, had become auxiliary to the General Union; and he had heard that measures had been taken to organise *State Unions* in the cases of Connecticut and Massachusetts. - Facts like these, which show that prosperity attends every department of the system, are calculated to arouse the sleeping energies of the teachers and friends of Sunday Schools throughout our country, and to offer, in addition to the blessed promises of Scripture, the highest encouragement to labour, and pray for the prosperity of these Institutions.

The object of the Sabbath School Monthly Concert of Prayer is one of very great importance, and we hope that everyone who desires the success of this cause will set apart the second Monday evening of each month as a season for special

prayer for the influences of the Holy Spirit on Sunday schools throughout the world.<sup>56</sup>

### **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

The meetings of this evening, says the *Telegraph*, was particularly interesting, as being the sixth anniversary of the Monthly Concert in the Park Street Church. During all this period, a high degree of interest in the cause of missions has been evinced, both by prompt attendance and liberal contributions. A particular statement was made this evening of the collections from November, 1818, to the present day, by which it appeared that there has been a somewhat unusual regularity of progress in attentions to missionary concerns, and of perseverance in the same method of affording pecuniary aid. The collections of the different years were as follows:-

First year.	\$522.39.	Monthly average.	\$44.36
Second year.	\$758.91.	Monthly average.	\$63.87.
Third year.	\$928.91.		\$77.41.
Fourth year.	\$840.02.		\$70.00.
Fifth year.	\$750.69.		\$62.55.
Sixth year.	\$798.02.		\$58.83.

The united amount of the above is \$4,514; the average annual amount, \$754.49; the average monthly amount is \$88.70. In the course of the second and third years, there were extraordinary occasions, which raised the contributions higher than they otherwise would have been. Making allowance for this fact, the increase was gradual to the fourth year.

The Secretary of the Board mentioned the two following reasons why this meeting has been so long and so well attended:

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<sup>56</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 6th November, 1824. pages 375 – 376.

*First, That a conscientious regard to the subject is cherished in the minds of many individuals; and secondly, A uniform system of giving.* Numbers, after duly considering their circumstances and the claims of other benevolent objects, have come to a determination how much it is their duty to give, and give accordingly. In more than one instance, when persons have been prevented from giving by necessary absence, they have afterwards made up the payment which they considered as having been due. It can scarcely be doubted, that if a system of giving according to circumstances) were generally adopted, the funds of benevolent Societies would be greatly increased, while, at the same time, the donors themselves would feel less inconvenience in parting with their charity.

The Rev. Mr. Wisner, of this city, and the Rev. Mr. Edwards, of Andover, subsequently addressed the meeting in support of these principles, and made a solemn and powerful appeal to Christians in behalf of the missionary cause. The exercises of the evening were calculated, unless we greatly mistake, to produce a permanent effect.

It is to be understood, that the net amount of these collections is stated, after paying the expenses of lights, fuel and attendance.

*(Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.)*<sup>57</sup>

### **New Monthly Concert.**

We are glad to notice that the second Monday in each month, as recommended by the Sabbath Sunday School Union for a Concert of Prayer, is religiously observed in many places. We hope it will become universal. The meeting in the city, this

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<sup>57</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 6th November, 1824. pages 376 – 377.

present week, was well attended and peculiarly solemn. We cannot believe that these meetings will in any degree lessen the interest in the general Monthly Concert, - Nay, we believe it will have a tendency to increase in interest and in numbers. – Those who are piously engaged in training up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, feel the importance of prayer for a blessing on their labours – and as the promise that those who water others shall themselves be watered, is returned into their own homes, their hearts will be expanded with true benevolence, and they will pray more frequently and with more fervency for the success of missions, and the universal spread of the gospel. Every Sunday School Teacher is a missionary, and they cannot pray for the success of their cause without praying for the cause of missions.

We have no doubt that the Sunday School Union will be adopted throughout our land, and that the observance of the Monthly Concert of Prayer will be co-extensive. This will give a new impulse to Sabbath Schools. In these nurseries of piety, thousands and tens of thousands will be added to the church of Christ, and join the little army with banners in praying for the prosperity of Zion.<sup>58</sup>

### **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

A letter from Mr. David Brown to the Corresponding Secretary, gives an affecting account of his reception among his relatives and friends, after an absence of about four years in New England. The *Journal* recently received from the missionaries at Dwight, contains several notices of this young gentleman, which show that he is regarded by his nation with sentiments of cordiality and esteem; that his conduct among them is judicious and devout; and that his influence, even on

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<sup>58</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 18th December, 1824. page 456.

their political concerns, is great and salutary. He has been chosen secretary to both branches of the Cherokee government, beyond the Mississippi. – The Monthly Concert at Dwight is well attended according to the last accounts, men and women attended from places five miles distant, for whom it was necessary to return the same evening. How does this compare with the Monthly Concert among ourselves?

A letter from Mr. Fisk, dated Jerusalem, Nov. 22, 1823, gives several anecdotes illustrative of the character of the inhabitants, and mentions a learned Greek, whose labours are of great service to the cause, having already translated into the Arabic several Tracts and a considerable portion of the New Testament. He hoped to complete it the next summer. The letter gives a particular history of facts relative to the arrests of Messrs Fisk and Bird by the Turkish government, which has been noticed in former papers. This letter, which we understand is to be published, will illustrate the care which the Saviour takes of his cause, as well as strengthen the church's confidence in the ability and devotedness of her missionaries.

*Boston. Telegraph.*<sup>59</sup>

### **Sunday School Concert.**

The Monthly Concert of Sunday School Teachers was held in this city on Monday evening, with increasing interest. The meeting was fully attended and the prayers which were offered, and the information communicated, were calculated to encourage and animate those who are engaged in this heavenly enterprise. The answers to several questions which had been given to children of the School, were communicated to the meeting, which discovered uncommon knowledge of the scriptures. Children of eight, ten and eleven years of age, being

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid. page 458.

required to exhibit proofs of the authenticity of the Scriptures; of the goodness and power of God, and of the Divine character of the Saviour, discovered a knowledge of the Bible, that surprised those who had been long in the School of Christ – and would have confounded an infidel, if any had been present, or have opened the eyes of a blind Socinian, that he might have seen the true character of Christ.

Much interest was added to the meeting by the unexpected arrival of the Rev. Mr. Osgood, who has been engaged for several years in establishing Sunday Schools and Bible Classes, and libraries in our new settlements, and in Canada, and who is now on his way to England, for the purpose of procuring funds and books to accomplish his benevolent designs. Mr. Osgood stated that there were now four Sabbath School Unions in Canada. That about 600 pounds were contributed and expended the last year. That the Chief Justice of the Province, was a warm patron of Sunday Schools, and had recommended the subject to the Grand Jury, as worthy of their patronage. He also gave an account of Revivals of Religion at Lockport, Sackett's Harbour, and several other places near the Lakes – showing that the Lord is extending the borders of Zion, and strengthening her stakes.<sup>60</sup>

### **Monthly Concert.**

*Palestine Mission.*- The intelligence from Palestine communicated last Sunday evening, is apparently unfavourable;- yet no one who has noticed the dealings of Providence towards the missionaries of other times and places, and even towards the Palestine missionaries themselves will deny that the event may and probably will, prove to the furtherance of the gospel. Even – “the blood of the martyrs is

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<sup>60</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 19th March, 1825. page 664.

the seed of the church.” Three letters of similar import were read at the Concert, which had been transmitted from Rome by authority of the “holy see,” to the Pope’s Vicar on Mount Lebanon, to the Maronite Patriarch, and to the Vicar of Syria and Palestine respectively, complaining in very strong language, of the conduct of certain Catholics, who had allowed the Rev. Lewis Way, an English missionary, to rent an old Catholic college at Antoura, for the more effectual accomplishment of the objects of his mission. They represented that the possession of this building would give the “banditti” [missionaries] great advantage in distributing their “erroneous” copies of the Scriptures; and that it was of the utmost importance to the Catholic church should be remedied. Whether, or not, the College has been given up in consequence of these representations, it is not yet known:- probably it has been. This however is not of much consequence, compared with the inference to be deduced from the alarm felt by the Catholics;- proving beyond a doubt, that in their opinion, the mission threatens to be successful. Satan is disturbed, only when his empire is in danger. Another circumstance apparently unfavourable, is the issuing of the Turkish Firman, published in our last, which entirely prohibits the circulation of the Bible throughout the Ottoman Empire. This is a ground never before taken, even by the Grand Signior; for while Mussulmans have been forbidden to read the sacred volume, the same prohibitions has not been extended to Christians. But now, through the influence of the Catholics no doubt, the case is changed; at least in theory. At Aleppo, when the Firman was first promulgated, those who had Bibles were threatened with hanging, if they did not give them up; yet not one Bible, so far as is known, was given up. This shows with what apathy the subject is regarded by those most interested; and, on the whole, it is to be hoped that the evil consequences of the Firman will not be great.

*Sandwich Islands.*- The accounts from these islands are, as usual, encouraging. At Mr. Thurston's meeting in Kiruah, near the western extremity of Owyhee, two meetings are uniformly held on the Sabbath, with a congregation of 600 to 1000 individuals. The house is 60 feet long by 30 broad; and is superior to any other building of the kind on the island. The Governor, who resides at Kiruah, always attends, and has given laws for a due observance of the Sabbath. Four cases of special attachment to the cause of religion, were particularly related; - one of which respected the late Queen Keopoolani. A narrative of her conversion and death, we understand, is to be published by itself; and will doubtless make a very interesting Tract. When she lay upon the bed of death, she warned those standing around her, to prepare for that solemn hour. And feeling assured that she was entitled to such an ordinance, she expressed a strong desire to "have water sprinkled on her in the name of God." Accordingly the ordinance was solemnly administered by the Rev. Mr. Ellis.

*The Waldenses.*- A letter was read, from the Rev. Sereno E. Dwight, dated at Rome, in which he gives some account of this interesting people: - the only people that preserved uncorrupt the doctrines of Christ and his Apostles, through the darkness of the Middle Ages. They inhabit three deep valleys quite at the north part of Italy, and open only to the south. Population nearly 20,000, and chiefly resident in 13 villages. They are a very plain, industrious, and pious people; bearing, as Mr. Dwight imagines, a very strong resemblance, in their character and manners, to the fathers of New England. In consequence of their religion, they are subject to many and great privations; can be neither physicians nor lawyers; are obliged to pay enormous taxes, and suffer various other hardships; - yet, for all this, apostacies to the Catholic religion are almost unknown. Mr. Dwight, having letters of

introduction to the Rev. Mr. Bert, a godly minister among them, was received with the greatest cordiality. He attended a little meeting in company with Mr. Bert, and was highly pleased with the plainness, sincerity and solemnity which seemed to prevail. Although in a manner shut out from the world, Mr. Bert has a library of 7 to 800 volumes; and is a man of general intelligence, as well as undoubted piety.

In answer to an inquiry of his guest, Mr. Bert remarked that THE WALDENSES HAD ALWAYS BAPTIZED THEIR INFANTS, AND ALWAYS DONE IT BY AFFUSION.

*Recorder and Telegraph.*<sup>61</sup>

### **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

The monthly meeting for prayer at Park Street church is usually well attended, and its exercises made interesting to all who feel an interest in the missionary cause; but, on Monday evening last, the house was filled to overflowing, and the exercises were rendered doubly attractive by the presence of the Rev. Mr. Ellis, an English Missionary, who has recently arrived in America, and who spent six years among the natives of the Society Islands, and nearly two years at the Sandwich Islands.

Deferring until a future evening an account of the Sandwich Islands, Mr. Ellis, in an address of considerable length, (though far from being wearisome or tedious,) exhibited in deep-drawn colours a picture of the former deplorable and brutal conditions of the inhabitants of the Society Islands in the South Pacific ocean. He next adverted to the great and happy change which within a few years had been wrought in their situation, apparent to every superficial observer who visits their

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<sup>61</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 19th March, 1825. pages 669 – 670.

shores – and lastly detailed the means by which the moral darkness, that for centuries hung over them, had been dispelled.

After noticing briefly the situation, extent and population of the Islands in question, he carries back his silent and attentive auditory to the days when these isles of the sea were scarcely known to a civilised world: when nature appeared in all her heathen and degraded wildness, and when the light of Christianity had not reflected a single ray from either continent to illuminate these gloomy and lonesome shores. “Domestic happiness,” says he, “that solace of all our care, of all our grief,” not only did not exist among them, but their own native language, sufficiently copious it would seem for other purposes, did not afford even a name. The female sex, “that last best gift of heaven to man,” were sunk in the lowest state of degradation. Compelled to perform a great share of the labour and drudgery, they were not permitted to eat from, or even touch the dish used by the other sex. Intoxication was a characteristic of the natives generally – and, before they were discovered or visited by Europeans, they made use of a fruit growing spontaneously in the islands, to intoxicate and benumb their faculties. Theft, instead of being avoided and despised, was universally practiced and considered a virtue. Sorcery prevailed to an extensive and almost incredible degree – so much so, that they believed those persons, who were not killed in battle or by poison, or were not sacrificed, were sent from the world by the incantations of the sorcerer. A want of natural affection extensively prevailed among them – more than two-thirds of the infants brought into existence were destroyed, either by being strangled, drowned, or buried alive. Nor were the children less cruel towards their parents, for they tormented and murdered them under very aggravating circumstances. The government of these islands was indeed tyrannical, and, if possible, even worse than savage – for the slightest offence the king or chief

despatched his subjects with club or spear – and when it better suited his heathenish purposes, they were ordered to be buried alive in an erect position, with their heads just above the surface of the ground, and there left to linger out a painful and miserable existence – or, they were often decapitated, or put in an old canoe, bound hand and foot, and sunk to the depths of the sea. Like thousands and millions of the human family in other places, they worshipped idols of wood and stone, the works of men’s hands – they offered their children in sacrifice to these deities, and even gave them into the mouths of sharks – which they supposed to be gods – their children were also thrown into burning volcanoes to appease the wrath of the gods, and to prevent a like eruption. If they built places of worship or temples for their gods, every pillar and post must be bottomed on a human body, who they slew wherever they could lay their hands upon a fellow being. Their wars on the water were conducted in canoes, fastened together, and when at a distance, by stones and slings, but when near their enemies, by clubs and spears and javelins. Their wars by land were distinguished by more barbarous and horrid cruelties – not an individual of a vanquished foe was spared – mother and children, the aged and infirm, were alike subject to their ferocity – whole villages, with all they contained, were burnt to the ground. The preceding is but a bird’s eye view of the highly interesting, though melancholy tale, of their former deplorable condition, as related by the reverend speaker; but, thanks to the Author of all Good, their situation was now changed, the bright side of the picture was yet to be presented. They now enjoyed, as heretofore, the same healthy climate, the same fertile soil, and the same picturesque and romantic scenery; but instead of the lowly and miserable hut, they now possessed comfortable and substantial cottages with roofs well thatched, and walls well plastered with lime made from coral

which they plunged into the sea to obtain. Every station now contains two or three school houses and a meeting-house, which is usually large, often from sixty to a hundred feet in length. Men and women now appear decently and properly clad; industry generally prevails; tyranny is abolished; the lives of children are spared; families live together in the most perfect happiness; sick relatives and friends are visited and assisted, and charitable societies are formed for this purpose; sorcery and poisoning exist only in memory; sobriety now bears more universal rule than intoxication once did; their government is established on Christian principles; courts of justice and trials by jury are now in successful operation; the power of the king is limited, and wars are almost unknown; idolatry is totally abolished; the stones which once formed their heathen temples are now used to build churches, consecrated to the living God.

There are now about twelve thousand persons able to read understandingly – three thousand children are under instruction, and all the books used in schools are derived from the Scriptures. Twenty-eight houses of worship are already built, and are visited by large congregations. Secret prayer is performed by all, and family worship is instituted, and sacredly observed. Prayer meetings and Sabbath schools are formed and universally encouraged; eight thousand persons have been baptised; eleven churches formed, containing in all two thousand members; and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is administered on the first Sunday of every month. Several of the adjacent islands have been visited by the natives of the Society Islands, and an apparent moral change has marked their course.

These surprising and powerful changes, Mr. Ellis remarked, were not affected by an invading army, by sorcery, or terror, or by bribery; but by the simple means of preaching Christ, the hope of sinners. In March, 1797, the first mission was established; but by 1807, a civil war broke out among the

chiefs, and all the missionaries, save two, were compelled to flee. In 1811, however, they returned and resumed their labours; and in July, 1812, the first king was baptised. From this time their exertions began to be abundantly blessed; forty-seven the same year were baptised, and their numbers and their zeal, and their sources of happiness have continued to increase to the present time, as before mentioned. *Zion's Herald*.<sup>62</sup>

## VOLUME TEN

### 4th June, 1825 to 27th May, 1826

#### **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

The Monthly Concert was observed in Park Street Church on Monday evening last by a large audience. The secretary of the Board of Missions, who has lately returned from the South, took a view of the progress of religion in that part of our country, and read parts of letters from the Ceylon and the Sandwich Islands.

It is interesting to notice that religion in general is advancing in every part of the Union. The number of exemplary Christians is increasing; the ordinances of religion are better attended and supported, and morality is gaining ground. Though we have much to deplore and much to amend, both in this and other cities, yet it is unquestionably true, that in the Southern, Middle and Northern States, the great cause of evangelical religion is on the increase; and we have no reason to feel as if God was about to give the American church over to spiritual desolation.

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<sup>62</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nine. 16th April, 1825. page 730 – 731.

Mr. E. then read extracts of letters from Messrs. Woodward and Winslow, missionaries in Ceylon. These were principally taken up in giving short memoirs, or characters of boys whom they support in their boarding schools, and who are supported by the benevolent of this country, from whom they have received names. The names of five boys were mentioned – viz:-

**Wm. Coombs**, supported by the Juvenile Female Society in Newburyport. Great expectations were raised concerning this boy, by Mr. Poor in a former communication. There is at present no reason to think these sanguine expectations are to be disappointed. He gives great evidence of piety, and on the whole, is the head boy of the school.

**Jeremiah Day**, supported by the students in Yale College, is a noble, manly boy; - has been hopefully pious for eight months, and promises to be very useful among his countrymen.

**J. P. K. Henshaw**, supported by the Mite Society in Baltimore, - he has the best natural talents of any boy in the school, has once been serious, but his impressions for a time subsided. – He has of late again been awakened, but the missionaries wait for more evidence of his piety.

**Cyrus Mann**, supported by the Monthly Concert in Westminster. A year before the date of the letter, he came to Mr. Woodward, a large over-grown lad, with an appearance exceedingly unpromising. He was taken in only at the earnest recommendation and intercession of another boy named Cyrus Kingsbury. But he soon began to make rapid improvement soon read in Tamul (sic), and so far as the human eye can judge, gave good evidence of piety within six months after entering the school. He was then proud and haughty – is now humble and docile; once ignorant, now intelligent and diligent in his studies.

*Azael Backus*, supported by ladies in Bethlehem, Conn. He appeared very unpromising at first, and was near being dismissed from the school. He is slow to learn, but is diligent and docile, and what is better, has become hopefully pious. He has already done much good among the boys. No one in the school can speak on religion, and pray with so much solemnity and effect. The heathen say this boy must be sincere, because he weeps when he talks and prays; and he is an unanswerable argument in favour of the Christian religion.

*Timothy Dwight*, an assistant in the central school, was awakened some time since, but his convictions subsided. Of late, however, his impressions have been revived, and he has now come out decidedly on the side of religion. His renewed impressions have had a very happy effect upon his companions.

By Mr. Winslow's letter, dated January 10th, 1825, we have the pleasing intelligence that the revival at all the stations in Ceylon, had re-commenced. This was preceded by great fervency in prayer among the hopefully pious. Those who had previously been serious, but whose convictions had been stifled, were re-awakened, and many who were careless in sin were convicted. Eight or ten native schoolmasters give evidence of seriousness, and more than 50 have expressed concern for their souls. After a trial of eight months the missionaries were about to admit the first fruits of the revival to their church. They were soon to have a great meeting for this purpose. A temporary building, which would contain 3000 or more persons had been provided, and the new converts were to be admitted to the solemn ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's supper, in the view of thousands of heathens. It was expected that 44 would then for the first time sit down at the communion, making the whole number of native church members about 70. [It is presumed that others are hereafter to be admitted, but who for the purpose of future instruction are now delayed.] The

monthly Concert is well attended, and the mission enjoys the peculiar smiles of God.

Letters were also read from Messrs. Bingham and Ely at the Sandwich Islands, dated about the middle of November last, six weeks after the departure of Mr. Ellis. The missionaries are preaching and carrying forward their schools with great efficiency. They hope to have the Gospel of Matthew translated, and ready for the press as soon as paper can be procured. Mr. B. states that some missionaries are greatly needed:- that there are doors opened there for thirty preachers of the gospel, who could be actively and most usefully employed; that a preacher may acquire the language within a year after his arrival so as to begin to preach; and begs the Board to send them more labourers.

Mr. Ely is stationed at Owyhee, at the very spot where Captain Cook was killed. He sees the rock on which that great navigator fell; the ruins of the temple at which Otookiah once worshipped an idol, the bones of human beings which lie on the sea shore. Yet his prospects are very animating. Of their own accord the chiefs have built him a house of worship, [which was dedicated on 23rd April, 1824,] and a dwelling house. They have made laws forbidding any disturbance or sleeping in the house of God; the Monthly Concert is well observed; the house is crowded on the Sabbath, and the assembly very solemn. – Mrs. E. has a Sabbath school of 40 children; and on other days they are teaching more than 100 the rudiments of Education. Mr. E. had been on mission ground but little more than a year, and this is the newest station; yet he weekly preaches the word of God to the attentive people who are so eager for instruction, that they cheerfully wait on his ministrations. His house of worship is built on the ruins of a heathen temple..<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Ten. 18th June, 1825.. pages 44 - 45.

## Monthly Concert in Boston.

*Osages.*- At the Monthly Concert last Monday evening, the Corresponding Secretary read extracts from a Journal kept by the missionaries at Dwight, in the Arkansas Territory, giving some account of the schools attached to that station. – The examination of the Girls' School took place January 11th. It consisted of five Classes: the first containing twelve scholars – second 3 – third 7 – fourth 5 and fifth 5. The last mentioned class is so far advanced as to spell with great accuracy and read well in any book; and the 4th and 3rd are able to read in the New Testament. Besides the exercises in reading and spelling, the different classes attend to certain other branches of knowledge, according to their degree of advancement; and all recite from memory occasional lessons in the catechism, hymns, Bible, etc. – The Boys' school was examined the day following. It contains about an equal number of scholars as the School for Girls; and in about the same state of forwardness.

*Sandwich Islands.*- An extract of January 31, 1824, from the Journal of Messrs. Richards and Stewart, at Lanainah, Island Mowee, represents that for the last fortnight there had been an unusual interest manifested by the natives in the business of education. Fifty had called on the missionaries that morning for spelling books; and 150 more in the subsequent part of the day. At least 100 were obliged to go away unprovided for, the stock of books on hand being inadequate in the supply. On visiting the chiefs on the island, Feb. 2, the missionaries found them busily employed in study at their desks, with their servants seated around them on mats, and engaged in the same pursuit. It is worthy of remark, that, though the chiefs seemed first disposed to *monopolise* the advantages of instruction, they now wish these advantages to be extended to the meanest of the people. The eagerness of adults

and men high in power to acquire knowledge, and in order to this their willingness to submit to the study of its simplest rudiments, is more than had been anticipated by the most sanguine friends of Missions.

*Society Islands.*- Mr. Ellis, after remarking what an interest it gave to the occasion, to think that this same Monthly Concert was observed throughout Christendom, described the manner in which it is ordinarily conducted at the Society Islands. There, not as in England or America, two-thirds of the adult population punctually attend;- and they come with hearts warmly engaged in the Redeemer's cause. The exercises are introduced by singing a hymn in which the natives unite with a sincerity and devotion not easily described. Next a prayer is offered, usually by one of the natives. A native then reads a portion of divine truth, which has been previously selected for the occasion. This is followed by the narration of religious intelligence from abroad, which the missionaries obtain through Religious Publications received from America and England. Such intelligence is listened to by the natives with the utmost interest. When the accounts are unfavourable, a gloom may be seen to come over their countenances, as if they had suffered some personal calamity. And when, on the contrary, the news of revivals and missionary success reaches their ears, they almost exult at the brightening prospect. In the prayer which is offered at the close of this narration, one of the natives usually leads. With great fervency he prays for those who have done so much to send the glad news of salvation to the long neglected Society Islands. He prays that the same light may shine upon all the Islands of the Pacific. He prays for England. He prays for America. He prays for India and for the whole world. "Your best friends, I had almost said, are there."

The Anniversary Meeting of the Auxiliary Missionary Society in these Islands is a kind of Jubilee. The natives on

that occasion assemble at the missionary stations, and pray that the blessings which Christianity has conferred on them may be extended through the world. Of 16,000 or 18,000 inhabitants on the Islands, about 10,000 are annual subscribers to this Society. And though they are generally poor, and obliged to get what they give by manual labour, they have paid in support of this object during the four years past no less than \$1800. The first thing, after gathering their harvest, is to set apart a portion sufficient for the payment of their annual subscriptions. The remainder of their produce they exchange, not as formerly for rum and powder and weapons of death, but for the implements of husbandry, and other articles appropriate to the reign of peace. *Recorder and Telegraph.*<sup>64</sup>

### **Synod of New York. [Presbyterian.]**

Narrative of the State of Religion in their Bounds. (in part.)

Throughout the bounds of the Synod there has been, the past year, a very commendable attention to public worship on the Lord's Day, and weekly lectures and prayer meetings have been generally well attended.

The *monthly concert* has been almost universally attended in our churches, and although in some instances the members assembled have been few, yet we trust their supplications have been heard, and answered in the conversion of many of the inhabitants of the islands of the sea, and many of the natives of our forest.

Although we cannot report any such general outpourings of God's Spirit as on some former occasions, yet we rejoice that

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<sup>64</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Ten. 16th July, 1825. pages 106 – 107.

his special influences have not been entirely withdrawn, even during the past year.<sup>65</sup>

### **A Narrative.**

Of the State of Religion within the bounds of **the Synod of New Jersey**. (in part)

The Monthly Concert of Prayer has generally been well observed. In addition to this, and other Prayer Meetings which have long existed, the Synod are happy to learn that associations of private Christians have been formed, in several of our congregations, for the special purpose of imploring the effusions of the Holy Spirit upon them; which have been followed with a signal blessing.

But we have not only to rejoice in the general increase of the interests of religion; there are also special reasons for thankfulness. During the last year, large additions have been made to many of the churches, particularly within the bounds of the presbyteries of Newark and Elizabethtown. On many of the congregations in that highly favoured region, God has been pleased to pour out his Spirit, and to grant them times of refreshing, the fruits of which are to be seen in the hopeful conversion of upwards of 1100 souls.<sup>66</sup>

### **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

The only statements made at the Monthly Concert on last Monday evening were by the Corresponding Secretary of the Board for Foreign Missions; who said he had some difficulty in selecting matter, so abundant was the interesting intelligence which had come to the Missionary Rooms during

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<sup>65</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Ten. 12th November, 1825. pages 369 - 370.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* page 370.

the past month. In making our report of his statements, we shall pass lightly over those articles of intelligence which were received too late to be noticed in the *Missionary Herald* for the present month, since we would not unduly anticipate that useful work.

*Ceylon.*- The animating effusion of the Holy Spirit, which, in the early part of 1824, blessed all the stations of the American mission in Ceylon with an extensive Revival of Religion, has been described on our pages. That revival declined gradually, after near eighty persons from among the heathen had become the hopeful subjects of renewing grace. Still the missionaries were led to entertain strong hopes of another gracious visitation. Nor were their hopes disappointed. About the middle of October, in the same year, many of the native members of the church were usually excited to prayer and activity, in behalf of their unconverted acquaintance. The graces of some, which had seemed to languish; and the missionaries were much encouraged to multiply their efforts. In short the mission was blessed with a *second* effusion of the Holy Spirit. The special seriousness, as in the former revival, extended to all the stations. The greatest part of the members of the Charity Boarding Schools, several assistants in the missionary's families, and several schoolmasters, were more or less affected by divine truth; and a number indulged a hope of pardon through the Lord Jesus; among whom were several, whose influence, should they continue steadfast, will be great on the side of truth and piety.

In January of the present year, the first fruits of the former revival, in number forty-one, were admitted to the visible Church of Christ. To induce the people to assemble on the occasion, and to accommodate those who should come, a temporary building, 100 feet by 66, was erected by the missionaries. In this house from twelve to fifteen hundred

natives met on the day of the solemnities, which were witnessed with great apparent interest. The English missionaries of the neighbourhood were there. The exercises on the occasion were as follows:- Introductory address, prayer and singing – prayer and sermon – address to the candidates on the subject of baptism and prayer – baptism of the candidates, a ceremony which is said to have been peculiarly interesting – prayer after the baptisms – reading the articles and covenant of the church – baptism of the children – address to the persons received into the church – administration of the Lord’s Supper – and address to the audience.

*Eighty-six* persons commemorated the love of Christ at his table; *seventy-three* of whom were natives.

After these services, the question was put to the audience, “Who among you are sincerely desirous of becoming Christians, and are determined earnestly to seek the salvation of your souls?” Immediately, *more than one hundred* natives, unconnected with the church, arose, thus publicly declaring their belief of the Christian religion, and their intention to become the disciples of the Lord Jesus.

Of those admitted to the church, the case of *Timothy Dwight* was described as peculiarly promising.

The number of children in the mission schools established by the American missionaries, was, in February last, more than 2,600. Two hundred and fifty of these were girls; a fact which the Secretary said was worthy of grateful notice, as, but six years ago, it was with difficulty that missionaries could procure so small a number as *ten* females for instruction; so strong were the native prejudices against female education. [Other sections followed on the Cherokees, Sandwich Islands, and on the influence of Christian Schwartz in India.]<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Ten. 19th November, 1825. pages 394 – 395.

## **Revival in Gray, New Hampshire. 1824.**

[At a certain point, early in the revival:-] “A weekly conference was established, designed principally to pray for a revival; and in October the monthly concert was held for the first time. It has been remarked, by members of the church, that a spirit of prayer seemed to prevail, at this time, though but few attended their meetings, besides the church.<sup>68</sup>

## **Revivals in Salem, Massachusetts.**

[The article referred to here concerned a revival in 1824 and 1825. Although the monthly concert seems not to be mentioned specifically, other prayer activities and preparations are described. Also, introductory sections mention previous revivals in Salem, in 1786 and 1804, - it is stated that no records of these two revivals were prepared. Another revival occurred in 1810, and is described in the *Panoplist* for April and May of 1811. Several very small and local revivals have also occurred since then.] A very extensive and thorough report is presented here.<sup>69</sup>

## **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

[A long description was given of the proceedings in “Honoruru” when the bodies of the King and Queen were brought ashore from a British frigate. The King and Queen had been to England, and had apparently died while on their trip.

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<sup>68</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Ten. 7th January, 1826. page 505.

<sup>69</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Ten. 11th February. 1826. pages 578 – 581.

Also, some of the leading people on the Sandwich Islands were applying to be fully taught the Word of God.]<sup>70</sup>

### **Presbytery of Newark.**

Narrative of the State of Religion within the Bounds of the Presbytery of Newark.

The children and youth of our respective congregations continue to enjoy the salutary influence of Biblical and Catechetical instruction, and Sabbath Schools are generally well attended and in a flourishing state. The Monthly Concert for prayer is observed in all our churches, and in most of them, collections are at this meeting taken up for Missionary purposes. Societies for the advancement of religion at home and abroad, continue their exertions, and are gradually increasing in numbers... etc.<sup>71</sup>

## **VOLUME ELEVEN**

### **3rd June, 1826 to 26th May, 1827**

### **HISTORY OF THE MONTHLY CONCERT.**

I had occasion some time since to look up the principal facts relating to the early history of the Monthly Concert. The following is the result of my inquiries.

In 1744, as is well known, several ministers of Scotland proposed a concert of prayer for “the effusion of the Holy Spirit on all the churches and on the whole habitable earth,” to be observed weekly on Saturday evening, and quarterly in a more

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<sup>70</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Ten. 18th February, 1826. pages 599 – 600.

<sup>71</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Ten. 13th May, 1826. page 795.

solemn manner, on the third Tuesday of every third month. This proposal was circulated in a noiseless way, and was agreed to by numerous praying societies, in many of the towns of Scotland. In Edinburgh and Glasgow, particularly, the number of 'societies of young people' engaged in the object, amounted to more than seventy-five. The concert was also observed to some extent in other parts of Great Britain.

The time of its continuance was at first limited to two years, it being the design of the original movers, to renew it at the expiration of that period, with such alterations as experience and conversation might suggest. Accordingly, in 1746, they published their "memorial," stating what had been done, and recommending a further observance of the concert for seven years, restricting it to 'no denomination or party,' but extending it to "all who had at heart the interest of vital Christianity and the power of godliness; and who, however different about other things, were convinced of the importance of fervent prayer to promote that common interest." This memorial was widely circulated and excited much attention. A clergyman of Boston wrote concerning it, "the motion seems to come from above, and to be wonderfully spreading in Scotland, England, Ireland, and North America." About five hundred copies were sent to this country to be distributed in all the colonies. It was warmly seconded by many of the most respectable clergymen of New England, and especially by President Edwards, in his "Humble Attempt."

Whether this concert survived the seven years of its prolongation, or to what extent it continued to be observed after that period, I am not informed. I have an impression, however, that in our country, the quarterly if not weekly observance of it continued in some churches till within a very few years. It was revived in 1794, at a meeting of clergymen at Lebanon, Conn.; who agreed unanimously to set apart the first Tuesday in each

quarter for concert prayer commencing at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. – The measure was recommended to all denominations, and was adopted extensively by the churches in New England, and in the middle and southern states.

About April or May, in 1784, those excellent men with whom originated the English Baptist Missionary Society, Fuller, Carey, Pearce, and others, agreed to spend the second Tuesday in every month in concert prayer. They were led to this measure, it is believed, by President Edwards's 'Humble Attempt.' Fuller speaks of this tract as having had great effect on his own mind, and was accustomed to read it to his friends for the purpose of exciting them to the duty it recommended. In June of the same year, at the meeting of the Northamptonshire Baptist Association, with which Mr. Fuller was connected, the first Monday evening of every month, was recommended for united and extraordinary prayer. This was the origin of the "Monthly Concert." It was gradually adopted by other Baptist Associations and by Independents in that vicinity. In 1795, the Directors of the London Missionary Society, soon after its formation, recommended missionary prayer meetings on the first Monday evening of each month. From these beginnings, the monthly concert soon spread extensively in Great Britain and in other parts of Europe. The Baptist Missionaries to the East were the first, it is believed, to establish it in heathen lands.

The manner of its introduction among the American churches was briefly this. During one of the darker periods of the late war, a Connecticut minister in a letter to a friend in Massachusetts, hinted that churches should spread the state of their country before God in united prayer. This suggestion led to consultation, and resulted in a weekly concert, which was observed extensively in New England during the season of calamity which gave rise to it. When that occasion was gone by, it was evident that good people had enjoyed the concert too

much to relinquish it without a substitute. After a month or two of consultation and correspondence, the monthly concert already observed by foreign Christians was spontaneously agreed on as the fittest time. It was thought best to begin in a small way, and extend it gradually. The first meeting was held by three or four churches together in Litchfield, Conn., and was opened by a venerable clergyman saying, “there is not a tongue in heaven or earth can move against the objects of this meeting.” According to previous arrangement, other churches speedily united in the object, and in three months the concert spread, beyond the Alleghany mountains. I need not add ‘that it is now observed wherever there are Christians. (- *Christian Spectator*.)

Footnote:-

There have been various other partial and temporary concerts in this country. About the year 1800 a family concert was agreed on, to be observed weekly the hour after sunset on Saturday in winter; the hour before sunset on Sabbath evening in summer. This concert was observed in many places in New England and in New York. Some time later a concert was adopted in some places in Connecticut to pray for baptised children. About the same period Dr. Dwight, in an election sermon at Hartford, proposed a general concert to be predicated on the customary exercises on the Sabbath.<sup>72</sup>

### **Monthly Concert in New York.**

The Monthly Concert held in the Brick Church, Beekman-street, was uncommonly interesting. After an introductory prayer by the pastor [Gardiner Spring] the

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<sup>72</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 29th July, 1826. page 136 – 137.

Secretary of the American Home Missionary Society made a statement of the circumstances which led to the formation of that institution;- the nature and extent of the wants which it was designed to relieve, and its adaptiveness to this purpose if properly sustained;- of the many gratifying letters which had been received from persons at the South and West, expressing the liveliest satisfaction on account of its formation, and an earnest desire to share in the labours of its missionaries.- He concluded with a remark of this kind: that if the work was so great, so urgent, so in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel, then efforts must be made in proportion to its demands. "While we pray, let us give." Not that he would withdraw a shilling from any other object of Christian benevolence: he would only endeavour to stimulate those whom God has entrusted with property, to exertions more answerable to their ability and duty. He then addressed the throne of grace in behalf of this and kindred institutions and objects.

Next the Secretary of the American Tract Society arose, and after mentioning the beautiful illustration which was presented, that evening, of the unity existing between the different objects of Christian benevolence, went on to give some account of the proceedings of that Society. It was its object, he said, to place religious truth, in the form of Tracts, within the reach of every individual in the field who can read, whether old or young, rich or poor, learned or ignorant, bond or free. And although less than 18 months have elapsed since its formation, it already has the co-operation of all the principal Tract Societies in the country. Great harmony had prevailed among the Committee, and they were every way encouraged to persevere in their work. In providing a suitable house for the Society's accommodation, more than \$30,000 had been expended; all of which, with the exception of \$6,000 or \$7,000, was made up by donations, principally in the city, for the

express object. The sum still due will be cancelled in a very few years, by means of the rents for those parts of the building not required for the purposes of the Society. So that, when a poor widow gives her mite for the circulation of Tracts, she not only has no reason to fear it will be swallowed up in the expenses of erecting the Society's House, but may reflect that as nothing is now paid for rent, her donations will probably go further, in this way, towards accomplishing her benevolent object, than if appropriated in any other manner.

It was remarkable further, that more Tracts were now printed by this Society, in a given period, than were printed previous to its formation, on the whole Continent of America. Every step of its progress has been apparently marked with the divine favour. Since the first of May, its issues have amounted to nearly 1,000,000 pages; being more than those of the whole ending at the commencement of that period. Its expenditure in the same five months have amounted to about \$9,000: its receipts to almost the same amount. Aid has from time to time been received from very unexpected sources, and often bearing such a relation to the wants of the Society, as strikingly to illustrate the kind care of an overruling Providence.

Another fact which had been noticed by the Secretary, is this: that in proportion as revivals of religion have increased in any section of the country, in the same proportion has been the demand for Religious Tracts; an encouraging evidence that the Lord will bless this mode of circulating divine truth.

Never, since his connection with the Society, has there come to his knowledge so many proofs of the usefulness of Tracts, as within a few weeks. In the correspondence of the Society, delightful evidences of this kind were very often communicated. Not long since, one of the missionaries of the Home Missionary Society was applied to by an aged man in Ohio, to know if there was no way by which a minister could be

obtained for the settlement in which he resided. The missionary could give him no direct encouragement,- but advised him to persevere in his efforts to obtain one, and in the mean time supplied him with a small parcel of Tracts to be distributed in the families composing the settlement. The aged man fulfilled his trust faithfully. He himself had seven sons and daughters, all married, and residing with or near him. On visiting the settlement again, a few weeks after, what was the surprise of the missionary, to find 12 of the 14 children rejoicing in hope, and another anxiously enquiring the way of life, - and all this through the instrumentality of the Tracts he had left! That entitled "*Poor Sarah,*" had been most peculiarly blest. The religious interest excited in the several branches of this family was extending among others. - A case was also mentioned of Tracts being introduced into a parish where the minister felt little or no interest in revivals; among which were those entitled, "*The Warning Voice,*" "*Today,*" "*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,*" etc. It was not long before several individuals were found anxious for their eternal interests. The number was soon increased; and, finally, several became happy in the enjoyment of religion.

After another prayer and singing, a brief statement was given by the Pastor, of his recent visit to the New England states. In fulfilment of the object of his journey, he had attended the anniversary of the American Board at Middletown, and those of a number of its Auxiliaries in different places. The system of organisation adopted by the Board, he described as efficient and thorough. An Auxiliary is formed in the principal town of each county; and in nearly every parish favourable to such objects, are two Missionary Associations, one of males and the other of females, who pass over their collections to the respective Auxiliaries with which they are connected, and through them to the board. It is designed to extend this system

throughout the denominations of which this Board is the common organ; in which case there will be a total of nearly 5,000 Missionary Associations.

Never before, (Rev Dr. Spring remarked,) was he so sensible of the ascendancy which the missionary spirit has gained in the New England states. Some of the scenes which had passed before him he described as "more splendid than any national jubilee he had ever witnessed." To see multitude after multitude, as the anniversaries of different Auxiliaries successively occurred, assemble in their respective places of worship, with so manifest an interest in the cause, and so great a readiness to make sacrifices for its promotion, was a vision which he could hardly have hoped to witness for years to come. The impression made upon his mind more deeply than any other by the report of the Board at Middletown, was this, - *that the scheme of converting the world is perfectly feasible.* Difficulties have occurred to impede its advancement, and others without doubt will occur hereafter: yet the work has gone on, and will go on. Opposition is now too late. Reasoning from past to future, it is hardly possible to expect too much. It is only sixteen years, since in our land the work began. He well recollected the time, when the question was asked and answered by the first American Missionaries to foreign lands, Is it not our duty, by our own personal exertions, to take a part in the great work of converting the world? But now, what a change! From small beginnings have arisen forty-four Missionary stations, one hundred and eighty-nine Missionaries, twenty-three regularly constituted churches, two hundred schools, and ten thousand children of parents who are or have been Pagans.

But little more than thirty years ago, the work had not even commenced in Great Britain. Now, it commands the energies of that whole Christian community. Under their

patronage, and that of other communities drinking into the same spirit, are reckoned three hundred Missionary stations, nine hundred and eighty-four Missionaries, of whom four hundred are natives, forty printing presses, one hundred and thirty thousand scholars, and in the judgement of charity, forty thousand converts to Christianity, possessing not only the principles but the vitality of religion. This is exclusive of the many thousands of mere speculative believers. In some places, particularly in the Society Islands, the Missionaries are supported almost entirely by the natives.

Dr. Spring concluded by suggesting two thoughts in the way of application. **1.** That though the work was great, those who heard him could expect but a short time to do it in; and **2.** That should they delay a little longer, it would be accomplished by others. The meeting separated under impressions of deep, and we trust abiding interest. - *New York Observer*.<sup>73</sup>

**The Monthly Concert.** [letter to the editor of the *New York Observer*.]

The advocates of missions now generally believe that the greatest obstacle they have to encounter among Christians and the friends of missions, is an ignorance of what has been done, is doing, can be done, and must be done, before that last great command of our Redeemer is obeyed.

How then shall this ignorance be done away? Shall the sheets of our weekly papers and other periodical publications teem with fair statements of facts? Shall some missionary of the cross, having laid the millions of the heathen world at the feet of Christians who are still slumbering, with his dying breath raise the Macedonian cry, and wake their sleeping

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<sup>73</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 14th October, 1826. page 318 – 319.

energies to action? Ah! How many presses have been employed for this very purpose. And how earnestly has our beloved and much lamented HALL appealed to the tenderest Christian feelings of the Churches! But alas, how many are still sleeping at their posts? Have they then no love to their Saviour – no sympathy for the perishing heathen? Yes, Charity cries – yes! But they are prejudiced against the cause, and for this cause neglect to heed the facts and appeals, which if once read and understood, would call forth their most vigorous efforts to extend relief to a perishing world.

I ask then again, what must be done? Shall their indulgence and support be lost? Shall they themselves be deprived of the unspeakable enjoyment of being engaged in such an enterprise? I answer, No. That Christian love and benevolence which is circumscribed only by the bounds of the universe, answers, No. The truth must be sounded in their ears. And what reason can be more appropriate for this, than the Monthly Concert of Prayer? True, it may be said that but few assemble on such occasions; but this is the very way to make this attendance better. Those who do attend, will wish to tell their friends and neighbours what they hear; and soon the interest will become in a good measure general. ***This is actually the case where these meetings are made the occasion of communicating interesting facts.***

Let me just mention, then, the best mode of conducting them, that has as yet come to my knowledge. It is, for every clergyman, to select a few of the most competent in his parish, and apportion among them the different missionary stations. Let each of these persons collect, and at every meeting, in a concise and comprehensive style, read the most interesting and important facts that may be published during the month, relative to his station or stations. Let it ever be an object to select something that will be likely to interest each class of individuals

that compose the audience. At the close, let the pastor or some other suitable person, make an appeal to the audience, founded on the facts thus presented: or occasionally give a brief history of some station, from its commencement. An interest may be thus excited, which can never be effected by the minister alone. Cannot this, or some better plan be adopted, which will awaken a more steady, operative missionary spirit in every benevolent Christian bosom?

The Rev. Enoch Pond's Monthly Concert Lectures have done much in many places, to weaken prejudices and arouse the indifferent. They have been so interesting and profitable to me, that I am truly at a loss to determine, why so few have found their way into this part of the country. A. B.<sup>74</sup>

### **Sunday School Concert.**

The monthly concert of the Sabbath School teachers of Philadelphia was held at the usual place in Cherry St. on Monday 13th inst. – The exercises consisted of prayers, singing and addresses by several gentlemen present. Among other matters, a short and interesting story of a little girl in the State of New York was related by the corresponding secretary of the A. S. S. Union, to impress more deeply upon the hearts of the Assembly the truth that very little children can be, and often are converted and can become active and efficient aids to the public institutions of Christian Benevolence, and ministers for good to the souls of others. The little girl was converted to the Christian faith about a year ago, at the age of seven years, and immediately began to inquire what she should do. Her first resolution was, by little earnings, to contribute something to the Sabbath School treasury; the fruits of which have been, ever since, a punctual monthly payment of six cents; a sum which

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<sup>74</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 21st October, 1826. page 327.

though by itself exceedingly small, the speaker observed, had not been paid (on the average) by the Sunday School teachers of this city.

An interest equally strong was felt and manifested by her in the salvation of individuals visiting her father's house, which had resulted in the hopeful conversion of two young women. In one of these cases she had strongly solicited the favour of her mother, that the young woman might be permitted to sleep with her, declining to give a reason for her request. It was granted, and after retiring to their chamber, she spent the greater part of the night, in the presence and hearing of her companion, at the foot of the throne of Him who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to grant repentance and remission of sin. She was heard and answered. In the other instance, under like circumstances in all respects, songs in the night season and hymns of praise from a child so young, kept her companion's eyes waking, and through grace produced that conviction which resulted in a similar deliverance – and these two in the last great day shall be stars in her crown of rejoicing. - *Philadelphian*.<sup>75</sup>

### **Boston Monthly Concert.**

I have just returned from the Monthly Concert at Park Street. It will be impossible for me to give you more than a faint outline of the exercises of the evening. They were intensely interesting. In the absence of Mr. Evarts, extracts from correspondence were read by the Rev. Mr. Anderson, Assistant secretary of the Board.

A letter from Mr. Goodell, dated Beyroot, July 25, states that the Missionaries have scarcely a quiet day, so great is the excitement produced by their labours. Another Armenian priest

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<sup>75</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 25th November, 1826. page 415.

had come from a distance to see and join himself to the Missionaries. Two Bishops and several priests are now with them. They are in great uncertainty regarding the convert Assaad being apprehensive that he had suffered martyrdom. If he be yet alive, they had strong expectations of his speedy release, as the Patriarch had declared himself weary of inflicting punishment upon him. – since all that he could do only made him the more obstinate in his heresy, and he was now nearly dying with stripes. The number who read the Scriptures with the Missionaries increases. The sacred volume is now read daily in ten or twelve different languages, and prayers are offered in nearly as many. A Catholic Bishop had sent his deacon four times to talk with a priest and persuade him to return to his former faith; but the consequence was, that the deacon was persuaded to renounce the Catholic religion and embrace that of Assaad. A man had remarked to the Missionaries that for a thousand years there had been no such inquiry about religion in Syria as at present. The priests were enraged to the highest degree, and in every possible way exhibited their malice. Mr. Goodell remarks, that changing religious opinions has long been common among the people, and little has been thought of it; but now, when men begin to be truly religious, it awakens the highest rage.

Part of a letter was read from Jacob Assaad, brother of the man before mentioned, a lad of about 15 years of age. He entered the family of Mr. Goodell in March last, and appears to have definitely embraced the true religion. The letter is written in a very animated style, and is a very remarkable production for such a lad. It gives an account of his former sentiments and practice. Once, in confessing to his priest, he stated that on Wednesday he had eaten a small piece of cheese: the priest said it was a great sin, and made him pray every night to the saints, and kiss the ground forty times a day for five months. At the

end of the time he told the priest that he had complied with the order, who said, "Very well, now you are a Christian." Another priest made him do penance for having eaten a piece of meat, which the priest said was a dreadful sin. Soon after he commenced reading the Bible, he perceived the deception of the priests, and did not hesitate to tell one of those who had made him do penance that his teaching was all a lie. I cannot give a full description of this remarkable letter, but presume it will appear in the *Missionary Herald* for January.

The Rev. Mr. Green from Union Church remarked that in the intelligence from Palestine there was much to excite gratitude, and to make it certain that God is with his servants. An impression seems especially to have been made upon the priests; and who knows that among those who are listening to the gospel, there may not be some Luther or Knox. When Luther commenced his efforts they were small, and the effect confined to a small circle. But the spark which had been struck spread from one individual to another until kingdoms had been enlightened. Jesus who kindled that flame is the same now. His arm is as mighty – his truth as omnipotent. Let us not then, said Mr. Green, be discouraged, if the Sun of Righteousness is a little longer in rising than we could wish. Christ intends that his servants shall have something to do. He could, if it pleased him, "Let there be light," and light would burst around the globe; but he carries on his cause in the manner which will do the most good to his people. There are two grand considerations to be borne in mind, when we inquire whether pure religion shall continue gloriously to spread among the nations – The first is, *the death of Jesus Christ*; the second, *the promises of God*. Let the Christian stand on Calvary, and with the promises in his hand, doubt if he can, whether every knee shall bow to God.

Mr. Anderson cited the substance of the principal Missionary intelligence which had been communicated at this Concert during the past year. – That from Bombay had never been more pleasing, and never more painful. At the meeting in March a letter was read from the “life-giving pen of Hall,” containing an account of the ten years Missionary labour at that station, and the cheering prospects of success. But just as the hopes of the Mission were brightening, a cloud arose, and in September during the meeting, letters were bro’t which informed that Mr. Hall was dead. From Ceylon it had been stated that the Missionary Church there embraced ninety native members, comprising many intelligent minds, and several already useful preachers of the gospel to their countrymen. We had also learned that the impediments in the way of raising the female character had been very much diminished; and that *caste*, which had been valued above all price, inducing men to despise knowledge, had lost its power over many minds and been thrown aside. From Palestine we had been made to weep by the death of Mr. Fisk. The recent intelligence, tho’ exhibiting the Missionaries as in an arduous struggle, gave very cheering prospects. From the Cherokees the evidence of good had been, during the year, more substantial and decisive than ever before. The Sandwich Islands had occupied more of our attention than any other mission. From these in past years the intelligence had been cheering. We expected much, but our expectations had been more than answered. We had been informed that none chiefs, embodying a great proportion of the influence in the islands, had become members of the church; that twelve meeting houses had been erected, one capable on containing four thousand persons, the materials of which were brought from the mountains upon the shoulders of 2,200 men moving in one procession. We had heard of sixteen religious meetings upon one island on one Sabbath: of revivals upon

three islands; of 20,000 persons in a course of instruction, 12,000 able to read the Scriptures, and 2,000 maintaining regular family prayer. We had been told of the intemperate Karanoku reformed – of the cruel Kashumanu subdued, humble and benevolent, of Kapiolani emancipated from her intemperance, of the people of Lahama, who had once been thieves, becoming so honest that property, however much exposed, was perfectly secure, of Kanvaroods, whose inhabitants, reformed from the most debasing vices, had in the midst of their extreme poverty, united themselves in a Missionary Society, and raised \$30 for the support of their teacher, a sum greater than is raised in most of our county towns for Missionary purposes. We had heard from the printing presses in Malta, in Bombay and the Sandwich Islands; that during the year last reported, more than three and a half millions of pages had been printed (nearly half as many as all before) and were circulating among hundreds of thousands who had before been ignorant of the way of life. –

Mr. Anderson remarked, 1. That the success of the past year has greatly surpassed our expectations. 2. If the Missions of the Board go on for three years to come as for these three years past, great things will be seen. If we look for the success of their operations, it has been chiefly within the last three years. Their success has increased in geometrical proportion, and why may it not be so in time to come?

Rev. Dr. Beecher of Hanover church, then rose and expressed himself in substance as follows: Success has attended the operations of the American Board at all their stations; a success on the whole constant and generally great. There is something in the operations of the Board analogous to those of nature: they are silent, unostentatious, but *we see the results*. These results come to us not in declamation and speeches of native converts only, but in matter of fact argument.

It is a success which settles the question *for the world*. At first Missionary efforts were looked upon with disdain, but everywhere they have been prospered. All the posts we have taken in the kingdom of the enemy have been maintained – he has not driven us back from one of them. These posts were not chosen because they were easily occupied; some of them were peculiarly difficult, and what hinders that we should go on occupying post after post, until the whole dominion of the enemy is in our hands?

Brethren, said Dr. B., it is the last time, it is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. God has risen from his throne, and we may as well suppose that he will allow death to depopulate this nation, as to suppose that he will permit anything to stop the progress of his kingdom on earth. True, we have to contend with obstacles, perhaps to suffer martyrdom; “But so much the better; the better for the martyr, because for him ‘to live is Christ and to die is gain.’ – the better for the cause, for the blood of the martyrs has not lost its efficacy. *If they would help us, let them persecute.*” We may calculate in time to come on rapid success. Glorious things are spoken concerning Zion. Hitherto the church has been on the defensive: now the order has come down from above, to the combined hosts of God in England, Germany, and America, “Onward to the attack.” But we have other results which do not come across the water. What a feast have we here every month; and how has it appeared all around us, that he that watereth, shall himself be watered? We have results among us which have come down from heaven. The blessing has gone to many families in the midst of us, and his hand is not weary, but is stretched out still.

*N. Y. Observer.*

[Footnote: Within the last two weeks the revival which pervades our churches has evidently made important progress.

Christians abroad who pray for Boston, need not fear that they pray in vain.]<sup>76</sup>

### **Sabbath School Concert.**

The monthly Concert for Prayer, which is usually attended with great punctuality by the teachers of the Sabbath School in this city, was rendered peculiarly solemn this present week, by the sudden death of one of our number, and also one of the Sabbath School children. Miss Tomlinson, whose death is mentioned in another place, was instructing her class on the Sabbath of last week, and pointing their thoughts to heaven. Before the close of the week she was summoned to give an account of her stewardship. And on the last Sabbath morning, while the school was assembled in their place, the bell was tolling her funeral knell. As her death was thought to be occasioned by the small-pox, the members of the school were not permitted to pay the last sad tribute, as they otherwise would have done. Let Sabbath school Teachers be admonished to work while the day lasts.<sup>77</sup>

### **Concert of Prayer for Colleges.**

Thursday, the 22nd of February, inst., will be observed by Christians in many places as a day of fasting and prayer in behalf of our Colleges. We understand the day will be observed by the church in Yale College, and that a sermon will be preached on the occasion by Professor Fitch. We hope the

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<sup>76</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 16th December, 1826. pages 457 – 458.

<sup>77</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 16th December, 1826. pages 458 – 459.

friends of Zion in this city and elsewhere will unite their supplications.<sup>78</sup>

(Page 606 contains part of a sermon on “Prayer for Colleges,” and also a Report on the various revivals in Williams College.)

### **Spirit of Missions in the South of France. (Nimes.)**

At the Monthly Concert of Prayer in the present month (November) I was invited, by the Committee of the Missionary Society, to address the people, which I did from the pulpit. I spoke for about forty minutes. The congregation was large and exceedingly solemn. Every eye was fixed upon me, and every ear listened with intense interest.

As soon as the service was finished at Nimes, I was obliged to go to Milhan, a village about three miles distant, to address a large congregation, which I found had been waiting for me in the church for over an hour. I say I was obliged to go, for two clergymen came to me at Nimes, and said that they had come, with about twenty other persons, expressly to take me with them to Milhan, and that I must absolutely go with them. I went, though I had been so unwell with a cold that I had not been out of the house for three days previous. Thanks to the Great Preserver of my life that I found myself the next day better than I have been for nearly a month past, and my health has been improving ever since.<sup>79</sup> (part only)

### **Revivals in New Hampshire.**

The state of religion in this region continues to be highly prosperous. The following particulars, which were said to be

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<sup>78</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 17th February, 1827. page 608.

<sup>79</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 17th March, 1827. page 664.

derived from the best authority, were stated at the Monthly Concert in Concord, March 5.

At Durham, where a work of God commenced in October last, one hundred had become the hopeful subjects of renewing grace. At New Market Factory the number of hopeful converts was 20. At Lee, a gracious work of the Spirit appears to have commenced, and eight are numbered as the fruits. At Stratham, sixty give evidence of a saving change. In Northampton forty have hopefully embraced the truth as it is in Jesus. In Hampton it is estimated that fifty-six have become partakers of the blessings of salvation since that place has been visited with the special influences of God's Spirit. In Greenland, sixteen, it is hoped, have made a full surrender of their souls to the Redeemer. In Newington, where there is no minister, and where the church has become nearly extinct; where but one solitary member remained, who was on the very borders of eternity, and about to step into the grave; the Lord has poured out his Spirit, and eight are numbered as the trophies of his grace; six have united with the church, and thirty more are in a state of inquiry. In Portsmouth, there is a greater interest manifested in the concerns of religion than there has been for a great number of years. Twenty exhibit evidence of genuine conversion, and between fifty and sixty others were anxiously enquiring. In Rye, the state of religion the state of religion continues to be highly pleasing; fifty are mentioned as giving evidence of the new birth. In Dover, there was an interesting state of feeling; three had professed to entertain hope.

Thus, in this little cluster of towns, in the eastern part of this State, are reckoned more than 350 who have hopefully become the subjects of the grace of God, since last September, and converts are still multiplying.

In Warner, N. H., about fifteen miles from Concord, a revival of religion has lately commenced.

*Repository and Observer.*<sup>80</sup>

## **Revivals.**

A correspondent at Andover Seminary has communicated to the *Boston Recorder* a list of towns which have been reported, at the four last Monthly Concerts, as being blessed with revivals of religion. The number of hopeful converts, and of those who have made a profession of religion, is stated in many of the towns, but as members are daily added where revivals are continued, we shall not copy them. The number of towns comprised in the list is: in Maine, 10; New Hampshire, 30; Vermont, 25; Massachusetts, 40; Connecticut, 24; Rhode Island, 2; New York, 50; New Jersey, 5; Pennsylvania, 10; Delaware, 6; the Canadas, 3; and six colleges – in all about 200 towns. The number of hopeful converts is stated at from 8 to 740. If we estimate them at an average of 50, the aggregate will be 10,000. The number of towns might be considerably enlarged, as we know of several places not mentioned in the list. “But enough is here told,” adds the writer, “to show us the wonders God is doing in our land.”

What might he say to Christians who are looking with surprise at these unexampled displays of His grace – “O, ye of little faith! Wherefore did ye doubt?” I would that every professor of religion would solemnly ask himself, before God, - What part have I taken, as an instrument, in promoting these glorious works? and if every professor of religion had prayed as I have prayed, and acted as I have acted, - is it probable that these results would have followed? – And should I have the least hope that God would pour His Spirit down upon my dying

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<sup>80</sup> *Religious intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 24th March, 1827. page 684.

neighbours and friends, if I knew that every one of my brothers and sisters in the church felt just as I do? O Christian, pray, pray, pray!

From the *Boston Recorder and Telegraph*.<sup>81</sup>

**Monthly Concert.** (from the *Recorder and Telegraph*.)

Messrs Editors, - I have long wished that some plan might be adopted, by which the Monthly Concert for prayer should be made more interesting and profitable throughout our country towns, generally.

If ever Christians ought to burn with holy ardour of soul when approaching the mercy seat; if ever *their benevolence should be expanded, and their sacred vows of entire consecration to God renewed*, it seems to me it should be on this interesting occasion. One great reason why Christians do not *feel* more when they pray for a world of wretched sinners is, that they are in want of *facts* on the subject. I am persuaded there is a far greater degree of ignorance among Christians with regard to this thing than is generally supposed. Not long since, I told a Christian man who lives not forty miles from Boston, that about 600,000,000 of our race were yet enveloped in pagan darkness, and he was astonished. He never had had any idea, that such a vast proportion of mankind were without the light of the gospel. Present facts to a man, and if there is a Christian soul within him, he must *feel*; and *feeling*, he will *pray* and *act*. Even in those places where Christians are, in general, enlightened on this subject, there is still need for the constant presentation of those *facts* which are every day growing, in number and in interest.

The Monthly Concert seems to be a peculiarly appropriate time for the presentation of such facts; and indeed

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<sup>81</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 21st April, 1827. page 748.

as far as my knowledge has extended, some portion of its exercises have been of this nature. The object of this communication is, to propose a plan, by which the minister will be relieved of a burden, and the meeting rendered more interesting and effective. It is as follows:

1. Let the minister appoint from the male members of his church, (young men if possible,) from four to eight individuals, or more, as may most convenient, and let them collectively be called "*The Monthly Concert Association.*"

2. Let each individual have a particular portion of the earth assigned to him; and let it be his duty to collect, during the month, all the fact relative to that portion, which are in any way connected to its religious interests.

3. Let these individuals be called upon by the minister to relate the facts they have collected, at each Monthly Concert.

The following is submitted as a convenient division for this purpose, though it can be varies as may be thought best.

1. Our country and the Canadas, including accounts of revivals, Sabbath Schools, and benevolent operations generally.

2. South America, and the Islands of the Pacific

3. Europe and Palestine.

4. India, all Asia east of Palestine, and all its Islands.

5. Africa, including all the proceedings of the Colonisation Society, and everything relating to the blacks in our own country.

These accounts should be made as interesting as possible, and therefore care should be taken that they be not too long or too minute. N order that the Association may be supplied regularly with the requisite facts, I would suggest that a subscription be raised in each society to defray the expense of a few leading religious publications; and that these be put directly into the hands of the members of the association. Only a few dollars would be required to procure the Missionary

herald, published in Boston, and perhaps one or two religious newspapers; to which should be added one devoted to the cause of the Africans, as Freedom's journal in New York.

Messrs Editors, if you think the above plan practicable, I should be glad to have it proposed to the Christian public. Yours, etc., G.<sup>82</sup>

## VOLUME TWELVE

**2nd June, 1827 to 24th May, 1828**

### **Reports on the Great Revival in 1826.**

This volume contains the main reports about the 1826 revival from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and also the reports from the Congregational Associations in New England.

The year 1826 saw the first extensive revival in the city of Boston since the first Great Awakening in the year 1740, when George Whitefield visited the town. There had been smaller revivals amongst the Baptists in Boston some years earlier, and also a stronger revival in 1823. By 1826, several new evangelical Congregationalist churches had been built, which managed to break away from the dead hand of Congregational Unitarianism in Boston. The Old South Church had been the only Congregational church in Boston which had remained roughly orthodox since 1750. This 1826 revival transformed the scene, from an evangelical point of view, in the city of Boston.

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<sup>82</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 12th May, 1827. pages 797 – 798.

Tremendous village revivals occurred right through the County of Berkshire, Massachusetts, in 1826, and also in a number of areas of Connecticut and Vermont.

The revivals in Oneida County, New York, became the most famous, as years passed, because the name of Charles G. Finney was associated with the revivals which occurred in that county, and because an official *Narrative* of the revival was published by the Presbytery of Oneida.<sup>83</sup>

### **Narrative (in part) from the General Assembly.**

But while the Assembly would rejoice and bless God for sustaining, and multiplying, and giving increased action to the benevolent institutions within our church, and throughout our land, they have still higher grounds for joy and gratitude to the Head of the Church, for the showers of divine grace, with which their Zion has been favoured during the past year. The Holy Ghost, like a mighty rushing wind, has descended and rested upon many assemblies, and by his all-conquering energy has subdued many stout hearts which were fraught with enmity against God, and the Gospel of his grace. The past year has been emphatically a year of *revivals*. To enumerate all the towns and congregations on which God has poured out his Holy Spirit, would swell our report beyond its assigned limits. Suffice it to say, that upwards of *twenty Presbyteries* have participated, in a greater or less degree, in the refreshing showers with which God has been watering his church. Within the bounds of the *Synod of Genesee*, we may mention the Presbyteries of Rochester and Buffalo. In the *Synod of Geneva*, the Presbyteries of Bath, Geneva, Onondaga and Cayuga. In Onondaga, from 400 to 500 have been added to the

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<sup>83</sup> Presbytery of Oneida. *A Narrative of the Revival of Religion in the County of Oneida, particularly in the Bounds of the Presbytery of Oneida, in the year 1826.* Utica, 1826.

church, and in Cayuga, about 900. In the *Synod of Albany*, the Presbyteries of Columbia, Champlain, Londonderry, Troy, Ogdensburg, and Oneida. The last two have been signally blest. In Oneida [village], 1300 are reported to have joined the church, and in the Presbyteries of Oneida and Ogdensburg, *some thousands* are enumerated as the hopeful subjects of converting grace. In the *Synod of New York*, refreshing influences have descended on portions of the Presbyteries of Long Island, North River, Hudson, and the first Presbytery of New York. In the *Synod of New Jersey*, on the Presbyteries of New Brunswick and Elizabethtown. In the *Synod of Philadelphia*, on a few of the churches within the Presbyteries of Philadelphia, Carlisle and Baltimore. In the city of Baltimore, a good work is now in progress in the first and second churches. In the *Synod of Kentucky*, the Presbytery of Transylvania has been signally blessed. In the midst of other trophies of converting grace, they have to record the hopeful conversion of the Teacher and several of the pupils in the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb within their limits. In the *Synod of South Carolina and Georgia*, the Presbyteries of Orange, Fayetteville and Georgia, Union and Hopewell, have been more or less favoured. The two last have had the greatest additions to their communion, and the Lord is still carrying on his glorious work in the midst of them.

For all that the Lord has thus been doing, and is continuing to do for Zion, the Assembly would rejoice and give thanks to his holy name. And it is their fervent prayer that while God is working for the advancement of his glory, and the salvation of souls, those who are called to co-operate with him, may be richly endued with the spirit of wisdom, of grace, and of a sound mind, that the work may not be marred by human imperfection, but that the building of God may rise with symmetry and grandeur towards its summit in the heavens.

Upon several of our Colleges, the Spirit has been poured out. Centre College in Kentucky, Athens, in Georgia, and Dickinson, in Pennsylvania, have all participated more or less in the spiritual bounty of heaven's converting grace.

Our Theological Seminaries continue to receive the liberal support of the friends of sound learning and vital godliness.... Etc.<sup>84</sup>

### **State of Religion in Suffolk County. (Boston.)**

Suffolk Association embraced at the beginning of this year 13 churches, - one of which is without a pastor, 12 settled pastors 1960 members, Within the last eight months there have been revivals in all these churches but two. Within a short time about 500 have been added to these churches as the fruits of these revivals. The present number of inquirers is between five and six hundred. The number of inquirers in the Baptist congregations within the local limits of the association is very considerable – probably 200 or more. The number of Sabbath scholars who worship with the evangelical Congregational churches, is more than 2000; and there are 1200 in the Bible classes. Many teachers and pupils of Sabbath schools attend inquiring meetings and are gathered into the fold of Christ.

The revivals of which we would speak with devout gratitude to God, may be traced to a series of efforts commenced by some of the pastors at the commencement of the year 1826. Some of the pastors preached on the first Sabbath of the year directly and plainly to Christians, and with special reference to a revival. They immediately adopted measures to interest the young, and especially young men, and to bring the members of the churches to engage in active efforts for the

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<sup>84</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twelve. 9th June, 1827. pages 21 – 22.

prosperity of Zion. Nor did they labor in vain. The revival made its first appearance in the Essex-street congregation, and then in the Hanover-street, and Old South congregations, and the other evangelical congregations in the city, and in the first congregation in Charlestown; then in Waltham, in Medford, and in both the congregations in Newton. It may be stated with respect to most of these revivals, that the pastors devised and executed measures for their promotion, as deliberately, and it is hoped prayerfully, as they would engage in any Christian enterprise. Among the means God has blessed in promoting the present revival, may be mentioned the direct and earnest preaching of the gospel to saints and sinners; seasons of fasting and prayer observed by the churches; the appointment by several of the churches of their own members to visit two in company, the members of the church, and as many of the congregation as they could; visitation of the churches by a pastor and one or more lay brethren; direct and faithful conversation on religious subjects from house to house, accompanied with prayer, when practicable; meetings of inquiry; and a conference of the churches in the city of Boston last November. This last mentioned meeting appeared to be blessed of God in diffusing the revival almost over the Association.

Christians have done much, especially in the city, to promote this revival, by bringing persons into the meetings of inquiry. They have gone to their friends and others, who were thoughtless, have conversed seriously with them, have urged them to attend the inquiry meetings, and have sometimes accompanied them. Invitations have often been given publicly to all, who were willing to be conversed with personally, on the subject of religion, to attend the inquiry meeting. Many, who have come to this meeting with no real conviction of sin, have soon been deeply awakened, and have become constant

attendants, and ere long the hopeful subjects of divine grace. One individual of the Hanover Church, has in this way been instrumental in the hopeful conversion of eleven souls, and another more than half that number.

Though the churches have never awoke to that deep sense of obligation, that fervour, importunate, believing supplication, termed effectual prayer; and to that persevering effort, which are truly desirable; - yet they manifest to some extent a truly Christian zeal for the prosperity of Zion.

A weekly lecture has been established and maintained for several months by one of the ministers of the city, at Cambridgeport, which is within the limits of the Association. This lecture has been blessed, a revival has been enjoyed, a meeting house has been raised at Cambridgeport this week, and an evangelical church will be gathered there soon. A new evangelical society has been formed at Brighton within a few months; a meeting house is now building for the use of an orthodox church. Not only have the meeting houses in Hanover-street and Essex-street become full the past year, and a commodious house of worship erected in Green-street, and the Rev. Dr. Jenks installed pastor of an evangelical church gathered under his labours; but two new meeting houses for the accommodation of evangelical churches soon to be formed, are now actually building, one in the northern, and the other in the southern part of the city.

Invitations have also been given to establish stated meetings for the preaching of evangelical truth in several towns in the vicinity, where there are no evangelical congregational churches. A Sabbath evening lecture is also maintained in the first church in Cambridge, by the pastor and other evangelical clergymen invited by him, and a weekly Biblical lecture in the court house adjacent, both of which are well attended.

When we survey the city of Boston, and its vicinity, and see how six orthodox evangelical congregational churches in the city, five of them large and full, and four of these congregations collected within six years; and when we see two more commodious houses going up in the city, and two more within two miles of it, for the accommodation of evangelical churches; and see two others within the limits of the Association, and occupied by its members, built within four years past; and when we witness the continued progress of a religious revival, in this city and vicinity, we are ready to exclaim, “what hath God wrought! He hath done great things for us, and we are glad.” Truly, “the time even the set time, to favour Zion has come; for her servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.”<sup>85</sup>

### **State of Religion in Berkshire County. Mass.**

Berkshire Association includes 20 churches – only one is vacant. [Berkshire County] has enjoyed a very extensive revival this year. By the middle of March almost every church was enjoying a season of special quickening. In some places, for several weeks, little else was done than to attend to the concerns of the soul. The revival has been attended with an unusual spirit of prayer. Christians have felt that God was their refuge and strength. They have been, in most places, unusually engaged. In Visiting from house to house, some of them have devoted day after day, and week after week. The labor bestowed has been abundant: many have considered it a great privilege that they might be “co-workers together with God.” In many instances, this work of God has been perfectly overwhelming. Meetings have been held at all times of the day, and attended by almost every variety of characters. God has

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<sup>85</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twelve. 7th July, 1827. pages 89 – 90.

remarkably preserved the union of the churches with one another, and with their pastors, and among their own members. Christians have stayed up the hands of their pastors, by their prayers and labours. The revival has greatly extended an acquaintance among Christians, and greatly increased the fellowship of the churches.

The work has been most powerful in Lee, Lenox, Pittsfield, Becket and Otis. In Becket, a sudden stop was put to the good work by a division of the public mind as to the mode and subjects of baptism. In no other place has there been any injury produced by sectarian influence. This one fact is mentioned merely by way of caution against a diversion of the public mind from the concerns of the soul by directing the attention, during a revival, to any subject not immediately connected with the great salvation.

The following is a statement of the supposed number of those who have indulged hopes of a saving change during this revival. The places are named in the order of the time in which the revivals commenced.

Sheffield.	about 45.
Stockbridge South.	100.
Great Barrington.	40.
New Marlborough, North.	60.
Tyringham.	60.
Sandisfield.	70.
Becket, including Baptists.	150.
Pittsfield.	300.
Lanesborough.	28.
Williamstown.	30.
Williams' College.	6.
Richmond.	100.
Lenox.	200.
Lee.	250.

Dalton.	40.
West Stockbridge.	60.
New Marlborough, South.	15.
Otis.	150.
Egremont.	15.
Stockbridge North.	<u>40.</u>
Total.	1740. <sup>86</sup>

### **The General Association of Connecticut. Report of the State of Religion.**

The Monthly Concert of Prayer is generally attended with increasing interest; which is no inconsiderable omen of good to the missionary enterprise. The formation of Bible, Tract, Education, and Missionary Associations – the various and multiplied contributions for increasing the light at home, and diffusing it abroad through the earth, tell what is embodied in our churches.

Revivals of religion the year past have been multiplied. Throughout Litchfield North Association, “God has poured out of his Spirit.” In several of the congregations, the work has been *great*. Hundreds have found mercy. The churches have put on their beautiful garments. Love, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost mark their intercourse, and show forth the power of godliness.

In Litchfield South, many of the churches are cheered with the returning presence of God, and the conversion of sinners to Christ. In Middlesex Association, seven churches have been blessed with special revival. In Hartford North, the spirit has been shed copiously on eight of the churches; and more than four hundred have already been added to their number. Five churches have extensively shared in the same

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<sup>86</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twelve. 7th July, 1827. page 90.

blessing in Hartford South; four to considerable extent in Fairfield East; one eminently in Fairfield West; several in New Haven East; and in all the District Associations, more or less of the churches have rejoiced in the special work of the Holy Spirit. In many of them the work is at this time in its most interesting progress. Who can tell the joy in the presence of the angels of God, over these churches! An accession has been made to the kingdom of the Son, and to the glory of his grace, which we would humbly and thankfully acknowledge.

The report from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church is highly gratifying. The extensive revivals at the South and the West form a memorable era in their history. We hope they are but the beginning of a glorious day. We have watched their progress with interest. They present an animating prospect of the future glory of Christ – they take hold on the millennium, by sanctifying the talents and influence of those rising seminaries of learning, and raising up many to make glad the wilderness.

From the churches in Massachusetts, we have the most gratifying intelligence. The God of their forefathers is in the midst of them by his Holy Spirit. Revivals, such as awaken the fear and enmity of error, have been multiplied. Boston is a favored city. Piety and truth are taking deep root. All its Evangelical churches have the blessing of the Holy Spirit; and power and influence there, and in the vicinity, are finding their proper channels. In Berkshire County, revivals have been extensive, powerful, and of a most interesting character. It is also pleasant to learn, that the decisive efforts which are made against the use of ardent spirits, are fast elevating the tone of morality.

No report has been received from Rhode Island.

From New Hampshire and Vermont, though called to sympathise with our brethren there over the many waste places,

the feeble congregations, and the prevalence of irreligion, we receive such intelligence that calls for gratitude to God. There, too, the people of God, and the lovers of good order, are systematizing and concentrating their efforts to resist the deadly sin of intemperance, to assert the sanctity of the Sabbath, and to train the rising generation in the knowledge of the Bible. And there, too, the Holy Ghost has shed his influence in copious measures, beautifying their churches, and sanctifying the hearts and talents of their colleges and academies, that their waste places may be furnished with preachers of righteousness.

The revivals in the colleges are worthy of special notice. Yale, Amherst, Williams, Dartmouth, Middlebury, Burlington, Union, and Athens, have been blessed with revivals, the consequence of which must be highly propitious to the kingdom of Christ.<sup>87</sup>

### **Monthly Concert in Boston.**

At the monthly concert in Boston, the Rev. Wm. Sharp, says the *Christian Watchman*, read a letter lately received by him from Dr. Judson, and added few reflections. It was a gratifying evidence both of Dr. Judson's respectability in the eyes of his neighbours and of his disinterestedness, that he had received lately, in presents from citizens of Ava, and pay for services to the British Government as interpreter, &c. **four thousand dollars**, all of which has been passed to the credit of the Board.

It appeared by the letter from Dr. Judson, that the former converts to Christianity among the Burmans, eighteen in number, had, with the exception of two, continued to adorn their profession of religion. These two had been excluded from

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<sup>87</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twelve. 9th June, 1827. pages 21 – 22, and 76 – 77.

fellowship. When it is considered that the little band who had continued faithful, have been subjected not only to all the temptations to iniquity which abound in a state of war, but to all others also, which the condition of surrounding heathenism and idolatry sanctions and renders popular, - much glory should be ascribed to Almighty God, who has given such efficacy to the grace that he has communicated to their hearts, as to enable them to persevere in their profession of vital godliness. They stand as witnesses for him, as Abraham and Lot did, amidst surrounding iniquity; and it may be hoped, that as Sodom might have been spared for ten righteous, that Burmah may yet be converted to God.

The Rev. Mr. M'Coy, from the Carey Station, gave some account of that important mission, and sung a solemn hymn in the Indian language. It was delightful to hear the sounds of Christian praise and devotion in one of these languages, to which hitherto, sounds of Zion have been strange. It was oracular evidence of the extension of the kingdom of Christ among the tongues and tribes of earth, and of the familiarity of our missionary with the medium of Gospel instruction to our poor Americans.<sup>88</sup>

## Revivals in 1827

At the end of 1827, the *New York Observer* noted that there had not been so many revivals as had occurred in 1826. Nevertheless, they said that at a very conservative estimate, **fifty thousand** new members had joined the Protestant churches in 1827. Nearly 13,000 had joined the Presbyterian Church, and 21,000 had joined the Methodists.

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<sup>88</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twelve. 15th December, 1827. page 453.

They said that almost every town in Litchfield County, Connecticut, had been visited by revivals, along with a number of counties elsewhere in the country, plus ten cities, and four tertiary educational Colleges.<sup>89</sup> [Ed.]

## VOLUME THIRTEEN

### 1st June, 1828 to 23rd May, 1829.

#### **For the Monthly Concert.**

The most interesting initiative to be taken by the Editor of the *Religious Intelligencer* in this Volume began in the month of February, 1829, but, sadly, only lasted for about six months. This was to provide a special article for the Monthly Concert in which a summary was offered of all revivals which had just been reported upon, and then to summarise the latest missionary information from various fields and countries. The article was prepared by a group of “gentlemen” at Yale College, from letters and articles which were available to them.

For example, the article published in March, 1829, went as follows:-

*America.* - Progress of Civilization among the Seneca Indians in the State of New York. – A good degree of civilization exists among this people, which is to a great extent the result of Missionary efforts. The most of them have ordinarily produce enough to carry them through the year; and many of them sell considerable quantities in the market, such as pork, cattle, corn, hay, potatoes, oats, peas, beans, wood, &c., whereas a few years since, these same people as a body, were nigh starvation a great part of the year. But in nothing perhaps is their civilization more apparent than in their style of building.

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<sup>89</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Vol. 12, 26th January, 1828. pages 554 – 555.

Their log cabins, and pole barns, half-covered with bark, are now frequently exchanged for substantial, well-made houses and barns.

They have all the means of rendering themselves independent, where they have sufficient energy and industry to do so. Of this, however, it is to be lamented that they have yet so small a share, though the spirit of industry appears to be extending itself through the nation. About one half of the Senecas renounced their former superstitions and heathenish rites, and embraced Christianity; and are in favour of the introduction of Christianity, and the arts of civilized life. The remainder are attached still to the former religion of the tribe, and opposed to all the changes which have taken place. They have heretofore manifested much hostility to the efforts made to extend a knowledge of the Gospel. A society has been formed among the Christian females, and another among the males at Cattaraugus, for the purpose of aiding in the support at school, of children whose parents are poor or are pagans. Each of these societies contribute more than \$20 annually. The Indians at Tuscarora have erected, principally at their own expense, a chapel 38 feet by 28, which is generally well filled on the Sabbath with white and red people. The Indians have contributed the summer past 12 or 13 dollars in aid of Foreign missions.

*Indians in Canada.* – From the Grand River and Credit stations there have recently been sent out to other places 11 native laborers. The work of grace among the Mohawks is great, both at Grand River, and at the Bay Quinty. A letter lately received from the latter place, says, - “Nothing now remains for a general awakening but laborers who can speak and pray in their own tongue. So athirst are the Mohawks and the Missaugahs for the Scriptures and hymns in their own tongue, that they every where inquire when they can obtain

them. The work in this country is great and marvellous. Hundreds are giving themselves up to the Lord and calling for our instruction.

**Revivals of Religion.** – At Jamesville, New York, there are 50 subjects. The same number are mentioned at Le Roy. In Kingston, Ulster Co. there are 40.

A state of interesting revival still exists in Boston, particularly at Park Street, Hanover, Union, and Green Street churches; as also in South Boston – There have been 500 hopeful conversions in Lowell, Mass. within two years past.

In New Hampshire, there are revivals in Washington, Hillsborough and Francistown. About 500 conversions are spoken of in those places.

In Preston, Conn. there are between 50 and 60 Hopeful conversions. Revivals also exist in Hartford, Wethersfield, Berlin, Middletown and Griswold, Conn.

**Bible Cause.** – An interesting meeting was held in New Orleans, with reference to this subject last month, attended by many individuals of high standing, who advocated the object. A subscription was made of \$779.

A State Bible Society has been formed in Illinois.<sup>90</sup>

Sections also followed about Sunday schools within the Western Sunday School Union, and increasing scholar numbers, the freemasonry scandal in New York, Bible distribution work in South America, more negroes going to Liberia, missionary work in Greece, and in the Sandwich Islands.

There were problems getting the article written and published in the middle month of the summer, because the person assembling the material was away from Yale while the College was closed, but these articles appeared for several more months in Volume 14.

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<sup>90</sup> Religious Intelligencer. Volume 13. 4th April, 1829. page 714. – 715.

## **What Happened at the Monthly Concert**

I will give in this paper, an account of a Monthly Concert, which I attended in a different place from that mentioned in my last. At the hour of meeting, I bent my steps towards the place of prayer, and had the pleasure as I approached the door, to find myself in company with several others, who entered the room at the same time as myself. Being a stranger, I seated myself in a retired part of the room, and was, I believe, unnoticed, except by a few who sat near me. While I was taking my seat, the minister entered. By the number who were present – though it was not half as large as it might have been, considering the population of the place – I concluded that here were some of the people who *loved* the Monthly Concert. The minister, without waiting till all had come in, commenced the exercises by reading four stanzas of a Psalm, which contained double that number. By the time these had been sung, most of the worshippers who came at all, had entered the room, and our number was much larger than I had been accustomed to see in places of about the same population. Now, thought I to myself, I will endeavour to ascertain, if possible, why so many attend this meeting at this place. The minister rose to pray. By his very first expressions, I perceived he was going to lead our minds and feelings away from ourselves. His views were spread at once over the globe. He blessed God for his promise to give the kingdom of this world to Christ. He gave thanks for the system of benevolent effort to extend the Gospel to every creature, which characterised the present day. He praised God for the success which had already attended the efforts of Christian benevolence. He prayed specifically for the success for each of the most prominent branches of this one great cause. In short, he seemed for the time, to forget himself and his own people, except as they formed a part of that great company, in every part of the world,

who united at that precious hour, in offering the prayer – *Thy kingdom come*.

At the close of this prayer, three stanzas were sung. Then, in an address of about ten minutes, the minister detailed some interesting facts in relation to the Palestine Mission. A brother was then called upon to pray, who, if I might judge from the appropriateness of his topics, and language, and from the apparent fervency of his spirit, understood very well the *object* of the Monthly Concert. The minister then continued his remarks about ten minutes longer, stating some additional facts, and endeavouring to excite the sympathy and aid of his people in favour of those who were destitute of their privileges. A third prayer was then offered up by a brother, who though he seemed to pray like a good man, was so intent on obtaining a blessing for the church and society with which he stood connected, that he apparently forgot, till the close of his prayer, the occasion which had called us together. I should have liked his prayer at any other time, but it was not a Monthly Concert prayer. I afterwards heard on inquiry, that he was a man of a worldly spirit, who did not love to contribute of his substance to build up the kingdom of Christ, and who, by being apparently very zealous for a revival of religion in his own neighbourhood, seemed to flatter himself that he was a very good Christian, though he was unwilling to sacrifice his worldly interests for the promotion of the cause of Christ. This account reminded me of several whom I had known in different churches – a class of professors, very zealous for revivals, but unwilling to deny themselves, and of doubtful character and prospects.

But to return from this digression. After the prayer last mentioned, the minister asked if anyone present had a remark to offer. An individual arose, and in a short but touching address, set forth the duty and the privilege of letting our *alms* accompany our *prayers*. This man, when he had done

speaking, was called upon to offer the concluding prayer. I was particularly struck with the spirit of expanded benevolence in which he seemed to breathe forth his desires to God. He pleaded for the descent of the Holy Spirit on a *world* of sinners. He seemed to embrace all mankind in the arms of Christian benevolence, and to be bearing them upwards to holiness and heaven. When he had concluded, a contribution was taken, and the meeting was closed by singing the Christian doxology in the tune of “Old Hundred.”

As I left the room, I felt that I had, in reality, attended a *Monthly Concert*. I was interested, and all who were present appeared interested in the meeting. “It was good for us to be there.” Those who were present at that time, I verily thought, would be likely, when the season returned, to attend again. With the exception of a single prayer – which, though good in itself, did not belong to that occasion – every thing was *appropriate*. I could not help breathing forth the desire – “O that every church in our land and in the Christian world, had *such* a Concert.” (from the *Vermont Chronicle*.)

Concentus.<sup>91</sup>

## **VOLUME FOURTEEN.**

### **1st June, 1829 to 29th May, 1830.**

#### **From the Editorial, 1st June, 1829.**

The monthly summary of religious intelligence for the Monthly Concert, is a new feature in our paper. Prepared by an association of gentlemen in the Theological Seminary. (In consequence of the vacation in College it is this week rendered brief and incomplete.) While it is a creditable proof that these

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<sup>91</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 13. 16th May, 1829. page 804.

gentlemen are commencing early their pastoral watch over the kingdom of their Master, we esteem it a valuable present to the readers of our paper, and a valuable guide to the prayers, meditations and resolutions of the Monthly Concert.<sup>92</sup>

### **Religious Intelligence Collected in the Month of May.**

[Circumstances render it impossible to prepare the usual monthly report. Nor is it necessary in consequence of the reports from the various religious societies. No Christian can review the history of the past month without feeling that the spirit of the Gospel is exalted and expansive, and that mighty as have been the efforts in the work of benevolence and salvation to which this spirit has prompted, yet that still greater efforts must be made by the church. We refer to the religious anniversaries held in New York. No Christian professor we trust, can contemplate the facts, and statements, exhibited at these anniversaries, without catching some of the same spirit, and engaging in its daily avocations with livelier impressions of his deepening obligations to consecrate himself and his, to the cause of his Master. The question may with propriety be asked by each one, When I publicly consecrate myself – my all – to my Redeemer, did I not include my wealth? Did not all include their wealth in this act of consecration? Do they not promise to give it up readily, cheerfully, whenever God in his providence may call for it? Why then this withholding of it, when God so loudly calls for it? Or is there no call, when **money only** is wanted to put the Bible into the hands of every destitute family in the United States – to establish schools among those perishing for lack of vision – in short, to send

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<sup>92</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 14. 1st June (30th May), 1829. page 11.

abroad to “earth’s remotest nation,” the glad tidings of great joy.]

**Revivals.** – Revivals continue still in many of the places mentioned in our last reports. There are revivals also in Kingston, Baskingridge, Lexington, N.J.; in Kelleyvale, Wallingford, Vt.; Belchertown, Mass., and in many of the towns on the west bank of the river, from West Springfield to Saybrook.

In the Valley towns of the Cherokee Nation, there is quite an attention to religion. Among the Choctaws also.

In Wales, England, thousands have been brought to a knowledge of the truth within a few months.

Meetings for prayer for revivals continue to be held in England.

In Germany and Switzerland a spirit of devoted piety seems to be spreading, calling into action much talent and learning.

From Greenland and Labrador, pleasing intelligence of the influence of the Gospel in elevating the human character has been received.

In Madagascar, thousands now can read, though eight years ago, not half a dozen knew anything of their own language. Nearly the whole Scriptures are prepared for revision.<sup>93</sup>

## **Religious Intelligence Collected in the Month of JUNE. [for the Monthly Concert.]**

**South America.** The Rev. Mr. Parvin, recently arrived in Buenos Ayres, has stated some interesting facts respecting the state of religion in that city. He supposes that there are from 5 to 6,000 persons in that city who speak the English

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid. pages 12 – 13.

language. There are three Protestant clergymen and one licentiate. From 150 to 200 attend at the Episcopal Church, and a dozen children receive instruction on the Sabbath. In 1827 a Presbyterian church was organised, at which about 60 attend, and about 75 children in the Sabbath schools connected with it. A Scotch Presbyterian church was opened March 15, 1829. But few families possess the word of life. Mr. Parvin has been engaged in carrying Bibles from house to house. The question now is, Shall the volumes from God, or the works of Voltaire be the Bible of this country? Christian, which shall?

**Seamen.** It is interesting to see the deepening interest felt in this long neglected class. A Magazine has been established for their benefit; which, however, if not better sustained must soon be discontinued. Are not the interests of 100,000 seamen sufficiently important to demand of Christians assistance in the support of this Magazine? Hast thou a son away upon the ocean? Take, Christian mother, this work for his and thy own good. It is only \$1.50 per year.

**Colonization.** At the second annual meeting of the Colonization Society of Connecticut, held on the 21st May, 1829, the following resolutions were adopted:-

**Resolved,** That this Society view with peculiar interest and approbation, the practice which is obtaining among the churches of contributing to the aid of this Society on the 4th of July, or the next succeeding Sabbath – a practice which we hope will prevail throughout the State.

Also, **Resolved,** That the Rev. J. H. Linsley, Rev. N. S. Wheaton, and Seth Terry, Esq., be a committee to devise measures to have an auxiliary Society to the Connecticut Colonization Society formed in each county in this State; one of the leading objects of which shall be, to have a public meeting in each town, or in several towns, united for this purpose, in the County on the 4th of July each year, at which meeting an

address shall be delivered, and a contribution taken to aid the funds of the American Colonization Society.

A circular has been addressed by the Managers of the N. Y. State Colonization Society to the clergymen of all denominations in this State, recommending that collections be made in the churches of that State on the 4th of July, or on the preceding or following Sabbath.

The following resolution was adopted by the board of managers of the parent Society, Dec. 22, 1828.

**Resolved,** That the African Repository after the first of March next, shall be sent to all such Clergymen as have this year taken up collections on or about the 4th of July, for this Society, and shall be continued to them as long as they shall continue annually to take up collections.

**WESTERN INDIANS. – Cherokees.** - Mr. Thompson says, ‘there appears to be a spirit of enquiry and a thirst for knowledge throughout all parts of this nation where I have travelled. In one instance, two Cherokees, a young man and woman, who could read, and who had failed of obtaining books at the meeting which we held at their place of residence, followed us on foot over one of the highest mountains I ever ascended, nine or ten miles, overtaking us just at its foot for the sake of getting each of them a hymn book.’

The translation of the Gospel of Matthew by Mr. Worcester is nearly or quite completed, and will be published without delay. Other books are in a course of preparation and they are all to be printed in the peculiar character invented by Mr. Guess.

**Choctaws.** - The whole number of Schools kept during the year is ten, containing in all 233 scholars. This year, 18 have left the schools, having acquired a common education – 29 have left without such a education, and 86 have joined the

schools. Mr. Williams writes – our meetings are very interesting. After the public preaching and an intermission, the natives continue to sing and pray for some hours, and are then loth to leave the place. As soon as one has spoken and prayed, another rises up, exhorts, and then prostrate before Jehovah, he pours forth his soul in prayer.

A letter from Elliot dated about the 20th of May states, that eight members of that family attend the inquiry meetings. Two of the principal Chiefs of the nation appear to be truly pious, and to have become nursing fathers. The new converts propose that hereafter the monthly concert be observed regularly by them, and that a weekly prayer meeting between the Sabbaths be kept up.

*Mackinaw.* - Mr. Ferry writes – I think as many as ten have become truly pious in the garrison and village. Among them are some of the most respectable and intelligent men in the place, white settlers and Indians. One poor crippled Indian woman seems to be a miracle of grace. Within a few days two of our boys have expressed a hope, others are more or less uneasy and seriously enquiring. The good work is still going on at Green Bay, and it is hoped with increasing power. Eight of the natives, says Mr. Miner, were added to the church the first Sabbath of this month. About 15 others are indulging hopes, some of them I believe on good grounds. Meetings are solemn, still and refreshing. Most of the youth are seriously concerned or hoping. Meetings are full on the Sabbath.

*Canada.*- The British and Canadian School Society began to establish schools on Bell's system in September, 1822. In September, 1825, there had been admitted 1,706 boys and 444 girls. There is also a Lancasterian school at Montreal, which is patronised by many Catholics. Many intelligent Catholic gentlemen have lately turned their observation to the United States, and are struck with the difference. On inquiring

into the causes of that difference, they are beginning to suspect that popular ignorance is less desirable than had been supposed. Even the priests, in self-defence, are beginning to encourage popular Education. And what is still more worthy of notice, the provincial Assembly has just passed an act appropriating no less than 12,413 pounds for elementary education, and authorizing the Governor to allow to the master or mistress of any school, having not less than 20 pupils, the sum of 20 pounds currency per annum and ten shillings for every poor child instructed gratis. Provision is also made for the election of trustees of schools, in every parish.

**United States.-** Many facts relative to the spread of Popery are alarming. The establishment of a Catholic Seminary at St. Louis, with subscriptions in that place of \$5,000, – with a considerable amount of this subscribed by Protestants. The silent but deadly influence of the Romish Church is already extensive and powerful, particularly over the rising generation, and consequently over the fountains of human character and action. A Catholic publication in Europe states that there are already in the State of Ohio 9 Catholic Missionaries, and in the city of Cincinnati an elegant Cathedral, attended by a congregation of about 300 – all at the expense of the ‘Society for Propagating the Faith’ at Rome. Will not the friends of the Redeemer, of their country and of humanity, awake to an effort in view of facts like these.

**Revivals.-** Revivals are reported from Glasgow and vicinity, Kentucky; from Midway, Marlborough Districts (where are 96 new communicants, and among them two Revolutionary soldiers,) South Carolina; from Berlin, Kingston, Berkshire, Sanbury, Genoa and Orange, Delaware Co., Athens Ohio; from Society Hill, Pa.; from Kelley Vale, Vt.; from Danville and Spenser, N.Y.. From still other places there are

notices of interesting revivals, which are unusually numerous at the present time.

The whole number of pious youth assisted by the American Education Society during the year is 404, - a large share of them are in the early stage of education.

By a resolution passed at the last Anniversary, the American Bible Society enters immediately upon an effort to supply every family in the U.S. with a Bible within two years. At a meeting held in New York a short time since, the sum of \$7,560 was subscribed: \$5,000 of which was by one individual.

We earnestly solicit the attention of all the friends of Religion and mankind, to the efforts of Temperance Societies and Sabbath Unions. The facts are too numerous and detailed for our limits, but they may be found in any of the religious periodicals.<sup>94</sup>

### **Religious Intelligence Collected in the Month of JULY. (wrongly stated as June.) [for the Monthly Concert.]**

The last month has been one, in which little matter, designed to be embraced in this report, has been given to the public. We believe the influences of the Spirit are descending upon many churches, exciting Christians to activity and zeal, and leading sinners to think on their ways; but no accounts of revivals have reached us, which have not been mentioned in preceding numbers.

**INDIANS. Mackinaw.** – The peculiarly interesting attention to religion at this station still continues. In a letter dated May 7th, Mr. Ferry writes, “The Lord has been pleased to bless us far beyond the weakness of our faith, At our communion on the second Sabbath in April, there were 17

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<sup>94</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 14. 27th June, 1829. pages 75 – 77.

added to the church, and at that time 23 or 24 more were cherishing a hope of having become reconciled to God. The number is still increasing.

*Seneca.* – The School at this station is as full as usual, containing about 56 scholars, who are well disciplined, and seem to improve as well as could reasonably be expected considering the obstacles which are presented by their early education. The people are very attentive to religious instruction on the Sabbath, our place of worship being frequently uncomfortable on account of the numbers. The Indians are busily engaged in erecting a meeting house at their own expense.

*Cattaraugus.* It is peculiarly gratifying to see the stand which some of the Indian tribes are taking on the subject of intemperance. They are just beginning to feel that it is a deadly evil. A Temperance Society has recently been formed at this station. About 40 signed a Constitution which obligated them to abstain entirely from drinking whiskey, or any distilled spirits, for the time of one year, and also to do all in their power by precept and example, to discountenance the use of it by others. Others have engaged to sign at the next meeting.

*South America.* Nothing but the notes of war and civil dissention reach us from this country. When it will be heard no more, he who sits in the heavens above knows. The people suffering much in this state of discord and contention, must be left, while this state continues to a melancholy extent, ignorant of the pure doctrines of the Gospel. – the slaves of sin, and exposed to the greater sufferings of the coming state of retribution.

*Sandwich Islands.* The most interesting feature of this mission is the schools, now widely scattered over different districts, and forming the young and rising generation to intelligence and virtue. These islands are daily assuming more

and more the appearance of a Christian country. No one, who feels interested in the happiness of his fellow beings can regret that he has given of his wealth to support those devoted missionaries in their labours, when he contemplates the tide of blessedness, now rolling over these once dark and miserable countries. God has owned the mission as his.

*New Zealand.* The mild Spirit of the Gospel is beginning to find its way into the abodes of this rude and savage people. The missionaries are encouraged – their influence is seen slowly, but surely extending itself.

In the Islands of the Pacific, though we no more hear of nations born in a day, a silent work, effected by the Holy Spirit through the truth, is going onward.

*Liberia.* The most interesting intelligence received the last month is from this Colony. The last dates were as late as the 22nd of April. Dr. Randall, who went out as successor to the late Mr. Ashmun, early fell a victim to the disease of the climate. His death was occasioned by too early an exposure, before he had sufficiently recovered from the fever, which brought on a relapse. Though providence seems to frown upon this settlement, it is to be hoped its friends will not be discouraged. Life, sacrificed to this object, is sacrificed in a noble cause.

The state of the colony, in other respects, is represented as flourishing. Agriculture is advancing slowly, but surely – trade both from the United States and from Europe is increasing.

The necessities of the Society are very great – never were greater. This Society embraces in it all that is great and noble in both Domestic and Foreign missionary Societies. Will

not – ought not Christians to give it their support – both money and prayers?<sup>95</sup>

**Mr. Temple, A.B.C.F.M. missionary in Malta.  
The Catholic Monthly Concert.**

A singular coincidence between Catholic and Protestant practises, is mentioned by Mr. Temple. At Malta, *on the first Monday of the month*, large numbers of women are accustomed to assemble on a spot near which large collections of human bones lie under ground, to pray for the souls of the dead which are suffering in purgatory. There they stand upon their knees for two hours or more, to utter their unmeaning prayers to effect their supposed deliverance. In the midst of the throng a priest stands with a box, and covered so as not to be recognised, collecting money to pay for the same masses for the dead. Their alms and their prayers are united together, in what they consider a most important object. *We* pray for souls that are yet subjects of mercy; and by an observable coincidence, one which certainly was altogether undesigned, we meet in *Monthly Concert* for prayer on the same day. It was to Mr. T. an affecting sight, to see these poor women wearying themselves in a task so hopeless and degrading; and he looked away to the land of his nativity, to cheer his heart in the belief that the many thousands of Israel were then pouring out their believing and united prayers to the God and Father of our Lord. But on the visit home, he has been pained beyond expression to learn how very few observe this season of special prayer. In most places where he has been through the country, the attendance at the concert is small. O when will the devotees of superstition cease to reprove and condemn the children of the kingdom in the midst of light? *Boston Rec.*

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<sup>95</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 14. 25th July, 1829. page 142.

## What Will You Give for the Souls?

Mr. Temple states, that during the almost seven years that he resided in Malta, he was witness regularly on Monday morning to a solemn and admonitory scene. A man passes through the streets, ringing a bell in one hand and rattling a box in the other, crying at every corner, "***What will you give for the souls? What will you give for the souls?***" The children and women come out of the habitations of poverty, and cast their mites into the box. When it is full of money, it is carried to a neighbouring convent, to pay the priests for praying the souls of the dead out of purgatory. Thus this gross superstition is supported by money gathered from the hand of penury itself. Thus the sympathies of the ignorant are excited, to maintain wicked men in praying useless prayers for those who are beyond the reach of prayers for mercy. By this affecting practice the faithful missionary was reminded of his obligations to pray, and toil, and suffer for those souls which are yet prisoners of hope, and to which the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ may come. And surely those who abide at home, and are excused from the perils and sufferings of the enterprise, may yet be inquired of what they will give for the salvation of men. It is true the gift of God cannot be purchased with money. Money cannot become a ransom for immortal spirits when ruined by sin. But it can feed and clothe the heralds of salvation. It can move the press that shall publish in every language the word of life. It can furnish the school, that shall teach young immortals who it is that hears prayer, and who, as a Prince has power with God and prevails. Reader, ***What will you give for the souls? What will you give for the souls?***<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 14. 30th January, 1830. page 569.

## Visit to Greece.

At the Monthly Concert in Park Street Church, Boston, on Monday evening, the Rev. Mr. Anderson gave a very lucid and instructive account of his late tour in Greece. Such an account, with the principal information which he collected, will be given to the public in due time; in expectation of which we shall not repeat the particulars which we heard at the Concert. We shall only state a very few on the *results* of his inquiries.

Education.- Greece has always had its schools. For a long period, they have been miserably degraded. They have been taught by ignorant priests; and the only school books in them have been a psalter, a book of prayer, and a very small spelling book, all in ancient Greek, which is not now the common language of the people. Hence the old schools are held in low estimation, although they excite some desire for knowledge. Since the revolution, Lancasterian schools have been introduced, twenty-five of which are already supported by the people; and an ardent desire for good schools and books is prevalent. Colocotroni said, "The Allies have given the Greeks liberty; I now hope the Americans will give them knowledge." Capodistrias, the President, is a man of enlarged and liberal views on the subject. He would, if it was in his power, immediately establish one hundred and fifty Lancasterian schools; and has given it in writing that the Scriptures shall form one of the books for schools throughout all Greece. This can be easily done; for it has always been the practice and is therefore expected. The pure word of God, thus imprinted on the minds of the youthful population, will be incalculably useful. Individuals in many places are making noble efforts for the promotion of knowledge. Mr. Anderson saw laid in one place the foundation of a house for a female school, which was about to be erected through the efforts of a Greek lady, and which was probably the first house for female education ever set

up in all Greece. There is every encouragement for entering into this inviting field, and the Prudential Committee have resolved to obey the call. They have already resolved to publish a system of school books adapted to the wants of the people.

Religion.- The points in which the Greeks agree with us in religious views, are more numerous than has been supposed, and their points of agreement with the Catholics fewer. Still they are ignorant and superstitious. They have no notion of spiritual regeneration, and place their religion in rites and ceremonies. – They intercede for the dead; pray much to saints, and more to the Virgin Mary than to God; have numerous pictures in their churches, which they regard as the Romanists do their images; and make the Sabbath a day of amusement. Such a Sabbath as we enjoy in New England the speaker did not witness, from the time he left the wharf in Boston till he returned. The clergy are more moral than those of the Romish church; but they seldom preach, and read an unmeaningful service in an unknown tongue. Still, there is one very important distinction between the Catholics and Greeks. The former have no access to the scriptures; the use of them is everywhere enjoined upon the latter, and they expect their light from that fountain. Mr. A. did not meet with a single ecclesiastic, who objected to the free use of the Holy Bible. What an opportunity is thus presented, to pour the light of heaven on hundreds of thousands of immortal minds.

The Rev. M. Temple is to leave on his return to the Mediterranean in the course of the present month, accompanied by two others. It is expected that one of these will go with Mr. Smith to the Morea; and the other with Mr. Bird to his former station at Beyroot. *Boston Recorder.*<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Fourteen. 16th January, 1830. pages 534 – 535.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

**1830 to 1839.**

### **VOLUME FIFTEEN**

**5th June, 1830 to 21st May, 1831.**

#### **MONTHLY CONCERT AT WASHINGTON. D.C.**

To return to my subject. Two of the Cherokees attended the Monthly Concert at one of our churches this week, on which occasion was read the interesting document on monthly Missionary Intelligence from the press of the Home Missionary Society. – That part of it which embraces the present state of the Choctaw nation deeply interested their attention. To the internal evidence of its truth they bore unequivocal testimony. Of the effects likely to be produced by the Treaty they must be considered adequate judges, and accordingly with the strongest feeling they deprecated similar effects among themselves. Taylor, the oldest of the Delegation offered a fervent prayer, with which those present seemed heartily and joyfully to join. The thought that probably many thousand Christians were praying for them that night kept up their spirits and inspired all their hope.

You will perceive that the Indians, while they put their trust in God alone for success, are resolved to leave no means unimproved, when I inform you, that about the first of last month, it was determined by them in Council that their principal chief, Ross, should make personal application to the Governor of Georgia, to show cause why a writ of error should not be granted by the Chief Justice of the United States, enjoining on the Governor to suspend the execution of the State laws in

certain cases, until their constitutionality should be tried before the proper tribunal.....<sup>98</sup>

### **Concert of Prayer for Colleges.**

The annual Concert of fasting and prayer for Colleges takes place, as our readers should remember, on the last Thursday, the 24th of this month. The period is near at hand. A period not only to be borne in mind by the Christian, but which it behoves him to meet with a preparation of thought and heart, suited to the importance of the solemn duties for which it is set apart. He is coming formally into the presence of a prayer-hearing God, on an errand of vast moment, and certainly some preparation is befitting such an approach. To discharge it properly must he not comprehend his errand? - can the heart go up earnestly and confidently before God, unless it is in some degree master of its subject? If God ever fulfils his promise to hear and answer the calls of his supplicating creatures, it is most certainly, when they come up to Him with the earnestness and entreaty of a heart that knows its wants and bears the subject of its desires in its hands. And when He has withheld the blessing asked, shall we not find, on self-examination, that it was for approaching his throne, in a condition unfit to receive it - with hearts unopened by contrition, for the reception of his will - with the listless, hesitation language of unpreparedness and ignorance of the subject? It is, be it remembered, "the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous man" that "availeth much."

If we would come then understandingly to the subject before us, prepared thereby to pray acceptably, it becomes us to consider the need of the blessing we ask - the condition of those upon whom it is asked - and to follow out the results of

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<sup>98</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Fifteen. 22nd January, 1831. page 537.

such a blessing upon the wide diffusion of the knowledge of Christ, and the salvation of the souls of men. Our hearts will kindle in the pursuit, and swell to span the measure of the good which might come of it, and rise with proportionate fervour to the God of prayer, to implore it of Him.

Every day brings news of the need of it. Every day brings us instruction how to pray for a blessing on our seminaries of learning, that may appropriate a portion of the youths there collected, to the cause of piety, and the diffusion of truth. Our country is in need. The world is in need. As the wave of population is rolling westward, covering for us new states and new territories, with an annual stride of 360,000 accountable souls, the constant cry is, "Come over and help us?" This wave outstrips the spread of intelligence, morality and virtue. The institutions, customs, examples and monitions which are scarce sufficient to preserve truth here, do not float with it. Does not this picture afford proof of the need of such a blessing? Not less annually than 200 preachers of the Gospel, are necessary to keep pace with this increase, and half as many more die annually. From whence shall this new levy and this recruit come? And the 500,000,000 of our fellow men, "who have never heard that a Ransom for their souls had been provided, are they to be left to perish for lack of knowledge? No, it must not be. We must pray that hundreds and thousands more may be prepared by the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit for this great work. There are in our Colleges, nearly or quite 3,000 young men, now impenitent, who, if thus sanctified, would become heralds of salvation to dying men."

These seminaries embrace within their walls the hope of our country – the men who are to fill the professions, and occupy the high stations of life, holding by means of their talents and advantages, an influence good or bad, which will be felt far and wide through our land. Is it not an object for

which the Christian might wrestle in prayer, to appropriate these talents, and this influence to the interests of purity and peace on earth, and the salvation of souls in Heaven? While the youth, talent, ambition, and future mental power of our country are thus gathered up, as it were, in a few sacred depots, let us come together at our respective places of prayer, and with a concerted voice, plead for God's blessing on them. And who shall say that He will not with His Holy Spirit "leaven the whole lump?" "Call upon me," is his declaration, "and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."<sup>99</sup>

## **Pastoral Letter. 1830. – subject – the Monthly Concert.**

**From the General Assembly to the Churches under their care, on the subject of the Monthly Concert.**

*The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, to the People under their care, "Grace to you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

Christian Brethren, - In attending, during our present sessions, to the reports from the several Presbyteries in our connexion, on the state of religion within their bounds respectively, we have been deeply grieved to find that the Monthly Concert for prayer has not been regarded in a manner corresponding with its unspeakable importance. In some Presbyteries and Congregations, indeed, it appears that the appointed season has been better observed than in others: but in almost all the observance we fear has been defective, and in

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<sup>99</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Fifteen. 19th February, 1831. page 600.

many no room is left to doubt that the neglect has been great and lamentable. We, therefore, felt it to be our indispensable duty to call your serious attention to this subject, and to endeavour to speak to you upon it, with the plainness, the fidelity, and the tenderness, becoming those to whom has been committed the care of souls, and who are under an awful responsibility for the faithful discharge of their sacred trust.

As it is our earnest desire that our views may in no respect be misapprehended, we would first of all observe, that we are very far from wishing to place the day or evening, assigned for the Monthly Concert, on the same footing as the Holy Sabbath. None but God, who gave us all our time, has a right to hallow any portion of it; and he has hallowed no more than one day in seven. This you know is the doctrine of our church, and it is a doctrine we have no wish to contravene, but to maintain and teach. There certainly may be occasions when the most fervent Christian may not only find it his duty to be absent from the Monthly Concert, but to employ the time of its continuance in such secular business as would be utterly improper, during any of the sacred hours of the Sabbath. But on the other hand, consider, brethren, that the word of God does plainly teach, that we should, as occasion requires, set apart of secular time for special prayer, and for fasting too, when the aspect of God's providence plainly calls us to these duties. Recollect also, that from the nature of the case, it is not possible there should be an extended union for special prayer, without a public agreement or understanding, as to the time when individuals shall come together for the purpose. Now we regard the Monthly Concert simply as a season of special prayer for the revival of religion, which the signs of the times plainly indicate to be proper; and which serious Christians throughout Protestant Christendom have voluntarily agreed to observe, that

their supplications may go up, as with one voice, to a prayer hearing and prayer answering God.

We are also solicitous that you should by no means suppose that we think the observance of the Monthly Concert, however strict, may come in place of the duty of prayer at other times, and in other forms. No, verily! On the contrary, it is with sorrow we find ourselves compelled to believe, that in the disregard of the Concert, we see, not a merely single omission, but a sad and strong indication that the spirit and duty of prayer in general, are in a low and languishing state at present, among the professing people of God within our bounds. If there was as much fervent and effectual prayer as there ought to be, in the closet, in the family, in the social prayer meeting, and in the public worship of the sanctuary, we are persuaded we should have no occasion to complain that the Concert was neglected. The love and holy delight of prayer, experienced and cherished in secret and social acts of warm and genuine devotion, would lead the participants in their exercises to rejoice in an opportunity to join their fellow Christians, in a more extended union for the same hallowed purpose.

Alas! Brethren, we do greatly fear, that the all-seeing God is witness, that the most of those who habitually, or generally, absent themselves from the Monthly Concert, do not address him in prayer at other times, and in other ways, with that fervour, frequency, and regularity, which Christian duty demands, and by which the spiritual health and prosperity of their own souls, would be greatly promoted. You perceive, then, that we wish the ordinary seasons and occasions of prayer should be increased, both in frequency and fervour, and not diminished on account of the Monthly Concert. We only desire that this latter should be added to the former. "These things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

We shall now, dear brethren, state to you some of the considerations which induce us earnestly to inculcate that the Monthly Concert should be observed generally, and carefully, and solemnly, by every professing Christian in all our churches; and by all, indeed, who have any serious concern for the salvation of their souls.

The first consideration we shall mention is, that we have no right to expect that any, or that all the means and instrumentalities that are now in use, or that can possibly be used, for the promotion of religion, will be successful – will be attended with any *saving* benefit, unless the blessing of God be sought, and drawn down upon them, by much earnest and persevering prayer. This is a truth plainly taught in the word of God, and one that has been confirmed by the experience of the church in all ages. Thus, when God promised to his ancient covenant people, saying – “A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh,” it is added, with reference to these very promised blessings – “Thus saith the Lord God: I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.” So also, when the prophet Daniel “understood by books,” that the captivity of his people in Babylon was near its close, he says, “I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes,” But it ought especially be noticed, that when, by another prophet, the latter-day glory of the church is predicted – the day which we hope is now near at hand, if it has not already begun to dawn – the day when Jew and Gentile shall be gathered into one fold, and shall acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ to be the true Messiah, the one great “Shepherd and Bishop of souls”- the whole, it is declared, shall be preceded by special prayer, and be given in answer to it; for thus speaks the holy oracle – “And I will pour upon the house of David, and

upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born.”

In like manner, we find in the New Testament, that while the apostles and primitive Christians were waiting for the promised gift of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost – “They all continued in one accord, in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren:” and it was while “they were all with one accord, in one place,” and doubtless employed in prayer and supplication, that they received, in the most astonishing manner, the blessing for which they had been waiting. It is worthy of observation, also, that in the brief and comprehensive form of prayer, taught by our blessed Lord to his disciples, no one subject of petition is made so prominent, as that which relates to the spread and success of the gospel. And how often did the apostle Paul ask the prayers of the churches to which he addresses his epistles, for himself and the other heralds of salvation? “Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you.” And how emphatically does he declare, that all human agencies and instrumentalities are absolutely nothing, but as they are used and blessed of God? “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase; so then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither is he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.”

With all these teachings and examples of holy writ, our own observation, brethren, is in perfect accordance. Have we ever known a revival of religion, in a particular congregation or region of country, which did not commence in a revival of a

spirit of prayer among God's people? He began with them; he revived them first. – Perhaps, indeed, their number was very small, but he impressed their spirits with a deep feeling of the constraining love of Christ, and of the infinite value of immortal souls, in danger of perishing all around them; and they cried mightily unto God for the influences of the Holy Spirit to revive his work; to show forth his glory; and to save sinners from their impending doom. Their cry was heard and answered; the influence of the Spirit of grace descended “as showers that water the earth;” converts were multiplied; and saints and angels rejoiced, over many sinners who repented and turned to God.

Consider attentively, brethren, the signs of the times. The day in which we live – blessed be God – is a day of much Christian enterprise, and of great expectation. But in our country at least, it is also a day in which the great adversary of souls, and his agents among impious men, are alarmed, awake, active, alert, banding together, forming every device, and putting forth every energy to arrest and counteract the progress of truth and righteousness. We derive encouragement from knowing that if God be for us none can be against us, so as to succeed eventually. He will ultimately and assuredly take care of his own cause, and sustain it effectually. But in the meantime, if we are not much engaged in prayer that he may *now* appear, and plead his cause *among ourselves*, we cannot tell to what lengths, in just displeasure at our remissness, he may suffer the wicked to prevail and triumph, and cover us with *confusion* – before he arises and scatters them as chaff before the whirlwind. We cannot tell but he will suffer his cause to languish and almost expire, in our own happy land, while he shall be pleading and reviving it in other countries. We verily are in jeopardy; and our refuge and hope are in God alone. Use whatever means we may, if there is not much earnest prayer –

the prayer of faith, wrestling with the angel of the covenant, the mighty God of Jacob, for his interposition, for his blessing on the other means, for his efficiency to be imparted to them – all will be vain and utterly abortive. The power to give them effect is all of God: and he seems to be waiting, to see whether we are sensible of our dependence, whether we acknowledge it, whether we deeply feel it, whether it will bring us with great and united importunity to his throne of grace, to plead with him to exert his power in our behalf; to send down his Holy Spirit; to turn his enemies into friends; to melt down all opposition, and to give his cause a glorious triumph throughout our beloved country; and ere long, throughout the world at large.

Our Sabbath, and Infant, and Common schools, our Bible classes, our Bible, Missionary, Education, Tract, and Temperance societies, our Colleges and Theological Seminaries, our Catechetical instructions, and the faithful and sound preaching of evangelical truth, are all *means* – most happily adapted in their nature and design, to promote knowledge, human happiness, and the salvation of immortal souls. But none of these, nor all of them combined, will effect what their best friends desire, unless the special blessing of God attends them. In the Monthly Concert all of these institutions and operations ought to be remembered; they ought to be borne on the hearts of God's praying people, when they beseech him to revive pure and undefiled religion. These – we repeat it – and all other benevolent institutions and operations, ought to be regarded simply as moral means; as *instruments* admirably fitted to produce reformation; but which notwithstanding never will produce it, on hearts naturally at enmity with God, unless he take them in to his own hands, and put into them a resistless efficiency. To think otherwise, is to idolize human instrumentality; it is to put it in the place of God. On this he will always frown; and if *we* are thus self-sufficient, he will

frown on us, and will show *us*, by mournful experience, that without him we can do nothing; that all our best plans and efforts will achieve nothing, till he shall please to interpose and crown them with success. It is in prayer that we recognize this truth; we acknowledge it to God, and we impress it upon our own hearts. We go out of ourselves; we confess our utter impotence; and “we lift up our eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh our help:” deeply sensible that “our help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.”

In our extended concert of prayer, if rightly conducted, there is a wide recognition of this great and essential truth; a recognition of it in regard to all the exertions, plans and efforts, that are now in use throughout Protestant Christendom. We solemnly profess before the Sovereign of heaven and earth, that we feel our nothingness; that we are sensible that without his interposition and aid, we shall, by all our doings, effect nothing for the promotion of his cause; and we earnestly plead that he would not withhold that blessing which is essential to success – that he would “arise and plead his own cause.” In this view the importance of the Concert is unspeakable.

But there are other considerations relative to this season for special prayer, which deserve our serious regard. One is, the encouragement which we derive from holy Scripture, to expect that an extensive union in prayer will be more prevalent than that which was less general. An instance we have of this in the case of the Ninevites, who by a deep humiliation “and crying mightily unto God,” were preserved from the judgments of the Lord, which his own prophet had denounced. Another striking example is recorded in the Book of Esther, from which it appears that the whole Jewish nation, when imminently threatened with utter extermination, entirely escaped the peril, after a general humiliation and looking to God for deliverance. Our Saviour himself taught the peculiar efficacy of union in

prayer, when he said, “where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.”

The smallest number in which union can exist is mentioned, for the manifest purpose of establishing *the principle* that social prayer is, for certain purposes, more prevalent than that which is individual and solitary; and hence the strong implication, that extended union may warrant the hope of an extended blessing. It is further to be considered, that the very thought that many thousands, in different parts of the world, are engaged with ourselves at the same time, in sending up their petitions to the throne of God’s mercy, is calculated greatly to encourage, excite and animate us, in our devotions. This proceeds from that social principle of our nature which God has given us, and in accordance with which our lawful desires and petitions, addressed to himself, are most likely to be answered.

Again – It is a very interesting consideration that the missionaries, who have gone forth to declare the glad tidings of salvation to the destitute in our own country, and to declare them in foreign lands to Jews, Pagans, and Mahometans – ask us to join with them in this Concert; they ask our united and earnest prayers for their success; and they tell us they are greatly animated and encouraged in their arduous work, by knowing they are commended to the special care and benediction of God, by pious Christians of different denominations, in a Concert of fervent supplications in their behalf. – They tell us repeatedly, that they look to the Monthly Concert as the life-spring of their hopes: And Oh! can anyone who feels the smallest spark of Christian love, refuse this share of encouragement to these devoted servants of our dear and common Lord.

Finally – The special object of the Monthly Concert is for the conversion of the whole world to God: in fulfillment of

the predictions and promises of the Holy Scriptures. This is an object most dear to the heart of every real Christian. It must and will be regarded in almost all of his prayers. It forms, we have remarked, the most prominent part of the Lord's Prayer. Inasmuch, then, as it is a common object of prayer, and the most important for which prayer can be offered, how proper, how reasonable, how obligatory does the duty seem, that the whole "sacramental host of God's elect," should take as it were a united hold of this great object, and carry it in concert to the foot of the divine throne, and there, with one heart and tongue, most ardently plead with their common God and Father, that he would grant the petitions which their great Intercessor and Advocate, now before his mercy-seat on high, dictated to his disciples in the day of his flesh – "Hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

In the conclusion of our address, we "beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation." We exhort you with all earnestness, to cherish in yourselves, and to endeavour, by all lawful means, to promote in others, the spirit of prayer. It does seem to us that this, more than anything else, is what is lacking among professing Christians at the present day. – We do not pray enough, nor with engagedness enough. We say not, brethren, because we do not believe, that we give more than we ought, or as much as we ought, of our substance, time, activity, and exertion, for the promotion of the cause of God. But we do say, that the greatest want, is the want among Christians in general, of that "effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous man which availeth much." O! if there was more importuning of God in the prayer of faith, we doubt not there would be more revivals of religion in our land; more success of our missionaries at home; and abundantly more to crown the labors of those, who, from our own and other countries, have gone to the wretched heathen. Prayer too would bring an

influence into our Sabbath schools and Bible classes, such as we have never yet see; and give an efficiency to all our plans and enterprises of benevolence and piety, that would fill us with surprise. Humble, earnest, persevering prayer, among all who name the name of Christ, would likewise, we are persuaded, soon be followed by the Spirit of the Lord lifting up a standard against that array of bold and blasphemous infidelity, which now threatens more injury to our beloved country, than if – with God our friend – all the nations of the earth were leagued against us.

We exhort you, therefore, brethren, that in your closets, and families, and praying associations, and the sanctuary of God, and the Monthly Concert, there be an earnest cry and an earnest effort, for the revival of the spirit of prayer. In regard to the Concert, let those professors of religion who have hitherto neglected it, be entreated by a regard to the consistency of their Christian profession; by a consideration of the example which they are bound to set before others; as they would encourage and not grieve the hearts of their fellow Christians; as they would promote their own growth in grace, and spiritual peace and comfort; as they love the Redeemer that died for them; as they love their country, exposed, on account of abounding iniquity, to the sore judgments of heaven; and as they wish to share in the happiness and reward of those who promote the kingdom of God and his declarative glory in the world – in view of all these motives, let them be entreated to take part with their brethren, in the sacred duty of praying for the speedy accomplishment of the promise, that “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” Signed in behalf, and by order of the General Assembly, EZRA FISK. Moderator. Philadelphia, May 31, 1830.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> *Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.* 1830. pages 39 – 42.

**VOLUME SIXTEEN**  
**4th June, 1831 to 26th May, 1832**

**The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.  
Convened on Thursday, May 19, 1831.**

Today we have had a sacred enjoyment in listening to the Reports of the Presbyteries on the state of religion. The whole day was spent in this delightful work. There are 101 Presbyteries, the most of which – probably near 80 – were represented. I cannot pretend to give you a minute account of these reports. I will only give you a very condensed summary.

Nearly three hundred congregations of the Presbyterian Church were reported as having been visited with revivals of greater or less extent; whilst it was reported that in many others, the state of things is highly encouraging. Oh, what blessed intelligence! The report from the Association of Connecticut, read by the Rev. Mr. Bacon; the reports for the General Associations of Vermont; and New Hampshire; the Consociation of Rhode Island, and the General Conference of Maine, were most interesting. In Connecticut more than 50 congregations, of our Congregational brethren alone, have enjoyed precious seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; in New Hampshire, in ten towns, or townships, as we say, there have been revivals; in Vermont there are ten congregations which enjoy revivals within 30 miles of Middlebury; in Rhode Island several churches have been visited; and in Maine, God has gloriously displayed his power to save. In 30 towns there have been revivals, and many hundreds have been gathered into the kingdom of Christ. If possible, I will send you a copy of the report of Mr. Thurston, the interesting and excellent delegate from that state. His

amiable spirit and his devoted and humble piety, make him an admirable exemplar of what all ministers ought to be in ecclesiastical meetings. I will also send you a copy of the Report read by Mr. Bacon, if I can procure one. About 120 students have been in the judgment of charity, converted at Yale, 30 at Williamstown, 30 at Amherst, 30 at Middlebury, and 20 at Bowdoin College.<sup>101</sup>

### **Religion in Connecticut, as Reported to the General Assembly.**

The General Association of Connecticut was formed one hundred and twenty-three years ago. Its territory is 90 miles by 70 in extent, with a population somewhat less than 300,000. It includes twelve distinct Associations of ministers, connected with 222 churches, of which 193 are believed to be supplied with pastors, leaving 29 at the present time vacant. The whole number of Congregational ministers reported on the list of the General Association, including the superannuated, and those employed as instructors of youth, or as agents of benevolent institutions, is 231. The number of communicants in our churches is estimated at 30,000, or not far from one-tenth of the entire population.

The churches and ministers are enjoying peace and mutual confidence. Feeble congregations, it is believed, are gaining courage and strength; and new churches are formed from year to year, to meet, though perhaps inadequately, the wants of new villages. Sabbath Schools and Bible classes exist in nearly every congregation, and are regarded by pastors and churches with a steadily increasing interest. – The various enterprises of Christian benevolence, for the distribution of Bibles and Tracts,

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<sup>101</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Sixteen. 4th June, 1831. page 7.

Especially have the power and grace of God been manifested within the past five months. – The same reviving influences of the Holy Spirit which have visited so many portions of the greater or less degree, the special visitation of the Spirit of God, since the commencement of the present year; and every week brings us the tidings that another and another of the churches is rejoicing in the same mercy of the Saviour. The cities of Hartford and New Haven have been particularly blessed. In Yale College about one hundred and twenty of the students have given evidence of having passed from death to life. The prosperity of this venerable institution in all its departments cheers its friends and is auspicious to the interests of the church of God. The Theological Seminary numbers about fifty students. Of the undergraduate students about one hundred and ten were professedly pious before the commencement of the present revival.

We ask in behalf of the General Association and all the churches in connection, a continual interest in the Christian sympathies of the churches represented in this General Assembly, and their prayers that the God of our Fathers, who cast out the heathen, and planted that vine which still covers our hills with its shadow, while it has sent forth its boughs to the sea, and its branches to the river, would ever cause that ancient vine and all its thrifty offsets to flourish with the clusters of holiness. We meet here our kindred and brethren, the descendents of our Pilgrim Fathers, and the partakers of the same precious faith with them and with us. And for our brethren and companion's sakes, we will say, Peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces. Because of the house of the Lord our God that is within thee, we will seek thy good.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Sixteen. 18th June, 1831. pages 39 – 40.

**Reports on the Great Revival of 1831**  
**From the *Religious Intelligencer*, Volume 17.**  
**(June 1832 – May 1833.)**

**Narrative of the State of Religion** within the Bounds of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and corresponding churches, May, 1832.

In giving to our churches a brief narrative of the progress of religion within our bounds since the last meeting of the Assembly; it is rendered less important to enter into particular details, by the fact, that most of this information has already been diffused, through the numerous channels, by which religious intelligence is so generally disseminated. All that can be expected, from this body, is a condensed view of the general results of the blessed revivals, which so many of the churches have enjoyed.

It is our delightful privilege to report, that sixty-eight Presbyteries have been blessed with the special influences of the Holy Spirit, reviving the churches, and bringing perishing sinners to the saving knowledge of the truth. In these highly favoured Presbyteries about seven hundred congregations are reported as having been thus visited in rich mercy. In many of these places, thus refreshed by the showers of divine grace, the displays of the power of the Gospel have been glorious, almost beyond example. Several Presbyteries have had their whole territory pervaded by an heavenly influence, and every congregation has become a harvest field for the ingathering of souls, to the fold of the good Shepherd.

In the details of these numerous revivals, we cannot fail to notice some circumstances, which distinguish the present age, and manifestly deserve particular attention. One of these

is the general extension of the work of grace. Formerly, it was a prevalent opinion, that some places and some communities were so entirely occupied and strongly fortified by the enemy, that no rational hopes could be cherished, that they would ever rejoice in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. So that in reference to the existence of a work of grace in such localities, we have been ready to say *if the Lord would make windows in Heaven might such a thing be!* But these conclusions of unbelief have been put to shame, by the easy conquests which divine love has recently achieved, in the very strong holds of proud infidelity, over the congregated forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Some sterile regions, where scarcely a plant of righteousness was ever seen, have become like the garden of the Lord. And in some communities, heretofore distinguished by the triumphant dominion of worldliness and impiety, the transformation, produced by the influence of the gospel, is so great, as to force all men to exclaim, "*What hath God wrought!*"

It is another distinguishing characteristic of the recent revivals, that so many of the subjects of renewing grace have been found in those classes of society, in which instances of conversion have usually been of very rare occurrence. We have been accustomed to consider men of wealth and political eminence, whose characters were already formed, under an unholy influence, as far removed from all probability of conversion, and almost beyond the reach of the means of grace. But we have lately been most impressively taught, not thus to limit the Holy One of Israel. In many places, the most numerous instances of conversion have been found, among the most active and influential members of society. And in several instances, the leading persons in the community, consisting of professional men, men of wealth, talents and high political standing, have been subdued to the obedience of faith, and led

willingly to renounce forever all glory, excepting that which is found in the cross of Christ.

One more distinctive trait in the work of grace, with which our churches have been so extensively blessed; is found in the resistless energy which has accompanied it. Several of our reports recount such triumphs of grace, over all opposition, as have rarely been witnessed. So overpowering have been the manifestations of the divine presence, in some places, that hardly a single adult, in a whole community, remained unaffected. Large congregations have been brought by the mighty power of God, anxiously to inquire with one united voice, *what must we do to be saved?* Often, and in places far distant from each other, has the thrilling spectacle been presented, before angels and men, of the wealthy and the learned, the eminent and high-minded, falling prostrate at the footstool of mercy and prayer. The barriers of pride, the fortresses of false religion, and the strong holds of infidelity and licentiousness, have been utterly demolished, by the manifested presence of the Holy One. Bitter party contentions have been forgotten, and deadly foes have come hand in hand, bathed in tears of contrition, to the Saviour's feet.

We cannot omit to mention the extraordinary extension of this gracious influence. From the shores of the northern lakes, to the plains of Florida; from the Atlantic border, to the banks of Missouri, we hear one united testimony, that the Lord hath appeared to build up Zion. In the crowded city, and the forest wild – in the halls of legislation, and the cottages of the poor – in the circles of refined elegance, and the cabins of servitude – among men of letters, and savages of the forest, there has been one pervading influence, one discriminate transformation of character. *“They do all speak in their own language the wonderful works of God.”*

It is a very interesting and gratifying circumstance, that the same reports, which announce these revivals, so wholly unexampled in number and extent, generally contain direct testimony as to the means; which have been blessed to their production and promotion. From these authentic sources, the Assembly has collected some valuable information upon a subject so vitally important; and commends it to the attention of all the churches. In examining the narratives, which the most highly favoured Presbyteries have given of the gracious operations of the Spirit of God, within their bounds; there is the clearest evidence, that the blessing bestowed, has been in proportion to the appropriate means employed. A spirit of fervent prayer, deep humiliation, and active effort in the churches, and a course of devoted, persevering labours on the part of the ministry, uniformly preceded, the displays of pardoning mercy.

And in these spiritual harvests the amount of good actually accomplished, has appeared to depend upon the diligence and fidelity, with which the field has been cultivated; insomuch that in several cases, the reports distinctly state, that the work of grace extended to every place where an active and faithful ministry was enjoyed. The heart-searching appeal, which this statement addresses to all our members and ministers, needs no argument to enforce it.

Upon another subject of deep interest, there is a general unbroken testimony from all parts of the church, which have been blessed with a refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We refer to the rich and precious blessings which have attended the numerous *protracted meetings* which have been held throughout our borders. Whatever honest difference of opinion there may have been, as to the utility of such convocations; whatever fears may have been cherished as to their tendency, the question now seems decided, that the Lord as signally

owned and abundantly blessed them, and that the seal of divine approbation is visibly and indelibly fixed upon them. From all portions of the church we hear the language of praise, for the great things God has done by means of *protracted meetings*, and of the glorious displays of converting grace which have rendered them eminently seasons of mercy.

Among the means which the Lord has graciously owned and blessed during this year of jubilee, many of your reports specially commemorate the influence of temperance societies. It is now a well-established fact, that the common use of strong drink, however moderate, has been a fatal, soul-destroying barrier against the influence of the gospel. Consequently, wherever total abstinence is practised, a powerful influence of resisting the Holy Spirit is removed, and a new avenue of access to the hearts of men opened to the power of truth. Thus, in numerous instances, and in various places, during the past year, the temperance reformation has been a harbinger, preparing the way of the Lord; and the banishment of that liquid poison, which kills both soul and body, has made way for the immediate presence of the Spirit and the word, the glorious train of the Redeemer.

Signally efficacious also in promoting this glorious work of grace, have been those institutions which afford religious instruction to the young – which convey the messages of salvation to children, before they are steeled against them by pride and prejudice – which apply the balm to their diseased hearts before the malady becomes inveterate, and which present the overtures of a Saviour's love to those who are on the threshold of life, and not yet fully enlisted under the banner of Satan. The discovery seems to have been reserved to bless this age of the world, that the fairest and most promising field of religious effort, is afforded by early childhood – that it is not wise to wait until the enemy is entrenched and fortified, before

the attempt is made to dislodge him – and that there is a method of preaching the gospel, most effectually, to a whole congregation of children. Sunday Schools and Bible Classes accomplish this most benevolent object. And the history of the Holy Spirit's operations during the past year, in blessing so many of our churches, and calling so many thousands of sinners to repentance, affords a full and cheering testimony upon this subject. Sunday Schools have proved to be the nurseries of revivals; their teachers have been found efficient, devoted labourers in gathering souls to Christ; and their pupils have come in lovely bands at the Gospel call, clustered round the cross, given up their young hearts to God, and sung *hosannas to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

We notice only one thing more in the reports of revivals, and that is the mighty power with which the simple truths of the Gospel have been attended. We have been too prone to believe, that the champions of infidelity were only to be encountered by subtle and skilful argumentation – that the pride of unsanctified intellect was only to be humbled by triumphant reasoning; and that the fortresses of high-minded impenitence were only to be successfully assailed, by the combined forces of learning and eloquence. But the experience of the past year has made us wiser. We have had a practical comment upon that inspired declaration – *not by might nor power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.*

While the high places of Satan's kingdom have been invaded by the power of the Gospel, while many of the conquests of redeeming mercy have been achieved among those who were considered beyond the reach of any gracious influence, while a mighty host of men, high-minded, talented men, have laid their honours down at the Saviour's feet; these wonderful events are not to be ascribed to any new energy of

human means. No prophet has arisen clothed with miraculous powers, to overwhelm opposers with resistless demonstration; no new messages from heaven have furnished with mightier weapons the soldiers of the cross. On the contrary, the word has been preached with greater plainness and simplicity than ever. And the solemn inculcation of the doctrines of the cross, and earnest, urgent appeals to the understandings and consciences of men, have been the means, rendered mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, and subduing proud hearts to the obedience of faith.

Who can estimate the precious influence which must be exerted by these 700 renovated churches, upon the whole population of our country – upon present and future generations? What energy of moral power is thus imparted to the cause of truth. How many fountains of salvation are thus opened to gladden the dry and thirsty land. The fruits of this astonishing work of grace are valuable to the church and the world, beyond all human computation. In numerous communities, the predominating influence is now consecrated to the cause of God. How many mothers have been prepared by grace, to train up their children for the kingdom of heaven. And what a noble army of young men have renounced the honours of the world, and devoted themselves to the cause of the Redeemer. – Never, until the destinies of eternity are unfolded, can be known the full amount of blessings bestowed in these dispensations of mercy. Verily the Lord hath done great things for us, let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Every minister and member in our communion, should be encouraged and animated, by such rich experience of Divine goodness, to more entire devotedness, and untiring diligence, in the Master's cause. – The most affecting motives are presented,

to lay aside all distinctions of party, and let the only strife be who shall be most humble, devoted and self-denying.<sup>103</sup>

### **Second Installment.**

[A long report follows about the various benevolent societies being strengthened and promoted as a result of the revival – The attempt to distribute a copy of the Bible to every home in the USA; the American Tract Society; Sunday schools and Bible classes; the American Sunday School Union; the cause of temperance; Christian Missions, including the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; the Assembly’s Board of Missions; the American Home Missionary Society; the Board of Education of the General Assembly; the American Education Society [to finance candidates for the ministry], the American Seaman’s Friends Society; and the American Colonization Society]

From the *General Association of Connecticut* we learn with no ordinary emotions of pleasure, that so powerful and extensive have been the revivals, in that State, during the past year, that almost all the churches have enjoyed these rich blessings. Those gathered into the visible fold of Christ in this great harvest, are vastly more numerous and more valuable as to character and influence, than in any former year. The happy effects of this mighty work of grace are not confined to its immediate subjects; but are gloriously manifest in the elevation of Christian character, in the moral state of the community at large, and in the flourishing condition of all benevolent institutions. Yale College has been greatly favoured of the Lord; and one hundred and ninety of its students are now the professed followers of the Lamb.

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<sup>103</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 17. 16th June, 1832. pages 43 – 45.

From the *General Association of Massachusetts*, we rejoice to hear similar glad tidings. More than two hundred churches, in connection with that body, have enjoyed special effusions of the Holy Spirit, and more than six thousand souls have professedly passed from death to life. Protracted meetings have been generally adopted and greatly blessed; and the temperance reformation has afforded efficient aid, in promoting the work of God.

From the *General Convention of Vermont, the General Association of New Hampshire, the General Conference of Maine, and the Evangelical Consociation of Rhode Island*, we receive reports, that the state of religion generally is decidedly and increasingly favourable. Many of the churches, in connexion with those bodies respectively, have enjoyed refreshings from the presence of the Lord. Benevolent institutions are generally prosperous; temperance is spreading its triumphs; the standard of morals is rendered more pure and elevated; and literary institutions are becoming more and more the nurseries of piety, and efficient auxiliaries in building up Zion.

Thus these ecclesiastical bodies unite with the Assembly, in a grateful acknowledgement of the unequalled blessings, which the Head of the Church has graciously bestowed upon this highly favoured nation. He hath not dealt so with any people. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and all that is within us, bless his holy name.<sup>104</sup>

## **Pastoral Letter.**

Dearly Beloved Brethren:

You will perceive by the narrative of the state of religion which we this year publish, that the God of all grace

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<sup>104</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 17. 23rd June. 1832. pages 58 – 60.

has been pleased, during the last year, to pour out more copiously of his blessed Spirit on the people of our denomination in this land, than perhaps in any period of equal extent, in former times. For this signal and ineffable benefit, we desire that you may unite with us, in ascribing humble and fervent thanksgiving to Him from whom we have received this transcendent mercy, and “from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift.”

[This led to a lengthy discussion of the proper use of means, the dangers, and things to be wary of, in the promoting and progress of revivals.]<sup>105</sup>

### **The General Association of Connecticut.**

The meeting of this ecclesiastical body was very fully attended last week, at Norwich. Delegates were present from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the Associations of Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine and Rhode Island. The Rev. Dr. Tenney of Wethersfield was chosen Moderator, and preached an appropriate sermon from Isaiah, vi.3. Uninterrupted harmony, and true brotherly love pervaded the whole session.

The reports from the District Associations on the state of religion were such as were never heard before. Not less than *eight thousand* persons have been added to the Congregational churches in this little vineyard of the Lord during the last year. Between six and seven thousand [were added to the churches] in the state of Massachusetts, and in about this proportion to the orthodox Congregational churches in all the New England states.

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid. pages 60 – 62.

From the report of the Connecticut Missionary Society, now auxiliary to the American Home Missionary Society, it appears that the receipts were more than \$9,000. A larger sum than was ever raised in one year for domestic missions. We hope our brethren in the Presbyterian Church who are so afraid of everything that grows in the land of the Puritans, will be convinced that we have not only “mills where we manufacture ministers,” but that there is disinterested benevolence enough, where pure religion reigns, to send them out at our own charges, as we have done these thirty years, to carry the glad tidings of salvation to the destitute, and plant churches on our western borders as fast as they widen, until the blessing of those who are now sitting in darkness shall flow back upon us from the Pacific Ocean.

The following Resolutions were adopted by the General Association – The highest ecclesiastical court to which Congregationalism can appeal.

**Resolved**, That, in the judgment of this Association, the traffic in ardent spirit, as a drink, is an immorality, and ought to be viewed and treated as such throughout the world.

**Resolved**, That this immorality is utterly inconsistent with a profession of the Christian religion; and that those persons who have had the means of understanding its nature and effects, and yet continue to be engaged in it, ought not to be admitted as members of Christian churches.

**Resolved**, That, in our view, those members of Christian churches, who continue to be engaged in the traffic of ardent spirit as a drink, are violating the principles and requirements of the Christian religion.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 17. 30th June, 1832. page 72.

## **State of Religion in Maine.**

We make the following extracts from the report made by the delegate from Maine to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

*The General Conference of Maine* is composed of nine County Conferences, which have in their connection 166 churches, containing in all about 12,500 members. These churches, being scattered over a territory larger than all the rest of New England, are located, of course, in most cases, among a sparse population. Of them, 128 are enjoying the word and ordinances from settled ministers, although the number of such ministers is only 112; a few of them having the pastoral care of two or more churches.

A large portion of the State being missionary ground, the prosperity of the churches, and the state of religion within its bounds, are connected in an unusual degree with the operations of the Missionary Society. Hence arises the fact, that more than half of the evangelical ministers in the States were introduced to their respective fields of labour, by means of this Society.

Among the greatest obstacles to the success of the gospel in Maine, both in the church and out, has been and still is the consumption of ardent spirits. The great number of our citizens engaged in shore fisheries, in lumber transactions, and in ship building, have been heretofore large consumers of ardent spirits. Our farmers indeed, and all classes, were greatly in the habit of using this destructive poison. A blow, however, has been given to this evil, from which we trust it will not recover. A good proportion of our population, of all classes, are disposed to unite their influence and efforts, in expelling this destroyer from our land. A few months since, a State Temperance Society was formed in Maine, under favourable auspices; and an agent for the State appointed. There are also

upwards of one hundred and forty town and country societies; and intelligence from every section of the State is cheering, as to the progress of the reformation.

This reformation in the use of ardent spirits, the exploring and supplying the State with Bibles, together with the introduction of protracted meetings, have been greatly blessed to the promotion of vital religion. Although it cannot be denied that there is still among our population in general, a great disregard of divine things, and in many of our churches a lamentable want of spirituality, and much worldliness, yet the last year has been a year of great mercy. At no former period, of the same extent, has the Holy Spirit wrought among us with such power and grace. There have been revivals in more than seventy towns and churches, connected with the General Conference, and not less than 2,500 souls are supposed to have been born again. One County Conference, having twenty churches, and 2005 members, had one third of this whole number added the last year. And two other Conferences, one having 1040 members, the other 3353 members had more than one fourth of them added during the same period; and about one fifth of all the members of the churches belonging to the General Conference, became such during the year past. To other and more favoured portions of our country, these operations may indeed appear to be the day of small things; but to us it is quite otherwise. The General Conference of Maine are prepared to say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

Sections follow on Sunday Schools and Protracted Meetings.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 17. 7th July. 1832. page 93 – 94.

## **State of Religion in Massachusetts.**

The following is an abstract of the Narratives prepared by the editor of the New-York Evangelist, who was present at the late meeting of the General Association:-

**Berkshire Association.**- Many of the churches have received more members during the last year than in any previous year, as the fruits of revivals that took place about a year ago. A pleasing revival took place at Otis, late in the autumn, which resulted in about 20 hopeful conversions. In Williams town, a revival in the winter, conversions about 30, several of whom were members of the college. A still greater work was at Pittsfield, numbering 130, many of whom were pupils in the Berkshire gymnasium and the female boarding school. There are in the county 4,000 Sabbath scholars. Most of the converts are from this class. Churches 25, of which 6 have no pastor; church members about 5,000.

**Mountain Association.**- There has been more or less seriousness in every congregation. Sabbath schools are flourishing. The regard of the people for various objects of charity is rising. Temperance advancing.

**Franklin Association.**- Eighteen churches, eleven of them have pastors, and all of them have Sabbath Schools. During the intervals of public worship on the Sabbath, in some congregations, nearly the whole assembly remain together in the Sabbath school, attending to the word of God. More than half the churches have had revivals. There have been thirteen protracted meetings. In several of the congregations, one fourth or one third, and in one more than half of the whole population belonging to the society are members of the church.

**Hampshire Association.**- 21 churches, 18 pastors.- Every church has had a revival, 800 added to them, the largest number 146. There has been a corresponding increase of piety

and benevolence, \$1,600 has been contributed for home missions, and \$3,000 for foreign missions; more than 4,000 Sabbath scholars. These schools have shared largely in the revival. The Sabbath is less desecrated than formerly. The National Circular on Temperance has been placed in every family, and has brought out 3,000 to join the Temperance Society, making the whole number of members about 8,000.

**Hampden Association.**- 21 churches, 14 pastors;- about one half have experienced revivals, and considerable excitement has existed in the others. The number added in 1831, was 490. In Mosen Academy about 30 young men are preparing for the ministry.- Sabbath scholars, 4,676. Contributions to religious charities [were] much larger than in any former year.

**Brookfield Association.**- 18 churches, almost without exception blessed with revivals. Protracted meetings have been general. Very few have been gathered in who did not previously abstain from ardent spirits.

**Harmony Association.**- 11 churches; all but one have experienced revivals. The whole number added in 8 months was 600. Protracted meetings in all, with good results.

**Worcester North Association.**- Several of the churches have come more directly under the influence of truth. Six of the churches have been gathered recently [that is – from Unitarianism]. Protracted meetings in most of the churches, and much blessed.

**Middlesex Union.**- 12 churches, ALL of which had been driven out from the house of God, and all had built, or were building, new places of worship. They were as coals of fire raked out from among the cold embers of Unitarianism. Congregations had been increasing the last year; some of them rapidly. In the Sabbath schools, 260 had been born of God. One thousand seven hundred dollars contributed to the cause of

Christ. Revivals in almost every church connected with protracted meetings. The hopeful converts reckoned at 500. **Only one** man in our churches is still engaged in retailing ardent spirits.

**Middlesex South Association.**- 8 churches; 4 ministers have been dismissed since to the first of January.- During the year 1831, each one enjoyed a revival, connected with protracted meetings. Added to the churches, 260. Whole number [of members] 1,068. Most of the churches are of recent formation, and several have had to build houses of worship at great expense. **No merchant** in their communion is guilty of the crime of selling ardent spirits.

**Andover Association.**- 15 churches, 4 ministers dismissed last year. Nearly all had revivals, and large accessions. In Lowell the revival had continued more than four years without interruption. And not only the place, but the whole community had been blessed by it. Young people coming there from other places, in connexion with the manufacturing establishment, had been converted and sent home to do great good. Woburn had enjoyed a revival for six years, with little interruption, and upwards of 400 members had been added in that time.

**Haverhill Association.**- 16 churches, but one half are in New Hampshire. All but one have pastors, and nearly all have had revivals. The work has been rapid and short. Few were awakened except at protracted meetings. Many of the converts are from the higher walks of life, and not a few from the open opposers of evangelical truth. West-Haverhill church lost their meeting-house, and their parish fund, amounting to \$12,000. Andover Theological Seminary has 153 students on its catalogue, besides resident licentiates.

Many evils are still prevalent. Sabbath breaking is entirely unchecked. Church members still drink and sell ardent spirits. And very much remains to be done.

**Essex Middle Association.**- 15 churches, 12 pastors; 800 added, and probably 200 converts more remain to be received. Seventy hopeful converts in Miss Grant's school in Ipswich, who have mostly joined to the churches where they have their homes. Revivals in all the churches.

**Salem and Vicinity Association.**- Revivals, which have gone through the churches, commenced at Lynn. From 800 to 1,000 have been added. The revivals have materially changed the relative proportion of males and females in the churches; protracted meetings seemed to overcome the world in the midst of the men; and everything gives token that the churches are preparing for a richer harvest. It is found that Unitarianism yield much less to the powerful influences that accompany protracted meetings, than the equally fatal error of Universalism.

**Suffolk North Association.**- 12 churches, all supplied with pastors. Considerable attention in ten of them. In four of the churches in Boston, 200 have been added. Whole number added is 250.

**Suffolk South Association.**- 10 churches, 2 destitute. All more or less favoured with revivals. Members 1,726, additions 200. Three have been driven from their meeting-houses, but in general the asperity of opposition is abated. Sabbath scholars 1,400.

**Norfolk Association.**- 15 churches, united and prosperous; pastors united in doctrine and effort. Have felt the strong arm of heresy, but are now strong in the faith. Some of the members give by system, the whole of their income for religious purposes. Several churches make temperance a term of admission. The churches in Dorchester and North-

Bridgewater have enjoyed for years an almost constant revival. The churches report 600 hopeful conversions in the last six months.

**Taunton and Vicinity Association.**- 10 churches. – 10 churches.- The ministers all walk in the same rule, and have no divisions. A great moral change has taken place here within a few years. All the churches have been blessed the last year. In one little parish of less than 400 souls, over 100 have been hopefully converted. It is believed the time is near, when all the churches will become temperance churches. Several are so already. The Sabbath is much rescued from profanation.

**Old Colony Association.**- There has not been such a general attention to religion through our churches as might be called a revival. But the standard of piety has been raised, and nearly all have received accessions. 12 churches, members 1,400, additions 170, Sabbath scholars 1,250. Old colony church newly formed.

**Pilgrim Association.**- 7 ministers, 5 of them pastors, all blessed with the special presence of God. Forty-five have made profession of religion on the very spot where the pilgrim fathers first landed. The whole number added to the churches is 153.<sup>108</sup>

### **State of Religion in Vermont.**

We make the following abstract from the Narrative of the state of religion, presented at the meeting of the General Convention of Congregational and Presbyterian ministers in Vermont, at Middlebury, September, 1832.

The cheering intelligence which greeted us from almost every quarter at the last anniversary, gave promise of the deeper

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid. pages 139 – 140.

interest in the history of the churches in our connexion, than it had ever before been our happiness to anticipate. If all the hopes which were then excited have not been completely realized, still we have the pleasure of announcing, and we do it with grateful acknowledgements to the author of all our spiritual good, that there never has been a year in which the indications of prosperity throughout the churches were more decided and uniform than in the past. The revivals of religion it is true, during the greater part of this period have been neither so frequent nor extraordinary as they were in the latter portion of the preceding year. Yet it has been a season in which the Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad. The fruits of those blessed revivals which made the year 1831 as an era long to be remembered in the history of our American Israel, have been gathered into the churches. The whole amount of the additions which have thus been made, so far as it can be ascertained from our imperfect data will not fall short of 5000, and in all probability greatly exceeds that number. It is an interesting fact, as will appear from the summary we now hasten to present, that those accessions have been distributed with singular equality through all the different parts of the State. Not a single association has been passed by, and the share which each has enjoyed in the glorious work, seems to have been almost in exact proportion to the extent of its field and the number of its labourers.

Within the limits of *Windham Association* the state of religion has of late been one of great interest and encouragement. Protracted meetings have been held in many of the churches and apparently attended in every instance with the divine blessing, and in many with the most salutary and cheering results. The additions to the churches connected with this Association, so far as they have been ascertained, amount to 457.

In *Orleans Association*, nearly all the churches during the past season have shared to a greater or less degree in the effusions of the Holy Spirit. Many of the revivals which began in the early part of the year, continued until August. The whole number of reported additions to the churches since the last anniversary, is 343.

Within the bounds of the *Black River Association*, there were, at the last anniversary, but two congregational ministers. There are now four. There have been no accurate returns of the whole number added to the church in the connexion during the past year. Nearly 100 were reported.

In the churches embraced in the *Caledonia and Essex County Association*, the season has been chiefly interesting on account of the ingathering of the fruits of former revivals. The additions made to the several churches, amount to about 450 persons. Among these there are individuals of all ages and ranks of society.

Twelve churches in the *Orange Association* are connected with the General Convention of Vermont, and nearly all of them are at present stately supplied with the preaching of the Gospel. Eight of these churches were favoured with the revival influence of the Divine Spirit about the period of the last anniversary: these gracious visitations continued to be enjoyed for several months of the present year, and did not entirely cease until the beginning of August last. All the churches have received some addition to their numbers. The whole increase of the past year is estimated at 288.

In *Royalton Association*, it has pleased the great head of the church to grant the rich effusions of his Spirit upon most of the churches. In many of the towns there were extensive revivals at the time of the last meeting of the Convention. As the result of those refreshings from the presence of the Lord, 511 individuals have already made a public profession of

religion; and in addition to these there have been large accessions to the churches in Braintree and in Rochester, from which no accurate returns have been received. Of the former number, the greater proportion are in the morning of life, many of them are young heads of families, and in several instances entire households, including old and young, have taken a decided stand on the Lord's side. The town of Brookfield is enjoying at the present time the special influences of the Holy Spirit.

In *Windsor Association* the past year has been one of signal mercy. With but one exception, each of the 13 churches which are under the care of the Association has experienced to a greater or less degree, the operations of the Spirit during the past season. About 500 have been added to the church. The influence of this great work is still extensively felt and seen, in the new energy which has been communicated to the efforts of Christian benevolence.

Eleven of the 18 churches embraced in *Pawlet Association* are now supplied with pastors, or with stated preaching. The reports from these churches are imperfect, but there is not known to be at present any special attention to religion within this district, though the cloud of mercy which spread so extensively over the churches here the last year, continued to shed down its sanctifying influences during several months of the year embraced in this review. The fruits of that revival have, in the mean time, been principally gathered into the churches. It was a work of extraordinary power, extending to all the churches, with scarcely a single exception. Protracted meetings are to be numbered among the most efficient means in promoting this revival. They were held in most of the congregations, and attended, it is believed in every instance, with a manifest blessing. The hopeful subjects of these merciful visitations continue, without a single known exception,

to give evidence of piety, and promise to be as active and faithful in the Redeemer's cause as the converts of any former revivals. The reported number of additions is 433. The real number would probably amount to 500.

The churches connected with *Rutland Association* were among those which have shared most richly in the effusions of the divine Spirit during the past year. Scarcely a church was passed over without a blessing, and in some the work of divine grace was peculiarly deep and powerful. Into the church, 511 have been gathered, most of whom may be considered as the subjects of this revival. The means which seem to have been most abundantly blessed in producing this blessed result, were protracted meetings and plain Biblical instruction.

The revivals with which the churches in the *Addison Association* have been recently favoured, were reported at the last meeting of Convention. Since that period there has been no special work of divine grace within the limits of the district. The efforts of the ministers have been chiefly directed the past year, to the work of gathering into the fold, and establishing in the faith, the subjects of the late revivals. The number of reported additions amount to 550, besides 60 who have been received into the several churches by letter.

Connected with *Essex County Association, New York*, there are 14 churches with but two pastors. Yet in this portion of our Zion, so comparatively destitute of the stated means of grace, the divine blessing has been richly experienced, as the evidence of which, 284 have been added to the churches by profession in the course of the past year.

In the territory embraced by the *Montpelier Association*, religion has made more rapid advances than in any former year.

After noticing the animating reports from other ecclesiastical bodies reported at the Convention, most of which we have before published, the narrative closes.

Such is the rapid sketch of what the Lord has been doing for our American Israel, since the season of our last interview. And surely this hasty and imperfect survey, in which so many details of the most interesting character are necessarily omitted, must be sufficient to convince us, if our hearts are at all interesting in the prosperity of Zion, that we have the most abundant occasion for gratitude and encouragement. The Lord has given us another striking and practical demonstration of his faithfulness to all his promises. No humble and fervent prayer,- no zealous, unremitting effort, evincing the sincerity of our desire for the conversion of men, has gone unrewarded. Shall we then any longer stand still? Shall we suffer our hearts to be diverted for a moment, from the great work which we profess to regard as the best object for which we can live or die, and in which we have so confident an assurance that God will give us a success corresponding to our faith and the devotedness of our zeal? Brethren, let us not be satisfied with the past; let us only be encouraged to more persevering exertion. The year before us may yet be signalized by a more astonishing display of the triumphs of redeeming grace, than any which has preceded it. Let us not wait till the coldness which seems now to be stealing over the churches, settles into decided apathy and indifference. Our time for usefulness here is short. It will soon be gone. Let it not leave us to the reflection that we have not done what we could for the conversion of the world.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid. 6th October, 1832. pages 298 – 299.

## **Presbyterian General Assembly.**

**Wednesday, May 30. [small part]**

*Conversion of the World.* The following resolution was adopted, prefaced by an appropriate recital, viz.:

*Resolved,* That it be recommended to the ministers and churches under the supervision of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and the churches in correspondence with the same, to observe the first Monday of January 1833, as a day of fasting and prayer for the Divine blessing on the ministry of the Gospel throughout the world, for the revival of religion in the whole of Christendom, for the entire success of those benevolent enterprises, which have for their object the world's conversion to God.

The Assembly extended a general invitation to all denominations of Christians in the United States, and the Christian churches in all other countries, to unite in the observance of the day.<sup>110</sup>

## **VOLUME EIGHTEEN**

**1st June, 1833 to 24th May, 1834.**

### **Sabbath School Concert.**

If there is any subject of vital interest to the civil and religious prosperity of our beloved country, it is the right direction of the habits and religious sentiments of our children. To them we must look, and on them we must depend, under the blessing of God, for the future enlargement and glory of the church. It is our *children* who must soon fill the places we now occupy. We have been filled with grief and alarm at the general

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<sup>110</sup> *Religious Intelligencer.* Volume Seventeen. 9th June, 1832. page 30.

apathy among parents, and even *Christian* parents, on this deeply affecting subject. Let our children live in ignorance, and be brought up in impiety, and who cannot see the consequences on the future destiny of the country, and of the church? Let them be instructed in the way of life, and brought up in the fear, nurture, and admonition of the Lord, and who will not see the blessed effects which would most assuredly follow to the church? Past events most distinctly show what God will do for the youth, provided we do what he requires of us, and many of us have obligated ourselves to perform. Read the history of the revivals of religion with which God has blessed the church for the three past years, and who is skeptic enough to admit that God has placed his seal of approbation upon Sabbath School instruction? How many hundreds, nay *thousands* have been taken from the youth in those schools into the church of Christ “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Let parents, and teachers, and all professors of religion, feel the truth and force of this divine declaration, and they will see the worth of Sabbath school instruction, and feel the importance of the monthly concert on that behalf. This cannot be neglected with impunity; it *must not* be forgotten. - *New Hampshire Observer*.<sup>111</sup>

### **Monthly Concert.**

Fifty dollars have been deposited with the Rev. Dr. Skinner, at Andover, as a *premium* for a Tract “on the best mode of rendering the monthly concert of prayer most interesting to the churches, and conducive to the cause of missions.”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 8th June, 1833. page 31.

<sup>112</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 13th July, 1833. page 111.

## **Monthly Concert.**

For the *Religious Intelligencer*.

It is one of the most interesting and encouraging facts, connected with the history of modern missions, that they are the offspring of *a monthly concert of prayer*.

The idea of a concert of prayer, now that it has come to be generally received, appears so simple and obvious to every mind, that it almost excites wonder that it was not thought of and adopted long before it really was. But experience has shown that men are very apt to overlook for a long time, some of the simplest and most obvious principles in the business of life. And in the present instance, the plan seems rather to owe its origin and extension, to the circumstances of the times, than to any intention on the part of those who took the lead in it, to introduce a system such as now exists. In the different stages of its progress, it has been attended with some of the most interesting incidents in the early history of modern missions. Not only did it lead to the first efforts in the present system of missionary operations, but it is also an interesting fact that one of the very persons who first resolved to observe the first Monday evening of the month as a season of prayer for the spread of the gospel throughout the world, was the first who engaged personally in the work [William Carey]. These monthly exercises of prayer led some who were engaged in them to feel the importance of making some suitable exertions to attain the objects for which they prayed. And it will generally be observed that in proportion to our earnestness and engagedness in any object of Christian love will we unite fervent prayer *with* active exertion for its attainment. When really in earnest, it requires no time to reconcile seeming inconsistencies. Then, it seems to commend itself to the common sense of every enlightened mind, that we are bound to call into exercise *every* appointed means that God has put in our

power, to secure the objects for which we pray. *If a brother or sister be destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, 'Depart in peace, be ye warned and filled;'* notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? And in like manner, it will be in vain that we pray, 'Thy Kingdom come,' unless we make suitable exertions to send to the millions of dying heathen the word of life, *which is alone able to make them wise unto salvation.* It was this simple and obvious reasoning that led to the first efforts in modern missions.

An association of Baptist ministers at Nottingham, (Eng.) as early as the year 1784, agreed at a time when religion was at a low ebb in that kingdom, to set apart one hour on the first Monday evening of every month, to pray for the spread of the gospel throughout the world. This was not however the first attempt that had been made to engage Christians in a *monthly concert.* As early as the *middle* of the last century, such a plan was proposed by the elder Pres. Edwards, by some pious clergymen in the Church of Scotland. And so strongly did it approve itself to the enlarged and liberal mind of that holy man, that he at once used all his influence to introduce and forward the plan. He even went so far as to publish a very interesting work on the subject, warmly urging upon Christians the importance of engaging in it. And although the effort proved unsuccessful, a similar effort was made some time after by the younger President Edwards, who laid the subject before the General Association of Connecticut and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, both of which bodies commended the plan to the congregations under their care. But from some cause it was never generally observed. The present monthly concert has grown out of the resolution of the ministers of the Baptist Association, among whom were Carey, Fuller and Pearce, names which will ever be dear to all who love the cause

of our Lord Jesus Christ. They seemed to be raised up at a peculiar crisis in the church and the world, for the accomplishment of a great work – *the revival of the spirit of missions*. In the early religious life of Mr. (now Dr.) Carey, the venerable missionary in India, especially, we may trace the finger of God in a peculiar manner. It happened that Mr. Fuller on an occasion connected with this object, with a view to engaging Christians more generally in it, preached a sermon entitled, ‘the Gospel worthy of acceptance,’ which made a very deep and serious impression on Mr. Carey’s mind. It occurred to him very naturally as it would seem, that if the gospel was worthy of all acceptance, it was certainly the duty of those in whose hands it was, to communicate it to those who had it not. The more he reflected on the subject, the more deeply did he become impressed with the solemn nature of the obligation resting upon those to whose hands had been committed the word of life. And notwithstanding many serious discouragements, from entering upon such a labor, he determined to set himself to the study of geography, voyages and travels, and whatever would enable him to ascertain the moral conditions and prospects of the heathen.

It was in the progress of these inquiries that he developed his surprising facility in acquiring foreign languages, and he had not pursued them long before he found an immense field opening upon him. The more he read, the more he felt, as he considered the millions of his fellow beings abandoned to gross abominable idolatry, or enslaved to the most degrading vice; thousands upon thousands of whom were daily perishing for lack of knowledge – his soul was filled with a holy desire to proclaim to them the glad tidings of a Saviour, and the unsearchable riches of his gospel. And he very soon communicated to his friend Fuller and others, his determination

to do all he could, to set on foot a *Baptist Foreign Missionary Society*.

The same principle is strikingly illustrated in the life of Howard. What was it that led him to those great self-denying exertions in behalf of the inhabitants of prisons, which have resulted in the present improved system of prison discipline, but a full and thorough acquaintance with their wretched and degraded condition. It is this *knowledge* of the wants of our fellow men that alone can lead to intelligent, well-directed effort in their behalf. Christians in this day of active enterprise should know more of the minute detail of the moral condition and prospect of the world. We forget that one part of the exercise, to always have a conscience clear of offence both toward God and toward men, (Acts xxiv:16.) consists in ascertaining what claims God and our fellow men have upon us. And this can never be done without some pains.

The formation of the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, however, was not the only result of the institution of this monthly concert – it was but the first of a long series of results, that will require eternity to estimate. The example of the Baptist brethren excited a powerful interest in the churches generally, and roused the slumbering spirit of missions, never, we trust, to sleep again, till this whole world shall be converted to our blessed Saviour. Other societies were formed, and the practice of assembling on the first Monday evening of each month to pray for the lonely, self-exiled missionary; and the cause in which he was engaged, has extended from one denomination to another, till it now embraces every evangelical congregation and Christian throughout the world. And let it but continue in the spirit with which its originators engaged in it, with a determination to accompany fervent prayer with all the effort that the church is capable of putting forth, and what may it not accomplish? Oh, let it not be seen in the day of final

scrutiny, that the American churches, so favorably situated for the missionary enterprise, held back from taking a decided stand in the work of the Lord. It is not now as when this concert was first established. *We* have everything to excite our interest and encourage our hopes. Each new tidings of success, every new opening for labor, should but excite us to greater effort, and urge us with new importunity to the throne of grace, to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth more laborers into his harvest.<sup>113</sup>

### **Day of Prayer for the Slaves.**

We have repeatedly called attention to the duty of devoting a special period of time for supplication to God on behalf of those in bondage. The subject, we are happy to perceive, is beginning to excite more attention than was formerly bestowed upon it. Our worthy and beloved brother of the *Christian Watchman*, at the close of some excellent “Thoughts on Slavery,” in which he forcibly exhibited the gospel authority, and practical tendency of certain “abstract principles,” continues as follows:- *Emancipator*.

“Why cannot the churches agree to appoint some evening of each month to supplicate direction *as to the best means of emancipating all the slaves in our States?* God, whose wisdom is infinite, can give us light on this subject. And his word commands that if any man lack wisdom, let him ask God, who giveth to all men liberally, *and it shall be given him!* Were the Christians in this whole nation to unite in this matter, might not a blessing on the whole people be expected?”

It will be recollected by our readers that a monthly prayer meeting has been established in this city, “to be held on

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<sup>113</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 13th July, 1833. pages 104 – 105.

the LAST Monday of each month, in behalf of the millions of our fellow men who are kept in slavery.” May not this evening be set apart by Christians of every name and denomination in our country, as a GENERAL CONCERT OF PRAYER for this great object?<sup>114</sup>

### **Monthly Concert at Princeton Theological Seminary.**

We have had the following excellent communication for some time, but the great press of other matter has hitherto excluded it. We shall be glad to hear again from the writer. – *Presbyterian.*

Mr. Editor, - I have just returned from the Monthly Concert in the Theological Seminary, Princeton. The meeting was one of the most interesting, and I trust profitable, I have ever attended. As I glanced over the audience, the glow of feeling which seemed to animate every bosom, and beam from every countenance, and the fixedness of attention which marked the occasion, evinced an interest in the object of the meeting, which I could wish were stereotyped on every pious heart. Were our concerts generally thus interesting, the spirit of missions and of piety would unquestionably be revived through the church; and the heathen, though ignorant of its cause, would soon feel its effects in the influence of the Holy Spirit descending upon them like gently distilled dew, or the “showers that water the earth.” For who that loves the Saviour can listen to the history of his triumphs, and not pant to urge them onwards? Who can hear of the immediate descent of the Holy Spirit to convert the heathen in answer to the church’s prayers,

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<sup>114</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 17th August, 1833. page 185.

and not love to mingle his desires with those of Christians of every class?

But why is it that in many churches there is no monthly concert? In many cases where it is observed, why is it so uninteresting? Why so few attend it? Because there have been no pains taken to inform the people on the subject of missions – of the importance and grandeur of the cause – of the condition of the heathen, and the triumphs of the Gospel. If Christians meet on the appointed evening, the exercises have little bearing on the subject. Judging from the formal round of prayers, you would think they had met to pray for everything under heaven, save the conversion of the world. And, then, as if completely to exclude missions from the view, the collection, if any be raised, is perhaps applied to some entirely different object. The *very cause* for which Christians should feel that they live, *forgotten!* The main object of organizing a church, lost sight of entirely? Is it any wonder if such churches should either be torn by divisions, or sunk in spiritual apathy, desolate and barren. They do not answer the end of their organization, why should not the Master cast them aside as useless? “If the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing.” Now this is in strict accordance with the facts. Show me a church animated with ardent missionary zeal, whose concerts are crowded and full of interest, and I will point you to one flourishing in spiritual concerns. The table of the Lord Jesus is filled with guests, and often the anxious sigh is heard, and the tear drop of penitence is seen stealing down the cheek in the midst of the great congregation. And on the other hand cast your eye over the churches of the land, and mark them that seldom pray or feel for the perishing heathen, and never extend a friendly hand for their relief, and you will see worldliness and spiritual death strew their victims all around. And why should it not be so?

Christianity is not selfishness; but universal benevolence. That is no Christianity that can fold her arms in philosophical *sang froid*, while the world is perishing under her very eye, and not put forth an effort, or even breathe a single desire for its rescue. Like unsavory salt, it is fit only to be trodden under foot of men.

Should these lines meet the eye of any Christian, and especially any Christian minister, in whose church or neighborhood there is no monthly concert – the conversion of the world is seldom thought of – no spirit of enterprising benevolence, and consequently little very active piety, I would urge him as he values the spiritual prosperity of his flock to try immediately to awaken among them a spirit of missions. It is unreasonable to expect the blessing of our Master, while we utterly refuse obedience to his commands, to assist in sending the Gospel to every nation. Establish the monthly concert; make it a source of information on the subject of missions, make this the prominent, if not the only subject of remark and prayer for the evening, and it *will* be interesting. Only pour the light of truth in reference to the heathen into the pious heart, and it will kindle into holy zeal, feel, pray, act, for their relief. When, you have your people once enlightened, and interested in the cause, they will regard the monthly concert as the most precious of all meetings. They will look forward to it with joyous anticipation. They will attend it with souls prepared to kindle into holy action, while they listen to the Gospel's triumphs; and delight to mingle their hearts in prayer for its success. Thus will the spirit of missions increase in your midst. Sand what is the spirit of missions but the spirit of Christ, and the spirit of piety? Thus, while in answer to your prayers and your efforts many a dark heathen soul may be gladdened with the hopes of heaven here, and admitted to its fruition hereafter, while the fainting missionary is animated by the reflection that his Christian friends are praying for his

success, and while he experiences the reviving love of Christ shed abroad in his heart, you yourselves will realize the preciousness of the promise, that your prayers, while they enrich others, “shall return into your own bosom.” You will know by sweet experience the truth of the declaration, “the liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.”  
Y. Z.<sup>115</sup>

### **Day of Fasting and Prayer for the Conversion of the World.**

January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1834. – This day is to be observed by many Associations, as a day of fasting and prayer, for the conversion of the world. It is a cheering thought that the whole Christian world, will be engaged about the same time, in prayer to the father of mercies. The spectacle cannot be contemplated without tender emotions. This united petition will not be in vain. Zion’s King is ever ready to listen to the cry of his people.  
*Luther. Evang.*<sup>116</sup>

### **The Annual Concert.**

We trust it will not be forgotten what blessings were shed upon some of the missionary stations in answer, as we believe, to the prayers of God’s people on the day we set apart on January last as a day of fasting and prayer for the conversion of the world. The time approaches for another observance of this General Concert. And we trust that the first Monday in January next will not be forgotten. Fighting, as we do, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers,

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<sup>115</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 31st August, 1833. page 210.

<sup>116</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 28th September, 1833. page 288.

what can we expect, but certain and overwhelming defeat if our dependence is not placed on the arm of God? We look abroad over the nations, and we see how firmly held they are in the fetters of superstition and paganism; the power of God alone is able to deliver them, and the Gospel only can emancipate them from bondage to the flesh and sin. Let us then place all our confidence in Him who is mighty to save, and let our prayers and efforts accompany each other for this great object.

The students of several Theological Seminaries have joined in the request, as we learn by the *Boston Recorder*, that Theological Seminaries and their members may be specially remembered on this occasion and that all Theological students would observe the day (not exclusively, but prominently) with reference to the raising up and qualifying of a holy and faithful ministry.<sup>117</sup>

### **Annual Concert of Prayer for Colleges.**

The time for the Annual Concert of Prayer on behalf of our Colleges is near at hand. It is hoped that this season of supplication for God's blessing will be remembered by all the friends of Zion, and that while they are yet speaking, God will hear. At the last annual meeting of the American Education Society, the following resolutions were passed.

“Whereas the dependence of the Christian Ministry upon the Great Head of the church is entire and constant, and his blessing absolutely necessary to its success: and, whereas the last Thursday of February has been annually set apart, by many of the friends of the Redeemer, as a season of united prayer, for a blessing on the young men in a course of education in their colleges and academies: therefore,

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<sup>117</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 7th December, 1833. page 446.

“Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to all the young men, under patronage of this Society, to observe the last Thursday in February, as a day of fasting and prayer, with special reference to the more copious effusions of the Holy Spirit on our literary institutions; that the young men who resort thither for an education, may be sanctified, and led to consecrate themselves in the work of the ministry.

“Resolved, That the churches of Christ, and all the friends of the Redeemer, be affectionately requested to observe the Annual Concert of Prayer.”

Resolutions recommending the observance of this Concert of Prayer have since been passed by the General Associations of Ministers in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire; and the General Convention of Ministers in Vermont; and the General Conference of churches in Maine.<sup>118</sup>

### **Temperance Concert.**

The last Tuesday in February was duly observed in this city [New Haven]. A very respectable audience assembled in the evening, and listened with great pleasure and satisfaction to an appropriate prayer by the Rev. Mr. Cushman of the Baptist Church, and to animated and eloquent addresses from Professors Silliman and Goodrich, Mr. Andrews, a member of the Law School, and Rev. Mr. Delavan of Hamden. We have seldom if ever heard the cause of Temperance more ably advanced. There was something animating in the thought that thousands and tens of thousands were engaged at the same time in promoting the same important object; and although we have much to deplore and contend with in this place, we believe the cause is of God, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.

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<sup>118</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 22nd February, 1834. page 617.

Let the friends of good order and reform be prudent, active, united, and firm, and the victory is ours. The car of Temperance is rolling onward (said Dr. Ives, at a former meeting) and you who are trying to retard its progress, must get out of the way or it will run over you.<sup>119</sup>

### **Narrative of the State of Religion (Presbyterian Church).**

The Monthly Concert for prayer has been observed quite extensively in our Churches; but the attendance on this interesting meeting is far from being as universal as the absorbing nature of its objects demand. [a very small part only of the Narrative].<sup>120</sup>

### **Suggestion that the Monthly Concert be held on Sunday evening.**

A writer in the *Connecticut Observer* proposes an alteration in the time for holding the Monthly Concert of prayer. We have no doubt it would double the number who usually attend.

A Letter to the respected members of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

**Respected and beloved,** - To every judicious and benevolent suggestion, tending to advance the sublime object before you there can be no doubt you listen with candor and satisfaction. Permit me, with the most sincere desires for the prosperity of your cause, to suggest that a change be made in the time of holding the **Monthly Concert**, from the first **Monday**, to the first SABBATH evening of the month. By this change, the very common lamentation through our country, that

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<sup>119</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eighteen. 1st March, 1834. page 630.

<sup>120</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 21st June, 1834. page 52.

but few attend the highly important occasion, and that but a limited interest is excited, would in a great measure cease. As, no doubt, the number of attendants would several fold greater than it now is, the spirit of missions would be more widely diffused; more hearts might be brought into benevolent and devout concert; the amount of collections would, doubtless, be largely increased; and the Christian community would come into a more enlarged, a holier and happier action for the conversion of the world. This employment of Sabbath evening would perfectly co-incide with the great design of the Christian Sabbath and its worship. It is true, ministers and the people, more especially in our cities, might occasionally, be somewhat diverted by some other object and other claims of benevolence; still, in such cases, the object of the Concert need not be wholly overlooked or neglected. But on the merits of the change suggested, the writer would not dwell. He sees, however, an obstacle in the way of rendering this change universal through the Christian world. Let the American Board at their next meeting, if they, in their wisdom, regard the change as desirable, make declaration to this effect and recommend, that, at home and abroad, the change should be made on the first Sabbath of next January; and there is much reason to believe, that their recommendation would be received and observed through this country and others, with entire unanimity, and to the increased rapid and powerful advancement of the salvation of the world. With great respect.

-A contributor, and life member of the A.B.C.F.M.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 30th August, 1834. page 220.

## **Synod of Utica.**

### **Narrative of the State of Religion.**

The great truth, that the church of Christ, and every member of that church, is bound to live for the conversion of the world, we may hope is growingly appreciated. The monthly concert of prayer is generally remembered. Many of our churches also observe concerts of prayer for the rising generation; for those that go down to the sea in ships; and for such as are bound in the hard and deadly fetters of slavery in the land of the free.<sup>122</sup>

### **Monthly Concert.**

Mr. Hooker, - At a late meeting of the Consociation of Hartford North, the subject of changing the time of holding the Monthly Concert to some other day or evening in the week came up for discussion. Aside from the fact that the adaptation of means is not that efficiency by which their end is accomplished – aside from the fact that every prayer-meeting is a monument of our dependence upon God; and our solemn belief that without his special agency every human effort to set forward the gospel will be ineffectual; as the Monthly Concert is coeval with all the leading enterprises of benevolence which distinguish the present day, it is not surprising that the members of this body; in common with all who pray for the coming and kingdom of Christ, should regard it as vested with a sacredness next to that of the Sabbath. That this meeting, commended to the affectionate regards and best hopes of Christians, received among us so little countenance and support, was alluded to with expressions of deep regret. It was conceded by many that one reason for this, and perhaps the chief, is that the time allotted to

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<sup>122</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 11th October, 1834. page 305.

this meeting is by the customs of the country often appropriated to other objects of a public nature. The remark however will not admit of universal application. Our cities make no complaint on this subject, and there the concert is observed by numbers more suitable and an interest more becoming.

On the whole, notwithstanding a different time would accommodate our churches better than the first Monday; since this time is fixed by appointment and the usage of years – as on this point, the whole Christian world is to be consulted, - and considering that if one time is less convenient to one portion, it may be more convenient to another – that a local and limited change would not produce a corresponding change universally, and must destroy that concert which constitutes the peculiar charm and interest of this meeting – the consociation unanimously deprecates any alteration. They preferred to make the best of a local inconvenience to incurring the hazard of a widespread damage of the common interest, and ordered the following declaration to be inserted in their minutes, and with suitable remarks, to be published in the Connecticut Observer,

Whereas the subject of altering the time for holding the Monthly Concert has recently been discussed in certain religious periodicals:-

Resolved, by this Consociation, that no such change ought to be adopted.

Attest,                      Chauncey G. Lee, Scribe.<sup>123</sup>

### **Letter to the Editor.**

*“Resolved,* That the Board recognize their dependence on the influence of the Holy Ghost, for all success in labors in

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<sup>123</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 25th October, 1834. page 342.

converting and saving the heathen, and the indispensable importance of fervent and importunate prayer to Almighty God for this purpose: therefore, that they deeply lament that special occasions set apart for such prayer, are so little regarded by the professed friends of Christ; and that the Board earnestly press on the attention of ministers and church-members, a general, conscientious, and solemn attendance on the Monthly Concert for prayer, and that the first Monday in January, in conformity with the recommendation of various ecclesiastical bodies, be devoutly observed as a day of fasting and prayer for the conversion of the world.”

Mr. Whiting,- The above is a resolution passed at a recent anniversary of the A.B.C.F.M. I could wish that the first page of the *Intelligencer* might make it a weekly presentation, in attractive capitals, till the time shall again return for changing it to a still more doleful tone of lament, or to a resolution of encouragement and gratitude; and that every Christian in America might wear it as a philactory upon his garments, - a living memento of past neglect, and an ever present stimulant to amendment and future faithfulness. The time has gone by for New England Christians to doubt the expediency and practicability of the Missionary enterprise. So plainly indeed is this cause based on the very foundation principles of the Christian religion that the purest charity allows a suspicion of *his* piety who questions it. The propriety of the Monthly observance for the special invocations of Divine blessings upon Missionary effort, is admitted with the same unanimity. But alas, for Christian consistency; with the great body of Christian professors, the *cold admission of propriety* is the beginning and end of their interest in the Monthly Concert. Who that is conversant with the concert room cannot attest to the verity of this assertion? And who that has heard the empty echo of that place has not hung his head with grief and shame, and lifted,

with his prayer for the salvation of heathen souls, a petition for the pardon of his brethren? There is no need of facts, then, to prove my position. Those who have attended, and love to attend the concert are referred to their own observations; those who have neglected it will find proof enough in their own bosoms.

But did the Board make no mistake in recognizing “their dependence upon the influence of the Holy Ghost, for all success in labors for converting and saving the heathen, and the indispensable importance of fervent and importunate prayer to Almighty God for this purpose?” If they are right in the use of such language, (and who dare say that they are not?) then we can see the propriety of their complaint and their request to the churches. We give them money for sustaining their operations, but withhold that without which money and operations must be unavoidable. As though our army were sent to war, well conditioned and disciplined, and with firelocks upon their shoulders, but without cartridges. This then is the plain statement of the case. Without Divine influence we have no expectation of conversions from heathenism; prayer is our only means of securing this influence; Christians neglect this means; and is not the consequence plain, that they do not desire that the heathen should be converted? This cannot be said of all who are not seen at the Concert room. A few exceptions must be made for age and infirmities, &c.; and it is hoped that persons kept at home by these causes, fail not to meet *in spirit* those of every Christian name or nation who assemble at their home around the mercy seat. But how many of the habitual or occasional absentees can be covered by these or *similar* apologies? For an answer let us have reference to matters of fact. In the town of W\_\_\_\_, Mass., the birthplace of American missions, where Mills, and Hall, and Fisk, (a sainted trio) prayed and counselled them in to existence, where gospel

privileges are unrivalled, and where a single church numbers 500 or 600 members, the Monthly Concert draws out only an average of 30 or 40 souls. But we need not go abroad for illustration. In our own city [Boston?] and where is one more favored or enlightened, a union meeting of three flourishing churches is composed of from 150 to 200 persons.

What a beggarly account of empty pews is presented at every occurrence of this occasion. And what *tardy* and apparently unwilling steps bring this small number to the place of assembly. And why is it that of this small number there are scarcely male members sufficient to represent the individual churches? Where are our pious merchants, and mechanics, and others? Ah! does not this tell the story of wrongs? And is it the *love of gain* which thus thins the ranks of the praying circle? Here must be great guilt. For if the glory of God requires this monthly observance, we have no more right to dispose of the time appropriated to it, to purposes of self-seeking, than we have to misapply the hours of God's own Sabbath. O, I would not touch those unholy gains of the Concert evening. No, no sooner than the silver which bought *innocent blood*, and afterwards *the Potter's field*. Are *they* not the price of blood,- of the soul's blood? What then is he that takes? 'Tis a dreadful epithet; I will not write it.

With your permission, Mr. Editor, I shall pursue this topic in a future number. B. N.<sup>124</sup>

### **Second Installment.**

Mr. Whiting – I have before written, under this head, that the Monthly Concert suffers the neglect of the great body of the church. It may be that some of your readers, in this case, belong to the multitude. If so, I would record a few arguments

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<sup>124</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. 20th December, 1834. pages 477 – 478.

for their benefit; not in a spirit of vituperation, and bitter reproach, but in a spirit of kindness and friendly persuasion. The conviction aimed at, is that of their own consciences, not of a public tribunal.

Why then should Christians punctually and scrupulously observe the Monthly Concert of Prayer for the conversion of the world?

1. *It is a duty they owe to themselves.* It is an averment which all who have had experience will sustain, that no meeting of the month is so calculated as this, to smother worldliness, to widen contracted views, and to inflame the heart with ardent affections to God and our neighbor. An *a priori* opinion could be no other than this: the very nature of the occasion secures those results; taking for granted always, that the advantages are rightly improved. The daily routine of home duties tends to a moral constipation. There is a gathering of the soul into itself till it becomes absorbed with the contemplation of its own petty revolutions, and forgets its relations to a great connected system of beings. Let one who has long been subject to such influences come out of himself, consider for a season a world's degradation and woe, and lift up his soul, in unison with all Christendom, in supplication for *a world*, and he will be as changed as was the grown up infant Caspar Hauser, when he emerged from his caged home, and gazed on the multitude of beings around him, and innumerable worlds above him. This is the legitimate tendency of the Monthly Concert; its periodical influence on all who observe and improve it. Has any man a right to deprive himself of these sacred and ennobling influences? That soul whose enjoyment are those of an isolated being, must be essentially unfitted for the associated blessedness of heaven's inmates. That soul which cannot participate in the delights of Christian

concert in well *doing*, should not expect the joys of the joys of universal and harmonious concert in well *being*.

2. *The observance of this occasion is a duty Christians owe to their respective churches.* “No man liveth to himself.” The example of each individual Christian is a constant flow of influence. His faithfulness upholds and encourages others in duty; or his neglect disheartens, and induces in others similar neglect. Covenant obligations then, which require each to sustain and encourage the other in good works are violated, when the Christian forsakes a meeting so fraught with interest to the church and the world.

3. *It is a duty Christians owe to the Missionaries they have sent.* We have sent out those beloved brethren into the very camp of the enemy. They have gone as pioneers to spy out the land which we purpose, under God, to go in and possess. We might suppose them to lift up a voice of entreaty from their post of peril, and say,- “Look on us, our brethren, have *you* not sent us to this work of self-denial and toil; are we not *your* agents? Look on us, ye who have home and kindred, and the pleasures of social and sanctuary religion; have we any home but an anticipated heaven, any present friend but our God? Look on us, ye who enjoy the securities of a peaceful and well-ordered government, are we not at the mercy of despots and ruthless chiefs? Are not ravaging armies and hordes or robbers on every side of us? Is not the jealousy of priesthood and populace arrayed against us? Do we not contend with principalities and powers? Look on us, ye who dwell under serene and healthy skies; are we not scorched by the torrid sun; are not our health and comfort impaired and our lives imperilled by plagues, and earthquakes, and siroccos? Look on us, ye who are blessed with institutions of moral reform, and with revivals which fill your hearts with gladness and hope, and your churches with happy converts; do we not labor upon a barren

and rocky soil? Must we not root out the prejudices of paganism and a *paganized* Christianity, which are interwoven with the very habits and employments, and worldly interests of a degraded and pusillanimous people? And are we not constrained to toil on, and toil on from month to month and from year to year, having but few souls given us? We say again, Christian friends, have you not sent us to this work and given us instructions to its performance; and will you then forget us? Will you, can you, betray us and our cause into the hands of the enemy by withholding your ardent prayers for our success? You will not, you cannot, Brethren, we have confidence in your faith and love. We will go on in our work: and when the hour of concert returns, our hearts shall take new courage and our hopes grow strong, for we shall know, that God's people are compassing His holy altar."

It is but lately that a beloved young man, on the eve of departure to Afric's pagan shores, made his last request to the Christians of this city, - "Brethren, pray for us." And still later, at his last affectionate interview with kindred, and neighbours, and friends, it was his only but oft-repeated request, - "pray for us." Many of us, too, have just listened to the remonstrance of one who has returned from beholding the barbarities and obscenities of South Eastern Asia, to see the cruel indifference of American Christians to an occasion of all others the most precious and reviving to the Missionary - His soul was heavy at the very mention of this topic and he at all times vented his emotions connected with it, in expressions of deep affliction. Yes, he who has the difficulties and trials of the missionary work in near view, either as a matter of anticipation or experience, can well appreciate the worth of prayer, and the obligations of Christians. And who can say that our brethren who have gone far hence to the gentiles, are unreasonable in asking and expecting the devotion of *one entire hour for each*

*month* that passes, to them and their cause – the cause of a world’s evangelization. B. N.<sup>125</sup>

### **Third Installment.**

The faithful observance of this appointed season was urged last week,- (1) as a duty Christians owe to themselves; (2) as a duty to one another; (3) as a duty to the missionaries they have instructed and sent. We argue – 4. *That Christians owe this observance to a world of wickedness and woe.* The world is the Christian’s field. “Lift up your eyes and look upon the field!” It is indeed *white to harvest*, but still it is *dark* with apostasy and wretchedness. And the fact that the world is ready to be acted upon diminishes in no degree the necessity of action. The tiller of the earth gathers no hope from the golden face of his fields, that his garners will be filled without many days of patient enduring toil. Nor was it to induce a slothful and presumptuous joy that our Lord pointed his disciples to the whitened fields of Palestine and Lesser Asia. No; it was to chide their indecision, and prompt them to immediate action. (See John 4:35) was there more in the limited view he presented, to excite their compassion and zeal, than in the great expanse of heathenism and false Christianity which lies out before *our* eyes? What does our vision embrace? The world’s population is 800,000,000 of souls; of these 500,000,000 are Pagans, 100,000,000 are Mahommedans, and 200,000,000 nominal Christians. Of these who are called Christians, 140,000,000 belong to the Greek and Roman churches – churches which have the name but not the power of godliness. And of the remaining 60,000,000, who are called Protestants, how few love our Lord Jesus Christ, and delight in his service. Here then is the picture of our world. Can he who loves his

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<sup>125</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 27th December, 1834. pages 488 – 489.

neighbour as himself look upon it without emotion? Christian friend, can you without emotion, reflect that every new year takes the death story of 20,000,000 of unenlightened, unpardoned souls? Does it not excite desire which many waters cannot quench, nor floods drown? Come, then to the Concert, and there give vent to these longings, in liberal charities, and above all in ardent, importunate and believing prayer. Till you do this, your debt to the Greeks and barbarians, to the wise and the unwise, is not half paid; no, there is no approach to payment. We have neither right nor reason to expect that the best devised and best founded system of operations can work out salvation for the heathen – without the super addition of that influence which prayer alone can secure.

5. *Our obligations to Christ enforce this duty.* If our previous reasoning is correct, this proposition follows of course. The last solemn injunction of Christ, rendered unspeakably more solemn and binding because [it is] the *last* – “go ye therefore, disciple all nations,” not only presents the example of holy compassion for a dying world, but implies and constitutes an obligation on the part of all his followers to do their utmost for its speedy accomplishment. Now with whatever liberality we bestow our *possessions*, though we should double and treble our contributions, which probably most of us ought to do, all this could not discharge the obligations imposed by this command, - could not absolve from the duty of *united and importunate prayer*. But if a concerted season of prayer for the conversion of the world, tends, as we have represented, to the edification of the churches if looking out upon a world of destitution and suffering, and then looking up to God in its behalf, expands the soul with love and desire; if it is on the efficacy of the fervent and unanimous cry of Christians, that our missionaries rely for success, and the heathen for salvation; if these things are so, then tremendous indeed, and compunctious

beyond conception, will be the death-bed and judgment-day reflections of that Christian whose omissions countervail these manifold blessings. Christ will not hold him guiltless. “*Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion.*” B. N.<sup>126</sup>

### **Monthly Concert at Park Street Church (Boston).**

The monthly concert last Monday evening (says the *N. E. Spectator*,) instead of being in four different places as usual in Boston, was held unitedly at Park street, being the first in the year. The house was tolerably well filled. To some extent, Monday was a day of fasting and prayer, and meetings were held in the afternoon. In the evening after the usual devotional exercises, Dr. Wisner made some statements, the substance of which follows.

#### **Good News from the Society Islands.**

It will be recollected that something like a year ago we had letters stating that ardent spirit had been introduced into these Islands by American vessels, and it appeared that the good effects of gospel missions were nearly annihilated. A letter of complaint was sent from Great Britain to this country; but, on reflection, the English were persuaded they had not done what they might and ought to have done, to promote temperance at these islands. This they then determined to set about; and the result has been most happy. A letter from Taheite has lately been received by the treasurer of the American Board, in which it is stated that temperance societies have been formed at the islands; and the consequence has been, the government has prohibited the importation of ardent spirit.

#### **Survey of the Past Year.**

Dr. W. then stated that the past year had been one of peculiar trials; particularly as it regards the deaths of

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<sup>126</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. 10th January, 1835. pages 521 – 522.

missionaries. Seven missionaries of the Board, five among the Indians of our own country, and two in foreign lands had ended their labors.

The Western Foreign Missionary Society which had three stations among the heathen, had been still more unfortunate. Of four missionaries sent to Western Africa, three have died; and two out of four sent to northern India.

The past year, the Dr. continued, has been a year of advancement in the cause of missions. Three more missions had been commenced by the Board; viz. Persia, Western Africa, and Southeastern Africa; and ten new stations have been occupied. Among the latter, are one in Greece, Two in Asia Minor, at Broosa and Trebizond, and one in India.

The increased interest in missions has been manifested, also, in our colleges and Theological Seminaries, and in our churches; which has been manifested by increased and more systematic contributions, and by the numbers who have gone on missions. During the year ending in Oct. last, forty-seven new missionaries had engaged in this cause of their master; and since that time, twenty-six have been added to that number.

#### **Collections at Monthly Concerts in the City.**

In addition to the large amounts subscribed by the churches in the city January last, the following collections have been made at the several churches, where the concert has been held. The sums specified are the amounts paid over, after deducting the expenses of lighting the churches, &c.

At Park street Church,	\$572.44
At Bowdoin street Church	\$861.04
At Salem street Church,	\$232.59
At Pine street Church	<u>\$54.76</u>
Total:	\$1720.83.

Owing to the destitution of a pastor, the concert has been held at Pine street only on three occasions.

The Dr. concluded by remarking on the expediency of giving regularly a specified sum every month; and if detained from the concert, the sum to be regarded as the Lord's, and given on the first opportunity.

On the two coming Sabbaths, it is expected that the yearly subscriptions will be again taken in the churches.

### **Trials and Death of Mrs. Thompson.**

Mr. Anderson then read a somewhat detailed account of the trials and death of that heroine Mrs. Thompson of Jerusalem.

Her husband left Jerusalem on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, for the purpose of bringing on their furniture which had been left. While absent, the natives about Jerusalem rebelled against the government; so that Mr. Thompson could not return or hear any thing of his wife and her infant child, for fifty days. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of July he returned, and not until the day before, did he hear of her preservation. Mrs. T. died eleven days thereafter.

The sufferings of Mrs. T. during this time, almost beggar description. She soon saw the cannon drawn out by the soldiers and mounted on the walls, and the work of destruction commence. Then followed repeated earthquakes, which made the huge walls of stone tremble like a leaf. At such times she was obliged to flee for her life to the garden. Here she was obliged to spend several nights, while she heard the balls flying through the air above her. The heat was at this time intense, in the shade at 90, and in the sun 114 degrees. While thus situated, one night, a great commotion was heard among the soldiers; and on listening, it was found that they were fast fleeing to the castle. Then the thought rushed on their minds, that the city was betrayed, that the lawless rebels were in the midst of them, which the light of day proved to be true. Then

plunder, devastation and slaughter prevailed in the city. A constant firing was kept up from the castle on the rebels in the city. One part of their house was burst open and plundered. The library of Mr. Nicolayson, the English missionary, and Mr. Thompson's clothing, were stolen. And to crown all, their house was made a fort;- portholes were made through its wall by the rebels, to fire on the soldiers in the castle; and the cannon and the small arms were directed against the house from the fort.

We will go no further with these heart-rending details. Suffice it to say, the Pasha came with a Turkish force, and delivered the city.

When Mr. Thompson returned, he found his wife was sick of Ophthalmia, which had for six days been diffusing itself through her system, and produced such an inflammation that all remedies were too late. After severe suffering, she at last rested in the embraces of her Saviour without a struggle or groan.<sup>127</sup>

### **Annual Concert of Prayer for Literary Institutions, February 26, 1835.**

Rooms of the American Education Society.

Boston. Feb. 5, 1835.

We have often alluded to the importance of this object, and have, at several times, brought forward various arguments and facts in favor of the faithful and general observance of the day. We now offer a few suggestions in respect to the way in which it may be properly observed in our churches.

1. Notice may be given on the preceding Sabbath by the clergyman, of the mode in which it is thought best to observe

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<sup>127</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 24th January, 1835. pages 558 – 559.

the day. He may also briefly explain the importance of the object, and the necessity of fervent and united prayer.

2. It may be proper to observe the day as a season of fasting, and some portions of it in private prayer. By doing this Christians will be better prepared to meet in public in concert with others. Their minds will be in a proper state to listen to facts and arguments, and to pour forth fervent supplications to the Lord of the harvest for his blessing on our institutions of learning and on all preparing for the work of the ministry.

3. At the social and public meetings, special prominence ought to be given to *prayer*. This ought to be considered the great object of the day. Revivals of religion are the special work of the Holy Spirit, and this influence is to be sought perseveringly and earnestly. Pains should be taken to impress the truth on the hearts of all the worshippers.

4. One prayer may be offered for the officers of our literary institutions, that they may be assisted in their great work, and that they may be faithful to the religious interests of the students. Another prayer may be offered for professors of religion in the colleges and academies, that they may be devout, consistent and heavenly-minded Christians, and that they may be guided by heavenly wisdom in all their efforts to do good. A third prayer may be offered for the conversion of those who are not religious; a fourth for all who are preparing for the Christian ministry, beneficiaries of Education Societies, etc.; and a fifth, for literary institutions and the cause of education in other lands.

5. In the intervals between the prayers, appropriate hymns may be sung, and remarks and addresses made by the pastor and other persons. The great importance of our colleges may be illustrated, their present condition described, the happy effects of revivals of religion in them explained; appropriate anecdotes introduced; the importance of the great increase of

ministers enforced; and the vital relation of the whole subject to the conversion of the world, and the glory of Christ clearly exhibited. The importance of prayer for colleges, at other times throughout the year, should also be urged on the attention.

The importance of prayer for literary institutions will appear, when it is considered, that there are about *seventy colleges* in the land, and that in these there are as many as *six thousand young men* in the course of education, two thirds, if not three quarters of whom are in an unconverted state, “having no hope and without God in the world.” They will, if they live and pass through a course of education, be our legislators, judges, lawyers, physicians and ministers. Every one of them will, by his sentiments and example, affect at least a thousand souls around him. Let then everyone who has an interest at the throne of grace pray particularly for revivals of religion in our institutions of learning – pray that these fountains may be pure, sending forth healthful streams, to make glad the city of God. Let parents on this occasion dedicate their Samuels to the Lord in the ministry of the gospel. In a report of an Agent, recently received at the Rooms of the A. E. Society, some interesting facts of this nature were communicated. “A deacon in one of the churches visited came to me,” says the Agent, “after service and said: ‘I have a request, sir, to make of you, which I hope you will not consider unimportant. While you were preaching, I determined to give my adopted son, seven years of age, to the Lord for missionary work. On our way home my wife told me she had done the same. We then mutually confirmed our dedication of him to Christ, and resolved that we would give him a suitable education, making him a subject of constant prayer to God until we have evidence that he is prepared for the office by the Holy Spirit. And now, sir, my request is, that you will remember this child, thus consecrated, in your prayers, and beg the people of God where you go, to remember him too.’”

Here, said another mother, as she brought her twenty-five cents, here is my subscription, it is all I have. Had I fifty dollars, said she, with a full heart, I should give it all to this noble cause. This little boy too, my only child, I dedicated to the work of God while you were preaching. It is all I have to give.”

Let pious parents who have sons in a course of education, thus make a solemn dedication of them to the Lord, on this deeply interesting occasion, and most blessed results would probably follow.<sup>128</sup>

### **Monthly Concert at Park Street.**

At the last Monthly Concert, Mr. Anderson made some interesting statements concerning the DEATH OF MISSIONARIES. Just one year ago, this night, the death of Mr. Matthias Joslyn, assistant missionary amongst the Cherokees of the Arkansas, was announced. In April, came the intelligence of the death of Mrs. Stone, wife of the Rev. Cyrus Stone, at Bombay. In the summer we heard of the death of Miss Thrall, among the Indians. In October was announced the death of Mr. Lockwood, an ordained missionary among the Cherokees of the Arkansas; and in November, of Mr. Montgomery ordained missionary among the Osages and his wife. In January, of the wife of Rev. Mr. Ramsay, of Bombay, and of Mrs. Thompson at Jerusalem. Then in February, the astonishing intelligence of two of our brethren, Munson and Lyman, by violence, in Sumatra. The whole number is ten, of whom four were ordained missionaries. And now we are informed of the death of *three more* laborers in the foreign fields; making thirteen deaths of foreign missionaries, which have come to our knowledge within one year.

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<sup>128</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 14th February, 1835. page 601.

Mr. Shepherd, one of the printers at the Sandwich Islands, had long been in a consumption. He died at Honolulu, July 6, while nearly all the brethren were assembled at their annual meeting.

Mrs. Rogers, the wife of the other printer at the Sandwich Islands, died, May 23. Her death was unexpected. She was buried in the same grave with her two infant children.

Rev. Henry Woodward, of the Ceylon mission, had been declining for some time past, and had gone to the Neilgherry Hills, for the benefit of a cooler climate; but growing worse, he hastened down, hoping to reach Madura, a place about half way to Ceylon, where the Board had established a new Mission. He was only able to reach the house of Mr. Addis, an English missionary at Coimbatoor, where he very gently fell asleep, in the full assurance of hope. Jb.<sup>129</sup>

**Baptist Missions in India. Monthly Concert.**  
**From a report about the American Baptist Convention,**  
**Richmond, Virginia.**

Mr. Sutton, a missionary who had labored in India, said that in travelling in America, as he had for months past, nothing tried him so much as it had to see so few Christians attend the monthly concert of prayer. I think, (said he,) that they do not *feel* for the heathen, if they are not willing to pray for them. I have lived for years, within half a mile of the Hindoo idol Juggernaut, and have seen the country all around it whitened with human bones. I bought land to build a house near the idol, and I picked up 150 skulls of pilgrims on a half an acre of ground. I once saw 140 dead bodies on a spot not larger than that on which this house stands. I suppose at this moment that

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<sup>129</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 14th March, 1835. page 665.

*five hundred thousand* pilgrims are on their way to that idol. As soon as one becomes ill or maimed, he is immediately left to die, whether parent or child, it makes no difference what the relation. The beasts of prey come and devour them before they are dead. I have seen them fall, and the birds of prey came down and picked out their eyes while still living. I have seen 250,000 human beings on one occasion come and bow down to the wooden idol. I have seen others come measuring the distance by lying down and stretching out their hands, and so onward, rising up and lying down, the whole distance to the idol. One person has been known to come *eight hundred miles*, measuring the whole distance in that way. Many hundred females have been burnt near my house, on the funeral pile of their husbands, and the fire lighted up by the oldest son. The degraded state of females is dreadful in that country. Not a woman in 50,000 can read a word. No man would think it safe to keep a daughter over 12 years of age unmarried. I presume that very few women live a day without being scourged by their husbands.

He gave a warm and very feeling exhortation to all Christians to pray God to enlighten that dark people – to exert themselves to attend the monthly concert of prayer, and earnestly plead with God to enlighten them.<sup>130</sup>

### **Gleanings from the *Missionary Herald* for July.**

(This was from the Hawaiian Island of Molokai.)

The Monthly Concert for Prayer is stately observed. There are rarely less than a hundred present, and frequently many more. Most of those who attend have, during the past year, been in the habit of contributing for benevolent purposes, *one stick of wood each per month*. And I can assure you that

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<sup>130</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Nineteen. 23rd May, 1835. page 823.

it is no uninteresting sight to see men, women, and sometimes children, bring their humble offering on their shoulders, from a distance of one, two, or more miles. The men go into the mountains and get the sticks, both for themselves and wives; but the latter bring and present their own. Though the people are superlatively poor, yet their contributions for one year in this way will amount to not far from twenty dollars.<sup>131</sup>

**Monthly Concert.** (from the *Philadelphian*.)

What are the practical results of the Monthly Concert? One of the results which should evidently follow from an enjoyment of this deeply interesting occasion, is a greater sympathy for the heathen world.

This sympathy should manifest itself firstly in *prayer*. Listen then to the prayer of the pulpit, of the social circle of the family altar, and of the closet, and is there that opportunity – that strong faith and that holy enthusiasm and agony of spirit, which the miseries and the coming woes of perishing millions demands? Is it the burden of the prayers of God’s people on all occasions, that he would hasten the fulfilment of prophesy and the accomplishment of his promises respecting the salvation of this entire world?

Again, this sympathy for the heathen should manifest itself in *giving*. Examine then the charities of the church in this particular. Doubtless there is a great increase on the whole, but in comparison with the objects to be obtained, how far short does the church fall of doing her duty. The men of the world shame us by the munificence of their liberality, in schemes which are only temporary.

Probably more is now being expended upon some of the public improvements adjacent to this city, than has ever been

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<sup>131</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twenty. 11th July, 1835. page 87.

spent in the cause of missions by the church of God. Men who have nothing apparently to gratify than their pride, will spend sixty or seventy thousand dollars in building palaces for their dying bodies, and yet the follower of Christ, to afford the dying millions a home in the Paradise of God, gives not as many thousand cents. Railroads are built – inclined planes are thrown over the towering mountains – canals excavated through solid rock – bridges thrown over rivers – colleges, alms houses and penitentiaries, whose foundations stand on thirty or forty hundred thousand dollars are reared; and yet, for the salvation of a world, and enough is given annually to build and send out five ships. Twenty-five cents is as much as some ever think of giving monthly to this great cause.

*Again.* This sympathy waked up at the Monthly Concerts should manifest itself in *doing*. It is not enough to attend a Monthly Concert and listen to the sad tale of heathen degradation and woe. It is not enough to shed a tear of sympathy, to send up the imploring cry for God's aid – to give according to our ability. This is all well in its place. But if this is all sincere, will it not be followed in all cases when it is at all practicable, by active efforts to advance the cause of God in all portions of the earth? Examine then into the history of the members of our churches, into their monthly history. What are they doing? How many of them have you to labor and die among the heathen? How many have it now in contemplation so to do? One perhaps in a thousand. The great majority are doing absolutely nothing. If they were responsible for the world's renovation, it never would be recovered to God – at least not till after a young eternity had rolled round its tardy years. You cannot obtain their assistance in any cause which has for its end the salvation of multitudes dying within the very precincts of the very city in which they live. I know of a Sabbath school of two hundred and thirty-four children who

stand in the utmost need of instruction, and yet not one of all the many followers of Christ, who live within twenty minutes' walk of it, have as yet offered to spend two hours on a Sabbath in promoting its benevolent and holy objects. And in almost all of the Sabbath schools of this city, I am informed there is a lamentable deficiency in competent teachers. What, I ask again, are the practical results of the Monthly Concert? Oh if a man's conduct is a fair criterion of his character, and the Saviour of the world has informed us, what a dreadful deficiency there is somewhere in the church of God! What a fearful scene will the death bed of many professors of religion present by and by. What piercing cries from disappointed and deceived thousands and millions will be heard at the judgment – Lord, Lord, open unto us! Open unto us! O that God would give us all, a spirit of uncompromising, heart-searching, and unfeigned repentance! Is it not approaching to a religious farce, to set apart seasons for such high and holy enterprises, and do after all next to nothing to secure the great end in view? What are the tears shed over a recital of pagan woes, and the benevolent wishes expressed in their behalf worth in the sight of God, if they are not followed by energetic and persevering labors to do them good. All are not situated as to render it practicable for them to go personally to the heathen. Such should give *according* to their ability. All cannot give. Such should be much at the throne of grace. O ye who profess to love the cause of God on earth, do, by the estimate you entertain of the soul's value, and the final approval of him who shall sit upon the white throne, pray and give and labor a thousand times more than you have ever yet done. Time is short. The soul is precious. God is just. Heaven is blessed, and hell terrific.

The following interesting description of a religious meeting of slaves in Virginia, is from the pen of Doctor Reed. See Journal of his visit to the United States.

“By the law of the State, no colored persons are permitted to assemble for worship, unless a white person be present and preside. On this account, the elders of Mr. Douglass’s church attend in turn, that the poor people may not lose the privilege they prize. At this time, two whites and two blacks were in the pulpit. One of the blacks, addressing me as their ‘strange master,’ begged that I would take charge of the service. I declined doing so. He gave out Dr. Watts’s beautiful psalm, ‘Show pity, Lord.; O Lord, forgive,’ &c. They all rose immediately. They had no books, for they could not read; but it was printed on their memory, and they sung it off with freedom and feeling. There is much melody in their voices; and when they enjoy a hymn there is a raised expression of the face, and an undulating motion of the body, keeping time with the music, which is very touching.

“One of the elders then prayed; and the other followed him, by reading and exposition of Scripture. The passage was on relative and social duties; and I could not avoid observing how it reflected on the conduct of the white, and pleaded for the poor slave. They sang again, ‘Come we that love the Lord,’ and with equal freedom and pleasure. The senior black, who was a preacher among them, then offered prayer, and preached. His prayer was humble and devotional. In one portion of it he made an affecting allusion to their wrongs. ‘Thou knowest,’ said the good man, with a broken voice, ‘our state – that it is the meanest – that we are as mean and low as men can be. But we have sinned – we have forfeited all our rights to *Thee* – and we should submit before *Thee* to these marks of thy displeasure.’

“He took for the text of his sermon those words, ‘The Spirit saith, Come,’ &c. He spoke with connexion of our

original distance – of the means provided for our approach and redemption – as the invitation as founded on those – and closed with an earnest and well sustained appeal to them to act on the gracious invitation. ‘Ah, sirs,’ he exclaimed, ‘do you ask what it is to come? Oh, it is to know your own weakness; it is to know that you are sinners, and ready to fall into heel for your sins; it is to fly to Jesus Christ as your help and your Saviour; and to cry, ‘Lord, save, or I perish.’ To come! Oh, it is to fall down at his feet – to receive him as your new Master – to become new creatures – and to live a new life of faith and obedience,’ &c. ‘Oh, sirs,’ he continued, ‘that you would come! How can I presume you to come? I have seen the good and the evil, and I have seen the Christian dying, and have seen the sinner dying.’ He spoke of both; and then referred to his own experience – the change religion had made in him – the happiness he had since he knew it – the desire he had that they should be happy likewise. It was indeed a very earnest and efficient appeal.

The other man of color followed with a spontaneous address, meant to sustain the impression. He had some conceit and forwardness in his manner, but much point in what he said. He concluded by noticing what had been done among them lately, and by calling on those who were really concerned to come to the Saviour, to show it by occupying the anxious seat. They sang again; and, while singing, some forms before the pulpit were cleared, and about twelve persons knelt down at them with great seriousness of manner. There was no confusion, and the act of coming out does perhaps less violence to their feelings, as they are a small body, and are on an equality. One of the elders now took the matter into his own hands, and offered prayer. Had he sought to cool down the state of feeling, it could not have been done. But there was no need for this; for there was no extravagance. They then rose,

and sang, and separated. This was the first time I had worshipped with an assembly of slaves; and I shall never forget it. I was certainly by sympathy bound with those who were bound; while I rejoiced, on their account, afresh in that divine truth which makes us free indeed, which lifts the soul on high, unconscious of a chain.

“Much has been said, and is still said, about the essential inequality of the races. That is a question which must be settled by experiment. Here the experiment was undoubtedly in favor of the blacks. In sense and in feeling, both in prayer and address, they were equal to the whites; and in free and pointed expression much superior. Indeed, I know not that, while I was in America, I listened to a peroration of an address that was superior to the one I have briefly noted to you.”<sup>132</sup>

### **Last Thursday of February.**

In the rooms of the American Education Society.

Annual Concert of Prayer for Literary Institutions, February 25, 1836.

We have often alluded to the importance of this object, and have at several times brought forward various arguments and facts in favor of the faithful and general observance of the day. We now propose to offer a few suggestions in respect to the way in which it may be properly observed in our churches.

1. Notice may be given on the preceding Sabbath by the clergyman, of the mode in which it is thought best to observe the day. He may also briefly explain the importance of the object, and the necessity of fervent and united prayer.

2. It may be proper to observe the day as a season of fasting, and some portions of it in private prayer. By doing this

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<sup>132</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twenty. 5th September, 1835. pages 210 - 212

Christians will be better prepared to meet in public in concert with others. Their minds will be in a proper state to listen to facts and arguments, and to pour forth fervent supplications to the Lord of the harvest for his blessing on our institutions of learning and on all preparing for the work of the ministry.

3. At the social and public meetings, special prominence ought to be given to *prayer*. This ought to be considered the great object of the day. Revivals of religion are the special work of the Holy Spirit, and this influence is to be sought perseveringly and earnestly. Pains should be taken to impress the truth on the hearts of all the worshippers.

4. One prayer may be offered for the officers of our literary institutions, that they may be assisted in their great work, and that they may be faithful to the religious interests of the students. Another prayer may be offered for professors of religion in the colleges and academies, that they may be devout, consistent and heavenly-minded Christians, and that they may be guided by heavenly wisdom in all their efforts to do good. A third prayer may be offered for the conversion of those who are not religious; a fourth for all who are preparing for the Christian ministry, beneficiaries of Education Societies, etc.; and a fifth, for literary institutions and the cause of education in other lands.

5. In the intervals between the prayers, appropriate hymns may be sung, and remarks and addresses made by the pastor and other persons. The great importance of our colleges may be illustrated, their present condition described, the happy effects of revivals of religion in them explained; appropriate anecdotes introduced; the importance of the great increase of ministers enforced; and the vital relation of the whole subject to the conversion of the world, and the glory of Christ clearly exhibited. The importance of prayer for colleges, at other times throughout the year, should also be urged on the attention.

In view of the great and precious blessings which might be expected to result from the general and proper observance of this season of prayer, it is to be wished that every church would assemble at this time to supplicate the great Author of pure revivals of religion, to convert and sanctify all the students in our colleges and seminaries of learning. Were Christians thus to meet and pray, we should soon hear the joyful exclamation, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."<sup>133</sup>

### **Worthy of Imitation.**

From the *New Hampshire Observer*.

Mr. Editor, - At the last Monthly Concert in \_\_\_\_\_, a member of the church remarked to the Pastor that he had "some money which he wished to put into the treasury of the Lord." The amount was six dollars. It is not the amount so much as the manner in which it was obtained that demands attention. It was the avails of abstinence from three articles, - Rum, Cider and Tobacco. He remarked that the use of rum was decidedly bad. Cider he did not consider much better. And he knew that Tobacco was injurious from his own experience. He had made an estimate of what these articles would amount to, as he had used them in former years, and found it to be six dollars. This amount he is determined to devote to benevolent objects, in addition to his other contributions, which have been liberal for one in his circumstances. Half of this sum he wished to be appropriated to Domestic Missions, and half to Foreign Missions. I have presented this subject, (without the knowledge of the individual) that others may be influenced by

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<sup>133</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twenty. 20th February, 1836. page 604.

his example. There are many who would be able to give far more liberally, than they do now, if they would act upon similar principles. The members of our churches would uniformly abstain from the use of these articles which are worse than useless, and appropriate the avails for the purpose of supplying the destitute with the preached gospel, the funds for our Missionary Society would be greatly increased. In the case which I have mentioned, we see the true Christian spirit brought into action – the development of the Christian character. Would that all the disciples of Christ might “go and do likewise.”

PASTOR.<sup>134</sup>

## VERMONT CHRONICLE

### Three Letters on the Monthly Concert.

Gent.: Please publish Nevins' remarks on the Monthly Concert, and oblige  
Yours, &c.

### Do You Attend the Monthly Concert?

I would like to have this piece *read*, though I know very well that many of those I ask to read it, could them selves write a better article on the same subject. I am a little afraid that some who do *not* attend the Monthly Concert, will read the *heading* of the article and then turn to something else, presumed to be more interesting. As that, however, will look very much like a desire to evade the light, and an unwillingness to hear why we should attend the Concert, I hope they will, through dread of the imputation, conclude to read the whole article. I cannot doubt they have their reasons for not

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<sup>134</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twenty. 2nd April, 1836. page 693.

attending, and I presume that if they will have them printed, I will carefully read them, provided they will read my reasons in favor of attendance.

I put a *question*. I put it not to everybody. I ask it not of the *world*, for the world is the *object* of the Concert, and cannot be expected therefore to join in it. I put it therefore to the professor of religion – the reputed disciple of Christ. I ask him if he attends the Monthly Concert? He knows what I mean by that phrase – the meeting for prayer attended by Christians on the first Monday in each month, in which they offer their social supplications for the success of missions, the spread of the Gospel, and the conversion of the world to God.

All the members of the church do not attend it. The *half* do not. No. The Concert has not yet secured the majority of the church. Even “the sacramental host” are not as yet in favor of the conversion of the world, if attendance on the Monthly Concert may be made the test, as I think with the utmost propriety it may; for surely he cannot have much of a desire for the world’s conversion who will not meet once a month to express it in concert with other Christians. And this, I suppose, is the principal reason why the world is not converted, because the prayer-meetings of the church bear testimony that even she is not heartily in favor of it. O, when will the question, “Shall the world be converted?” be put to the church, and carried in the affirmative? There will be joy in heaven when that result is reported there; and when the work of the world’s conversion will go rapidly forward, and nations be born in a day. Now, do you join in the concert, or are you one of those who make discord?

Many professors can say they *do* attend. I am glad so many can say it. You attend, but let me ask, do you *love* to attend? O! if you leave your *hearts* at home, that is bad. We want the heart at the Monthly Concert. It spoils all if we have

not the heart there to send up to heaven its sincere desires. "Prayer," you know, "is the heart's sincere desire." You attend, but do you attend **habitually**; or is it only *occasionally* that you go? Do you attend twelve times a year, if Providence oppose no obstacle? It is a *Monthly* Concert. It is intended that Christians should meet and pray together at least once a month. There are professors of religion who attend the Concert sometimes, perhaps on an average once in three months, and they think that is doing tolerably well. But what if others should so do! Then it would be no *Monthly* Concert, but a *Quarterly* Concert; and such it should be now to suit the practice of too many of the church. But I think once a month, or twelve times a year, is not too often for Christians to meet together to pray, "our Father... Thy kingdom come."

As a Christian, I *feel* that it is not too often, and I think, if I was a heathen, and knew all that is involved in being a Christian, I should feel like being prayed for by Christians at least once a month. O! it is not too often, either for us to pray, or for those for whom we pray.

Then, fellow Christians, let us attend every month, bringing along with us each one a heart touched with gratitude, melted by pity, fervent with love, full of faith, and as sure as we live, we shall bless and be blessed.

"But they say it is not an interesting meeting." I don't know why it should be uninteresting to *Christians*. Is it because it is a *prayer* meeting; or because it is a prayer meeting *for others*? Does it lack interest because there is no *preaching*, and the very prayers are not for ourselves? Will the disciple of Jesus make this confession? Will he acknowledge that it takes away the interest of a meeting, when its character is so devotional, and its object so benevolent?

It has been asked, "How shall we contrive to make the Monthly Concert interesting to the people?" It is only the

people themselves that can make it interesting. Let them come to it. Let the members of the church appear in their places on that evening. Let conscience bring them, if inclination does not, and let him who is to preside in the meeting be cheered by the aspect of a full assembly, and the interest of the Monthly Concert is assured without the laying down of rules and observances of minute directions. Who ever found a well attended concert for prayer uninteresting?

But, one says, it sometimes rains, and I cannot attend. I know it sometimes rains, but do you never go out in the rain for any purpose? O Christian, if for anything you ever go through the rain, go through the rain to the Monthly Concert. I suspect the rain does not hinder you from fulfilling an important engagement with a fellow creature. Now, I know that you have not specially engaged to meet God at the Monthly Concert; but there are *vows* on you which, I am sure, include this. Are you not one of those who say, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” waiting for his answer? His answer comprehends many things, and among them is this. Indeed, I think the duty of attending the Monthly Concert is included in the general obligation to go “into all the world,” and “teach all nations;” and you consented to it when you made the *full surrender*. Therefore let not trifles detain you at home on the evening of the church’s concert of prayer for the world. But if by necessity detained – if you go not, because on such a night you would go out for no purpose whatever, you can spend the hour in the closet praying for the world. That you will not fail to do. The closet is accessible in all weather. If you cannot go out to the prayer meeting, yet you can “enter into thy closet,” and though your prayer will be a *solo*, it will be as grateful to God as the *concert* of others.

But some professors of religion never attend the Monthly Concert! What I propose to say to them I must reserve for another article.<sup>135</sup>

### **Why All Christians Should Attend the Monthly Concert.**

It is a fact well known and deeply deplored, that some professors of religion never attend the Monthly Concert. Perhaps they never attend any of the prayer meetings of the church. It is not for me to say that such persons have no religion, though I must go so far as to say that I do not see how they can have a great deal. Nor does their religion appear to be of the *kind* contemplated in the New Testament. They may be Christians, but I am certain they are not *primitive* Christians. I do not, for my part, see how those who never meet with their fellow disciples for social prayer can be acquitted of contemning that gracious promise of Christ, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

What an encouragement to concerts of prayer is conveyed in those words, "if two of you shall agree!" How can they be supposed to love the presence of the Saviour, who are not desirous to meet him "where two or three are gathered together in his name!" If such disciples had existed at that time, of course they would not have attended the meetings for prayer which preceded the memorable day of Pentecost. They would not have gone to the "upper room." Perhaps they would have made some excuse for their absence. Perhaps not. One might have said he could not bear the air of a crowded room. Another, that he did not see why he could not pray as well at home. There were no such despisers of the prayer meeting

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<sup>135</sup> *Vermont Chronicle*. 30th June, 1836. page 101.

among the primitive disciples. They all frequented the upper room, “and *all* continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.” O that it were so now! Fellow disciples of the blessed Jesus, listen to a few plain reasons why we should all attend the Monthly Concert.

1. It is a meeting of Christians. Should you not meet with Christians? God has made you *social* beings: and Christians are the best company. Should you not cultivate that society on earth, with which you are to be associated for ever in heaven? The same class of persons – they that feared the Lord – used to meet together in the days of Malachi; and the Lord noted it down. Come then to the Concert.

2. It is a meeting for Christians for religious worship. The Concert is a *sacred* assembly. It invites not merely to mutual intercourse, but to intercourse with God and heaven. In it we meet with one another, that we may together meet the Lord; and if he kept a book of remembrance for them who feared him, and who met for *conference* with each other, will he not much more for those who meet for *communion* with himself?

3. It is the most interesting kind of religious meeting. It is a *prayer* meeting. Its exercises consist in prayer interspersed with praise. The song of gratitude and supplication of blessing ascend alternatively. O it is good to be there! What Christian but loves the prayer meeting!

4. It is the most interesting of all prayer meetings. I had rather be absent from any other than from this. Think how *large* a concert it is – how many voices join it, and hearts still more! From how many lands – in how many languages they pray, yet with one desire, and for a single *object*. Think of that object – its unity, its grandeur, its benevolence – a world lying in wickedness – the speedy conversion of that world to God! In the Monthly Concert Christians meet to express together to

their God this one great benevolent desire. And ought not you to be there?

But what gives the greatest interest to the Concert is, that Christ Himself in substance established it. Yes, he has taught us *so* to pray. His disciples asked him how they should pray, and he answered that they should *pray socially for the conversion of the world*, viz., that they should meet under circumstances which would justify the use of the plural number, "Our Father," &c. and thus met, that they should pray together, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Now, is not this just what we do in the Monthly Concert? We put in practice that lesson of Christ on prayer. That is the amount of it. The missionary concert has then the sanction of the Master, however some of his professed disciples may regard it. Is it so? Then I ask not, will you come to the concert, but how can you stay away?

5. It is good to draw near to God in prayer for a guilty and dying world. Christians find it so. If they benefit no others, yet they benefit themselves. God bestows blessing on them while they implore blessing for others.

6. It is kind to the poor heathen thus to meet once a month and pray that they may possess the same Gospel of the grace of God, which has brought salvation to us. If we were in their situation, and knew what it was to be in such a situation, we should wish Christians to pray for us. And shall not we, being Christians, pray for them? The golden rule requires it. The love of Christ constrains to it. How shall we not pray for them? How shall I be able to answer for it, I say, not to God, but to my poor pagan brother that I shall meet before the bar of our common Judge, if I let him go into eternity without even praying that the light of the Gospel may illuminate his dark mind? How shall I be able to bear his reproachful recognition

of me as a Christian? I will take care not to lie under the accusation. I will pray for him.

7. Nothing so cheers the hearts of our missionaries, and nothing so encourages them in their work, as when they hear of well-attended Concerts. So they tell us; and they write back that nothing they meet with on the field of their labours depresses and discourages them so much as the intelligence they receive from home, that Christians neglect the Monthly Concert, and few of the churches meet to pray for them. They know that they cannot succeed without God, and they know that it is prayer which engages God to work effectually with them. O, if we could but send them word by the next ships that go, that Christians in crowds come up to the Missionary prayer meeting, and the place of the Monthly Concert is thronged; they would be able, I have no doubt, to send us word back, perhaps by those very ships returning, that the heathen in crowds gather around them inquiring the way of salvation, and that many have gone even unto Christ, and become partakers of his grace. But in vain shall we expect to hear very cheering intelligence from them, while the intelligence they receive from us is no more cheering. O it is base treatment of our missionary brethren and sisters, as well as gross dereliction of the duty imposed by the Saviour's last command, not to meet and pray for them.

But why should I multiply reasons? Will you not attend henceforth? If, after all, you will not, I can only say I am sorry – sorry on two counts – sorry for the heathen, and sorry for you.

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Nevins.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> *Vermont Chronicle*. 7th July, 1836. page 105.

## **Will Any Christians Be Absent from the Next Concert?**

The Monthly Concert of prayer for the success of Missions and the salvation of the world. I wonder, indeed, that any Christian is ever voluntarily absent from that prayer meeting; but from that of Monday next, what Christian, that is [truly] a Christian, can of choice absent himself? Why? What particular attraction will there be in the next Concert, that a Christian should attend that if never another? Do you ask? Can you not imagine? Have you not heard the news brought by the last ship from eastern and southern Asia? When came a ship so freighted with tidings? MORRISON IS DEAD. What Christian will not go to the next Concert, if for no other reason, to offer praise to God that Morrison lived, and lived so long, and was enabled to accomplish the magnificent work of translating the word of God into the language read and spoken by one third of human kind?

But that is not all the news the ship brought. It came fraught with heavy tidings. How many tears have already been shed at the recital, tears of grief for the dead, and tears of sympathy for the living – the widows – and the mothers, for one, perhaps each, left a mother. LYMAN and MUNSON, in the flower of their youth, and on the threshold of their labours, have fallen, not the subject of nature's gradual decay, nor by some fell eastern disease, but the victims of violence, the food of cannibals? This is something new. We have never before had so loud a call in Providence to the Concert. What Christian will not obey it, and go on Monday to weep as well as praise, and to mingle with tears and praises, prayer for those poor brutal men that did the deed, and for them whose hearts it has so deeply stricken? And what Christian, who properly estimates his privileges, and duly regards his obligations, will

not, on that occasion let fall some drops of sorrow for his past remissness in praying for Missionaries?

I have said to myself since I heard of this outrage, “So much for not attending the Monthly Concert – so much for not praying more for Missionaries. I may be mistaken. The reader will judge. But so it has struck me. The church sent out these Missionaries, and many more than half of her reputed children have never met to pray for them! Whether the same remembered them in the closet and around the fireside I cannot say, but I fear they did not.

There is one most touching part of this melancholy tale. It is related that one of the Missionaries, I hope we shall never know which it was, was killed and eaten first, the other being compelled to be a spectator of the whole savage ceremony, with the knowledge that he was reserved for a similar fate. How he must have felt! Poor dear brother, I fear we never prayed for thee as we ought. You could go from country, and home, and mother, to seek a spot in savage Sumatra, to plant the cross and preach Jesus, while we could not once a month leave our firesides long enough just to go and pray for you that God would protect you and give you favour in the sight of the heathen. O this neglect of the Monthly Concert is a *cruel* thing! This forgetfulness to pray for Missionaries, how dwelleth the love of God in the same heart with it? Perhaps this was one of the multitude of thoughts that passed through his mind while he waited to be sacrificed, and while he perceived that God, though with him to support and save him, was not with him to protect him from the fierceness of man. Perhaps he thought, “O if Christians had been more uniformly and earnestly mindful of us in their closets, the family, and the Concert, the hand that holds even the savage heart, might have turned it to pity, and spared us. But his will be done. Bitter as is the cup we drink, it is not so bitter as the cup that was drank

for us.” Let us all go to the coming Concert, and humble ourselves together; and from his humiliation let each pray, “Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation.”<sup>137</sup>

### **Editorial Note.**

A momentous event occurred in 1837 which seriously affected the history of revivals in the United States of America. This was a disruption which occurred within the Presbyterian General Assembly of the United States, wherein all the churches which had been formed under the Plan of Union between the Presbyterian General Assembly and the General Associations of the Congregational Church in New England, were ejected from the denomination. The Plan of Union of 1801 was revoked unilaterally by the Assembly. This action by the General Assembly was basically illegal, but could not be set aside quickly. As a result, a (New School) Presbyterian General Assembly was formed, which included all of the excinded churches. This division in the Presbyterian Church continued until 1872, when a reunion was negotiated. The New School churches included many of the churches in the State of New York which had grown so rapidly as a result of the revivals in the previous decade and more, and represented about half of the denomination’s membership.

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<sup>137</sup> *Vermont Chronicle*. 14th July, 1836. page 109.

## CHAPTER FIVE.

### 1842 Onwards.

#### **Around the Time of the Revival in 1842 – 1843.**

The (Old School) Presbyterian General Assembly in May, 1842, published the Minutes of their annual General Assembly meeting. Each year, a “Narrative” was composed from the reports from many of the Presbyteries, to show the “State of Religion” in their churches.

The May, 1842, *Narrative* was naturally written about the events in the twelve months before that date, and so covers a time before the onset of the widespread revival of 1842 - 1843. It listed about 55 individual churches in which revivals had been experienced, in about fifteen Presbyteries around the country.

To this list it adds the following exhortation:-

“While the Assembly rejoice in these cheering and refreshing tidings of the work of the Lord, they would earnestly exhort our whole body to pray without ceasing, and labour without weariness and discouragement for such, and still greater out-pourings of the Holy Spirit. In the midst of revivals, the riches of grace, and the glories of redemption shine out resplendent and convincing: God is greatly honoured, gospel truth stamps its impress upon society with peculiar distinctness, and a salutary impulse is given to personal religion in the soul, and to all objects of active usefulness without. We do not see how our churches are to meet the expectations of this interesting age, and this growing country, of fulfil their part in the great work of missions both at home and abroad, unless they become more and more the theatres of these precious displays of the grace and power of God. Let all our people then unite as

the heart of one man, to throw off that religious apathy, to struggle against that worldliness and secularity which is so unbefitting our holy vocation, and to become strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, warm-hearted, self-denied, zealous and active in all just and scriptural endeavours, to secure the blessing and the presence of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>138</sup>

**By contrast, in May, 1843,** the (Old School) Presbyterian General Assembly reported revivals in fifty-three Presbyteries, and in at least four hundred of their congregations, as well as in “hundreds of other churches,” during the previous twelve months.

One of the means used, and which was blessed by God during the revival, was:- “A regular and devout attendance upon the monthly concert of prayer, is also mentioned as instrumental, in many places, of promoting the revival.”<sup>139</sup>

The fruitful periods of these widespread revivals apparently spread through the month of May, 1843, so that, the *Minutes of the General Assembly* for 1844 reports that in many cases, the conversions and accessions to the churches fell into the twelve months covered by the reports to the 1844 Assembly.

The 1844 *Narrative* said that they could not report the number of revivals which had appeared in the previous year.

“We are not permitted to tell at this time of such copious and extensive effusions of the Holy Ghost, as it was the privilege of the last General Assembly to record. Revivals of religion and ingatherings of souls, there have been during the past year in many portions of the Church; but not in such

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<sup>138</sup> Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. 1842. pages 49 – 50.

<sup>139</sup> Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. 1843. page 205.

measure, and to such an encouraging extent as during the year preceding. And yet it is very satisfactory to notice that nearly all of the Presbyteries that reported revivals last year, speak of the good work as having extended into the ecclesiastical year that now closes and with scarcely an exception they state the gratifying fact, that, so far as time and opportunity for testing them have been afforded, these revivals and their fruits appear to have been genuine. The statement made by nearly all of those Presbyteries is, that the persons who were gathered into the churches, as the fruit of those revivals have, with few exceptions, continued to ‘walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called’<sup>140</sup>.

### **Professor Samuel Miller’s Book. 1845.**

At the start of this present book of documents about the history and value of the Monthly Concert of Prayer, a long quotation was presented from a book by Professor Samuel Miller of Princeton. The quotation was a brief historical statement that he there presented about the commencement and development until 1799 of the united intercessory movement which led in due course to the Monthly Concert.

The small book consisted of four letters addressed to the members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and was about observance of the Monthly Concert of Prayer. These letters were published first in periodical form, and then were published under a separate cover, by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, which was the Assembly’s body for that purpose.

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<sup>140</sup> Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. 1844. page 397.

The first letter contained his introductory discussion of intercessory prayer in the Christian life, both personal and united. Then followed his brief history of the Monthly Concert before 1799, previously referred to, and then a discussion of the duty and importance of attending it.

The second letter discusses some hints as to the best method of conducting these monthly prayer meetings.

The third letter discusses the need to make financial contributions to the support of missionary work at those meetings.

The fourth letter includes his concluding remarks, and his appeals and exhortations.

This book was an interesting and compelling effort, and would probably have achieved more for the prayer movement if it had been published twenty years beforehand.<sup>141</sup>

### **The Monthly Concert after 1845.**

For various reasons, there was a serious decline in interest in spiritual matters through the whole of American society, and which affected the churches in many ways.

Despite Samuel Miller's effort, prayer for revival was apparently not relied upon so much. The habit had now developed in many quarters to solve the problem of declining church membership by organising an evangelistic campaign in the more modern sense. Since 1830, "protracted meetings" had become very popular, and they became relied upon increasingly. But the mistake began to appear that, if people relied upon these meetings to solve their spiritual problems in the church, without relying upon God in dependent prayer sufficiently FIRST, and SUPREMELY, then the protracted

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<sup>141</sup> Samuel Miller. *Letters on the Observance of the Monthly Concert in Prayer: Addressed to the Members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*. Philadelphia. Presbyterian Board of Publication. 1845.

meetings will not be so beneficial, or produce the spiritual results. And this is what began to happen to the various denominations after the 1842 – 1843 revival, through until the great revival in 1857 appeared, which was a very different kind of spiritual movement from what had happened in the 1830 – 1842 period.

There was a prayer movement which flowed on from the Monthly Concert, but in the years after 1843, it slowly took a different form, which is discussed at some length by Dr. J. Edwin Orr. The feature of the 1857 Revival which gained most notoriety was the Noon-Day Prayer meeting, and it was this feature which spread influences into the future after 1857.

Dr. Edwin Orr made three published attempts to chronicle the history of the 1857 revival in the United States. The first arose from an early doctoral thesis that he wrote during the early years of the Second World War.<sup>142</sup>

The second attempt was published much later in his life, although it provided a much wider panorama of this movement, indeed, he demonstrated how this revival was a world-wide movement.<sup>143</sup>

His final attempt was published after his death, and provided a much more detailed study of the revival in the United States. Sadly, this volume has not achieved the wider circulation that it deserved.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> J. Edwin Orr. *The Second Evangelical Awakening in America*. London, Marshall, Morgan and Scott. 1952.

<sup>143</sup> J. Edwin Orr. *The Fervent Prayer*. The World-wide Impact of the Great Awakening of 1858. Chicago. Moody Press. 1974.

<sup>144</sup> J. Edwin Orr. *The Event of the Century*. The 1857 – 1858 Awakening. Edited by Richard Owen Roberts. Wheaton. International Awakening Press. 1989. (see especially chapter 2, and page 289.)

**PART TWO**

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**FERVENCY in PRAYER**

## SOME BIBLICAL PASSAGES

### **1 Samuel 1:9 – 18.**

So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by the post of the temple of the Lord. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore.

And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look upon the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.

And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

### **2 Chronicles 7:14.**

If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their

wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land.

**Psalm 119:136.**

My eyes stream with tears because men do not heed thy law.

**Isaiah. 62:6 – 7.**

I have posted watchmen upon your walls, Jerusalem, who shall not keep silence day or night: you who invoke the Lord's name, take no rest, give him no rest until he makes Jerusalem a theme of endless praise upon earth.

**Isaiah. 66:8.**

Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

**Ezekiel. Chapter Eight, verse 7 – Chapter Nine.**

Then he brought me to the entrance of the court, and I looked and found a hole in the wall. 'Man,' he said to me, 'dig through the wall.' I did so, and it became an opening. 'Go in,' he said, 'and see the vile abominations they practise here.' So I went in and saw figures of reptiles, beasts, and vermin, and all the idols of the Israelites, carved round the walls. Seventy elders of Israel were standing in front of them, with Jaazaniah son of Shaphan in the middle, and each held a censer from which rose the fragrant smoke of incense. 'Man,' he said to me, 'do you see what the elders of Israel are doing in darkness, each at the shrine of his own carved image? They think that the Lord does not see them, or that he has forsaken the country. You will

see,' he said, 'yet more monstrous abominations which they practise.'

Then he brought me to that gateway of the Lord's house which faces north, and there I saw women sitting and wailing for Tammuz. 'Man, do you see that?' he asked me. 'But you will see abominations more monstrous than these.' So he took me to the inner court of the Lord's house, and there, by the entrance to the sanctuary of the Lord, between porch and altar, were some twenty-five men with their backs to the sanctuary and their faces to the east, prostrating themselves to the rising sun. He said to me, 'Man, do you see that?' Is it because they think these abominations a trifle, that the Jews have filled the country with violence? They provoke me further to anger, even while they seek to appease me; I will turn upon them in my rage; I will neither pity nor spare. Loudly as they may cry to me, I will not listen.'

A loud voice rang in my ears: 'Here they come, those appointed to punish the city, each carrying his weapon of destruction.' Then I saw six men approaching from the road that leads to the upper northern gate, each carrying a battle-axe, one man among them dressed in linen, with pen and ink at his waist; and they halted by the altar of bronze. Then the glory of the God of Israel rose from above the cherubim. He came to the terrace of the temple and called to the man dressed in linen with pen and ink at his waist. 'Go through the city, through Jerusalem,' said the Lord, 'and put a mark on the foreheads of those who groan and lament over the abominations practised there.' Then I heard him say to the others, 'Follow him through the city and kill without pity, spare no one. Kill and destroy them all, old men and young, girls, little children and women, but touch no one who bears the mark. Begin at my sanctuary.' So they began with the elders in front of the temple. 'Defile

the temple,' he said, and fill the courts with dead bodies; then go out into the city and kill.'

While they did their work, I was left alone; and I threw myself upon my face, crying out, 'O Lord God, must thou destroy all the Israelites who are left, pouring out thy anger upon Jerusalem?' He answered, 'The iniquity of Israel and Judah is great indeed; the land is full of murder, the city is filled with injustice. They think the Lord has forsaken this country; they think he sees nothing. But I will neither pity nor spare them; I will make them answer for all they have done.' Then the man dressed in linen with pen and ink at his waist came and made his report: 'I have done what thou hast commanded.'

### **Ezekiel 22:30 – 31.**

I looked for a man among them who could build up a barricade, who could stand before me in the breach to defend the land from ruin; but I found no such man. I poured out my indignation upon them and utterly destroyed them...

### **Daniel 9:1 -11, 16 – 19.**

In the first year of the reign of Darius son of Ahazuerus, I, Daniel, was reading the scriptures and reflecting on the seventy years which, according to the word of the Lord to the prophet Jeremiah, were to pass while Jerusalem lay in ruins. Then I turned to the Lord God in earnest prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God, making confession thus:

Lord, thou great and terrible God who faithfully keepest the covenant with those who love thee and observe thy commandments, we have sinned, we have done what was wrong and wicked; we have rebelled, we have turned our backs on thy commandments and thy decrees. We have not listened to thy servants the prophets, who spoke in thy name to our

kings and princes, to our forefathers and to all the people of the land. O Lord, the right is on thy side; the shame, now as ever, belongs to us, the men of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem, and to all the Israelites near and far in every land to which thou hast banished them for their treachery towards thee. O Lord, the shame falls on us as on our kings, our princes and our forefathers; we have all sinned against thee. Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God though we have rebelled against him. We have not obeyed the Lord our God, we have not conformed to the laws which he laid down for us through his servants the prophets. All Israel has broken thy law and not obeyed thee, so that the curses set out in the law of Moses thy servant in the adjuration and the oath have rained down upon us; for we have sinned against him.

O Lord, by all thy saving deeds we beg that thy wrath and anger may depart from Jerusalem, thy city, thy holy hill; through our own sins and our fathers' guilty deeds Jerusalem and thy people have become a byword among all our neighbours. And now, our God, listen to thy servant's prayers and supplications; for thy own sake, O Lord, make thy face shine upon thy desolate sanctuary. Lend thy ear, O God, and hear, open thy eyes and look upon our desolation and upon the city that bears thy name; it is not by virtue of our own saving acts but by thy great mercy that we present our supplications before thee.

### **Zechariah 4:6.**

Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.

### **Zechariah 8:20 – 22.**

These are the words of the Lord of Hosts: Nations and dwellers in great cities shall yet come; people of one city shall

come to those of another and say, “Let us go and entreat the favour of the Lord, and resort to the Lord of Hosts; and I will come too.” So great nations and mighty peoples shall resort to the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem and entreat his favour.

### **Malachi 3:10.**

Bring the tithes into the treasury, all of them; let there be food in my house. Put me to the proof, says the Lord of Hosts, and see if I do not open windows in the sky and pour out a blessing on you as long as there is need.

### **Matthew 6:9 – 10, and 19 – 21.**

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither Moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

### **Matthew 18:19 – 20.**

Again I tell you this: if two of you agree on earth about any request you have to make, that request will be granted by my heavenly Father. For where two or three have met together in my name, I am there among them.

### **Luke 11: 11 - 13.**

Is there a father among you who will offer his son a snake when he asks for a fish, or a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you, then, bad as you are, know how to give your

children what is good for them, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!.

**Luke 15: 7.**

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

**Luke 16:19 - 31.**

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil thing: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five

brothers; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come to this place of torment.

Abraham said unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

### **John 14:12 – 14.**

In truth, in very truth I tell you, he who has faith in me will do what I am doing; and he will do greater things still because I am going to the Father. Indeed anything you ask in my name I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in my name I will do it.

### **Acts 1:4 – 5, and 8.**

While he was in their company he told them not to leave Jerusalem. “You must wait,” he said, “for the promise made by my Father, about which you have heard me speak: John, as you know, baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit, and within the next few days.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit come upon you; and you will bear witness for me in Jerusalem, and all over Judea and Samaria, and away to the ends of the earth.

### **Romans 8:26 – 28.**

In the same way the Spirit comes to the aid of our weakness. We do not even know how we ought to pray, but through our inarticulate groans the Spirit himself is pleading for us, and God who searches our inmost being knows what the Spirit means, because he pleads for God’s people in God’s own way; and in everything, as we know, he co-operates for good

with those who love God and are called according to his purpose.

### **Romans 9:1 – 3 and 10:1.**

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

### **2 Corinthians 4: 3 -6.**

And if indeed our gospel be found veiled, the only people who find it so are those on the way to perdition. Their unbelieving minds are so blinded by the god of this passing age, that the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the very image of God, cannot dawn upon them and bring them light. It is not ourselves that we proclaim; we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants, for Jesus' sake. For the same God who said, "Out of darkness let light shine," has caused his light to shine within us, to give the light of revelation – the revelation of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

### **Ephesians 6:10 -12, 17 – 20.**

Finally, then, find your strength in the Lord, in his mighty power. Put on all the armour which God provides, so that you may be able to stand firm against the devices of the devil. For our fight is not against human foes, but against cosmic powers, against the authorities and potentates of this dark world, against the superhuman forces of evil in the heavens.

Take salvation for helmet; for sword, take that which the Spirit gives you – the words that come from God. Give yourselves wholly to prayer and entreaty; pray on every occasion in the power of the Spirit. To this end keep watch and persevere, always interceding for all God’s people; and pray for me, that I may be granted the right words when I open my mouth, and may boldly and freely make known his hidden purpose, for which I am an ambassador – in chains. Pray that I may speak of it boldly, as it is my duty to speak..

### **1 Timothy 2:1 – 7.**

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for Kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may led a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto a knowledge of the truth.

For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle; a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

### **James 5:16 – 18.**

A good man’s prayer is powerful and effective. Elijah was a man with human frailties like our own; and when he prayed earnestly that there should be no rain, not a drop fell on the land for three years and a half; then he prayed again, and down came the rain and the land bore crops once more.

## **FERVENCY in PRAYER**

**1799 – 1805**

Reports of details about the early revivals in this period usually did NOT include many details about the movement of prayer which prepared for the coming revival in particular places. The few instances where this did happen are as follows:-

### **Rev. Peter Starr, of Warren.**

About the first of March, 1799, we began to have religious conferences, on Sabbath evenings. Not more attended for a number of weeks than could be conveniently accommodated in a private room. At this time, there appeared to be more of a spirit of enquiry than usual, and a more solemn attention to preaching. In June and July, the minds of a number were seriously impressed; and the seriousness became general through the town. Christians were remarkably stirred up to a spirit of prayer, and to speak more frequently to one another, about the things of religion. Some who heretofore had great doubts, whether they had ever experienced a work of grace in their hearts, began now to have their evidences of it more clear, and their hopes more established, and were better satisfied that it was their duty to profess their faith, and join the church.

The awakening at first seemed to be chiefly among heads of families. It is remarkable, that numbers have been the subjects of this work, who before appeared to be far from the kingdom of God, were considered very erroneous in their

sentiments, and were supposed to have imbibed opinions which savored of Deism, and Universalism. Etc.<sup>145</sup>

### **Rev. Jeremiah Hallock, West Simsbury.**

The next week, on Wednesday, Nov. 1, [1798], another sermon was preached by a neighbouring brother, when there was but about half as many present as the week before. And we were greatly afraid that all was about to decline and die. This was indeed a trying hour. No fond parent ever watched the fever of his child at the hour of his crisis, when the period of life or death had arrived, with more anxious interesting feelings, than numbers of God's praying friends watched the work of the Spirit at this critical moment. Every symptom of its being fixed and increasing was as life from the dead, but the thoughts of its going off were more dreadful than the grave.

It was not long however, before it appeared that God was in very deed come to carry on his work among us. And the hearts of Zion's friends were elated with fresh hopes. Those whose minds were arrested were for the most part increasingly impressed, and there were also instances of new awakenings. The solemnity of this season cannot be communicated: it is known only by experience. Etc.<sup>146</sup>

### **Pembroke, Massachusetts, 1799.**

A Gentleman in Pembroke wrote thus to his friend in Boston.

God has been pleased to begin a glorious work in the first parish in *Marshfield*, and a few scattering drops in towns adjoining, although but a few as yet. O may we all be enabled

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<sup>145</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume One. September, 1800. page 100.

<sup>146</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume One. October, 1800. page 138.

to wrestle like Jacob and prevail like Israel. We need the prayers of all who have an interest at the throne of grace, that we may be kept from error and delusion. O may the time soon come, when the knowledge of God shall cover the earth, as the waters do the seas.

As to the present state of the reformation amongst us, there are between thirty and forty, in a judgment of charity, brought to the knowledge of the truth, and more than that number seem to be under serious impressions of mind.<sup>147</sup>

### **Rev. Edward D. Griffin. - New Hartford.**

The work of divine grace among us, three years ago, by which nearly fifty persons were hopefully added to the Lord, had not wholly ceased to produce effects on the people generally, when the late scene of mercy and wonder commenced. In the interval, several were, in the judgment of charity, “created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works.” It is not known however that anything took place in the summer of 1798, which had immediate connection with the present work, unless it were some trying conflicts in a number of praying minds, which appeared to humble and prepare them for the blessings and duties of the ensuing winter.

Late in October, 1798, the people frequently hearing of displays of divine grace in West Simsbury, were increasingly impressed with the information. Our conferences soon became more crowded and feeling. Serious people began to break their minds to each other; and it was discovered (so far were present impressions from being the effect of mere *sympathy*) that there had been, for a considerable time, in their minds special desires

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<sup>147</sup> Thomas Baldwin. *A Brief Account of the Late Revivals of Religion among the Congregationalists and Baptists, in a number of towns in the New England States, and also in Nova Scotia.* Boston. Clipstone. 1800.

for the revival of religion; while each one, unapprised of his neighbour's feelings, had supposed his exercises peculiar to himself.

It was soon agreed to institute a secret meeting for the express purpose of praying for effusions of the Spirit; which was the scene of such wrestlings as were not, it is apprehended, commonly experienced.

Several circumstances conspired to increase our anxiety. The glorious work had already begun in Tarringford; and the cloud seemed to be going all around us. It seemed as though providence, by avoiding us, designed to bring to remembrance, our past abuses of his grace. Besides, having been so recently visited with distinguishing favours, we dared not allow ourselves to expect a repetition of them so soon; and we began to apprehend it was the purpose of Him whom we had lately grieved from among us, that we should, for penalty, stand alone parched up in sight of surrounding showers.

We considered what must be the probable fate of the *risen* generation if we were to see no more of "the days that were past," for a number of years, and the apprehension that we might not, caused sensations more easily felt than described.

This was the state of the people when, on a Sabbath in the month of November, it was the sovereign pleasure of a most merciful God very sensibly to manifest himself in the public assembly. Many abiding impressions were made on minds seemingly the least susceptible, and on several grown old in unbelief. From that memorable day, the flame which had been kindling in secret broke out.

By desire of the people, religious conferences were set up in different parts of the town, which continued to be attended by deeply affected crowds; and in which divine presence and

power were manifested to a degree which we had never before witnessed. Etc.<sup>148</sup>

### **Lyme, Connecticut.**

From a Minister in Connecticut, to his Friend in Boston.  
30 June, 1799.

According to your desire, I will endeavour to describe some of the effects of the glorious work of God in this place, the preceding Fall and Winter. Previous to which, I must inform you, there was a great stupidity on the minds of our brethren, who appeared to dwell in their ceiled houses while the house of God lay waste. There were a few drops in the month of August [1798]; but on the first Lord's Day in Sep., many began to be alarmed; we therefore thought it our duty to appoint a day of fasting and prayer, which was on the seventh day of the same month. –

There was an universal solemnity, and profound attention observed on the face of the assembly, which exceeded anything I ever saw before. – It was a fast day indeed. The saints arose by confession of the infinite evil of sin, - with fixed resolution to lead a new life. – And in the close of the day (like St. Paul) they thanked God, and took courage.

After this our meetings increased, and the blessed effusions of the holy Spirit were distilled upon us. It was affecting to behold the saints exhorting; backsliders returning, and poor sinners crying for mercy. On the first Lord's Day in October we attended on the ordinance of baptism. My poor soul was warmed with the love of God, which made me speak from the heart, and it reached the hearts of my brethren, and the

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<sup>148</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume One, December, 1800.  
pages 217 – 218.

dear assembly; and we enjoyed communion with the Father, Son, and Spirit, at the Lord's Table.

After this, conferences increased. My brethren were much engaged in prayer to God for the effusion of his Spirit.

The saints in general were animated with the love of God, and were mighty in prayer for precious souls, triumphing over the united powers of darkness. Indeed it is almost beyond my power to give a full description of this wonderful scene. It is also to be remarked that our brethren of the Presbyterian order and other denominations joined with us in promoting the cause of our blessed Redeemer. Etc.<sup>149</sup>

### **Rev. William F. Miller, of Windsor, Wintonbury Parish.**

Previous to this uncommon seriousness, which there has been among us, the cause of religion for many years had been in a low and lamentably declining state. But here and there one had been under any awakening influence of the divine Spirit, and brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. For several past years, not more than two or three persons had, in any one year, joined the church.. Deism and other corrupt opinions were prevailing, and, as the natural consequence, the morals of the people had greatly degenerated. Family prayer – the Christian Sabbath – public worship and divine ordinances were greatly neglected. The rising generation, more especially, treated things of this nature with great coldness and indifference. A few of the children of God with us, at this period, were deeply affected and alarmed, at these threatening appearances of abounding wickedness. It seemed as if a righteous God were about to forsake us altogether – to give us up to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. And what

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<sup>149</sup> Thomas Baldwin. Ibid. pages 21 – 22.

seemed peculiarly to alarm our fears, at this time, in respect to our local condition, was the pleasing news we heard of the powerful work of God in other towns, while there was such a growing neglect of religion among ourselves.

This gave us reason to fear, that while other parts of Zion were so highly blessed with the presence of God, and the work of his grace, we should be left to our own destruction.

We therefore then felt the great need of abundant prayerfulness, and were brought to cry to the most high, for his holy spirit to be shed down for the awakening of sinners and quickening of his saints.

I appointed a weekly conference in the latter part of the month of February, 1799, for this purpose, believing that the prevailing wickedness of the day called for extraordinary prayer to God. This appointment was succeeded far beyond what had been expected, in bringing many people together to unite in prayer to God, and in seeking the precious blessings of his grace. In the latter part of March and the beginning of April, of the same year, there appeared the small beginnings of more than ordinary attention to the things of God's kingdom. Some were struck with a deep conviction of their sin and danger, and others were alarmed. This attention to religion continued to increase for several weeks, till it had become so general in the Parish, that it was judged expedient to set up, in various parts of the society, several religious meetings. Etc. [the revival flowed from these meetings.]<sup>150</sup>

### **Rev. Ammi R. Robbins, Norfolk, Conn., 1799.**

About five years past, the concert for prayer proposed to be observed quarterly, and which was attended in many parts of

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<sup>150</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume One. January, 1801. page 269.

the land, was also set up here, and the members of the Church with some others attended. These seasons appeared to be solemn, and were animated and encouraging to numbers of God's people. But nothing special appeared respecting a revival of religion, until Jan. 1799, when it was noticed that our religious assemblies were more solemn and attentive. The religious people about this time hearing of some revival of religion in two or three towns in the vicinity; and having before this heard of the work of God at a further distance, were induced to hope and ardently to pray that we might have a gracious visit also.

Although no special instances of awakening, as yet, appeared to take place; there is reason to conclude that numbers of God's dear people in secret, as well as in a special way, did most earnestly plead at the throne of grace, that the Lord would get glory to his name in reviving his work among us, and in infinite mercy send his holy Spirit to arrest the progress of thoughtless sinners, who were in the broad way to eternal ruin. Soon it was whispered among some of our serious people, that one and another in this or that part of the town were in trouble and very serious. Our congregation on the Sabbath became more full than ordinary and very solemn indeed. In February and March, the attention became so general that it was thought proper at the desire of many, that religious conferences should be set up. They accordingly were, in four and sometimes five different parts of the town. A public lecture was also appointed to be preached every Thursday, and became a matter of course through the summer and into the autumn; so that there was no need of warning; but when the day came, the house was filled with people almost like the Sabbath. Ministers from abroad were generally procured to preach on these occasions. And they were undoubtedly, by the blessing of God, a means of

promoting the work, of instructing and edifying young converts, and guarding them from errors and intemperate zeal.<sup>151</sup>

### **Rev. Samuel Shepard. Lenox, Massachusetts.**

I cannot learn from any of the first settlers, that there has ever been any remarkable revival of religion in this town until the month of June, 1799. It appears that the greatest number which was ever added to this church in the course of one year, was about eleven. This, if I am rightly informed, was in the year 1783.

Such was the effect of the unhappy divisions which frequently occurred in the church, and the numerous interruptions to public religious instruction and the stated administration of divine ordinances, that, for many years, the message to the church in Sardis might with peculiar propriety have been addressed to us – “I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead.”

At the time of my ordination, which was in April, 1795, the situation of the church called for the earnest prayers of all who had a heart to pray. The number of its members was not much greater then, than it had been, perhaps, for twenty-five years before; and almost the whole of them were bowing under the infirmities of age. No person, who was in early life, was a member of this church. Not a single young person had been received into it in the course of sixteen years. To see the youth, all as one, wasting away their best moments in stupidity – to view them as accountable creatures, and yet, living apparently without a hope – “without a wish beyond the grave” – and, to see a few grey-headed persons compose almost the whole number of communicants at the sacramental table –

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<sup>151</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume One. February 1801. pp. 312 – 313.

must, to one just entering upon the work of the ministry, give feelings, which cannot easily be described. Well might this church, like God's ancient covenant people when they sat in captivity by the waters of Babylon, hang its "harps upon the willows;" for, it seemed, indeed, that, when the few, who were rapidly hastening down the vale of time, should be borne to the grave, and delivered from the evil to come, the name of Jesus, in the holy ordinance of the Supper, would, among us, be scarcely had in remembrance.

Such were the melancholy prospects of this church until the spring of the year 1799. While showers of divine grace were falling on other parts of Zion, and God, by his Spirit, was visiting one place and another, and quickening multitudes "for his name's sake," we seemed to be solemnly warned in the words recorded in Rev. 2:5, "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place." But the Lord hath said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," and, glory be to his name. With him is the residue of the Spirit, and he can pour it out when, and where, and on whom he pleaseth. He hath made it, therefore, a day of his power, and caused, even in the midst of us, a "shaking among the dry bones."

In the month of April, 1799, several members of the church manifested great anxiety about the state of religion among us, and expressed a desire that meetings might be appointed for religious conference and special prayer for the out pouring of the holy Spirit. This request was afterwards made known to the church as a body, They unanimously approved of it, and a conference meeting was accordingly appointed. This meeting was attended by as many people, as previous appearances warranted us to expect. A sermon was preached at this meeting, and the audience was very attentive. At the next

conference, we conversed upon a particular passage of scripture, which led to a consideration of the being and perfections of God. Several persons at this meeting appeared unusually solemn. About this time two or three young persons were brought under deep conviction, and found earnestly enquiring what they should do to be saved; and at the third conference meeting, were to be seen, persons from every part of the town. Etc.<sup>152</sup>

**Rev. Jacob Catlin.**  
**New Marlborough, Massachusetts.**

Among the wonderful and glorious works of God, that of divine grace, in the conversion of sinners, holds the front rank. In compliance with the wish of many, I have concluded, very briefly to give a general statement of the late work of divine grace among the people of this parish.

In the summer and fall of 1783, which was previous to my ministry and acquaintance with this town, there was a very considerable revival of religion; the happy fruit of which was, that nearly fifty were added to the church. This was the first special and considerable work of divine grace, after the settlement of the town, a term of about forty years.

In consequence of this revival, lectures and conferences were frequently attended for several years. This was the pleasing state of things until, and after my settlement in the gospel ministry, which was in the summer of 1787.

Attention to things divine had, by this time, however, greatly declined, and a growing inattention among the body of the people was manifest, for about ten years. – During this interval of special divine influence, sad were the scenes of

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<sup>152</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume Two. October, 1801.  
pages 137 - 138

controversy in town, respecting the location of a new meeting house; and in the church, respecting discipline and practice.

When all these evils had subsided, and infidelity, which had been formidable, in troublesome times, in a great measure disappeared; there was discovered in serious professors, an uncommon concern for the welfare of Zion. Near the beginning of the year 1797, it was privately contemplated by serious members of the church to set up a religious conference, to be attended at least once a month. The plan was proposed to the church; and it was recommended to individuals to use influence to pursued their connections and neighbours to attend. The conference was small in the beginning, but constantly increased during that and the following year.

In the winter of 1798 we had, in different neighbourhoods, two, and often three crowded conferences in a week, eagerly attentive to the discussion of Bible doctrines, and the explanation of difficult passages of scripture. This, together with prayer and singing, was the whole business of our conferences; and some people attended, even for years, merely as to a school for the improvement of knowledge.

But it is apprehended that there was an uncommon spirit of prayer, among a few, for the outpouring of the Spirit of God. Not more than five or six hopeful conversions had been manifested in the parish for ten years; and the chief of these were within the first year, after the serious resolution of attending conferences.

But in the month of October, 1799, after all means had seemed to have become unsuccessful, and prospects had become very gloomy, it pleased God to manifest his glorious power, in arresting the attention of multitudes, not merely to dry speculations, but to the vast concerns of their own souls. Etc.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume Two. December, 1801. page 225.

### **Rev. Ira Hart, Middlebury, Connecticut.**

This society is but lately formed, and I am the first settled minister. I am informed that some years since, there was a small revival of religion, and several persons added to the church. At the time of my settlement, while everything else appeared favourable, the spirit and power of vital piety seemed almost gone. There was a general and commendable punctuality in attending public worship on the Sabbath; but not that animation, that fixed, engaged attention, and solemnity, which characterize those who tread the courts of the Lord to be fed with the *bread of life* and the *waters of life*. We had a number of praying families, but alas too many, in which the morning and evening sacrifice was not offered to God, and no supplication made by parents for the gracious presence of the Redeemer with themselves and their children.

Several cases of discipline existed in the church, which required the tenderest management and lay upon the brethren as a heavy burden. All saw and acknowledged the evil and longed to have it removed, but in the general inactivity and discouragement, and owing perhaps in some degree to the want of a settled minister nothing effectual had been done. The church appeared timid, and some of the enemies of the cross exulted and cast reproach. It will appear however, that our sinful fears were not realized; and that Christ, the great head of the church, caused the sweet influences of his grace to break forth from this very quarter, whence we expected trouble and danger, or which we grounded our fears of disunion, and which appeared at the time to hang over us as a portentous cloud.

Returning home from some places where there was a revival, my mind became impressed with the idea, that nothing so effectually kept off the divine blessing from us as our neglect of those cases of discipline. The church were urged to proceed

immediately, and being soon convinced that reformation must begin at the house of God, entered into the affair with spirit. I soon found that individuals had for some time past been wrestling with God in prayer, and had a strong hope that what they heard from other places, would be soon realized here. This helped to encourage them and others to proceed against an offending brother without delay. In July, a complaint was regularly exhibited, and a day for the trial appointed. A circumstance now took place which showed that the Lord was on our side. Though the accused, a man aged about 80, appeared for some time not to regard the summons of the church, and though pains were taken to suppress the evidence; yet such was the power of God, that he found no peace, till his heart melted, and he appeared and plead guilty to the complaint. His venerable appearance, his apparent deep-felt penitence and humility, rendered the scene peculiarly affecting to the church and to his own family. On his confession, which was public, he was restored to our charity and communion. It was indeed a solemn transaction, and seemed to interest the whole audience and to make an impression highly favourable to religion.

Soon after, returning from a neighbouring society, I called at his house, I perceived a stranger present and a considerable alteration in the countenances of the family; but whether there was anything special, or whether their feelings were unfavourably excited, on account of my conduct in the late affair of discipline, I knew not. Judge then my agreeable surprise when soon called upon by the mother in tears to answer to her daughter and the stranger the great question, "what shall we do to be saved?" To this unexpected question I gave the scripture answer, and soon found they were indeed pricked in their hearts. And here, the late awakening with which a

merciful and sovereign God hath visited us, may be properly said to begin. Etc.<sup>154</sup>

### **Rev. Jesse Edson. Halifax, Vermont.**

There appeared to be a growing seriousness and solemnity in our public assemblies, from the time of my ordination, which was in October, 1796, from which I took great encouragement, that God was about to visit us with a shower of divine grace, months before anything particular appeared. It worked a long time like a secret fire; many hearts burnt within them, before they made their minds known to each other, thinking they were alone.

The first visible appearances of a revival began in the church; professors seemed to awake from their stupidity and coldness, and to speak freely one to another upon the things of religion. A spirit of prayer and supplication was poured upon them – they began to meet for religious conferences, and an increasing fervency and engagedness appeared; and the attention of two or three, who had entertained a hope for several years, was called up. – From this time, there began to be a visible shaking among the dry bones; and a few individuals were raised to spiritual life.

[In one of the Sunday services at Halifax,] The Spirit seemed to come like a rushing, mighty wind, to melt the souls of God's dear children, to cause sinners to tremble, stubborn wills to bow, and hard hearts to relent. Etc.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume Three. August, 1802.  
pages 64 – 65.

<sup>155</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume Three. November, 1802.  
page 188.

## **Statement on the State of Religion Presbyterian General Assembly, 1803.**

The Assembly heard, at more than usual length, and with more than common satisfaction, the accounts received from their members, of the state of religion within the bounds of the Presbyterian Church. Since an enquiry of this sort has become a part of the annual business of the Assembly, it may be confidently asserted, that no result has ever been presented to our body, so favourable, and so gratifying to the friends of truth and piety.

There is scarcely a Presbytery under the care of the Assembly, from which some pleasing intelligence has not been announced; and from some of them communications have been made which so illustriously display the triumphs of evangelical truth, and the power of sovereign grace, as cannot but fill with joy the hearts of all who love to hear of the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom.

In most of the **northern and eastern Presbyteries**, revivals of religion, of a more or less general nature, have taken place. In these revivals, the work of divine grace has proceeded, with few exceptions, in the usual way. Sinners have been convinced and converted, by the still small voice of the Holy Spirit, - have been brought out of darkness into marvellous light, and from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, without any remarkable bodily agitations, or extraordinary affections. In this calm and ordinary manner, many hundreds have been added to the church, in the course of the last year; and multitudes of those, who had before joined themselves unto the Lord, have experienced times of refreshing and consolation, from his presence.

In many of the **southern and western Presbyteries**, revivals more extensive, and of a more extraordinary nature,

have taken place. While many, within the bounds of those Presbyteries, have been, as is hoped, effectually called, without any exercises other than those which have generally attended the progress of vital piety, there have been multitudes of instances, in which great bodily agitations and other circumstances out of the usual course of religious exercises, have attended the work.

As these extraordinary appearances have been before announced by the Assembly, and as the knowledge of them is generally diffused throughout the American Churches, it is not judged necessary to enter into minute details on the subject. The Assembly can only observe, that, although they forbear to express any opinion as to the origin and nature of some of those circumstances, which have attended the southern and western revivals, and which have so much attracted the attention of the religious world; yet they are constrained to acknowledge, with thankfulness, that last year, while it presented a continuance, and great extension, of this extraordinary work, has furnished evidence that it is indeed the work of God, for which the friends of piety are bound to praise his holy name.

**[Radical Social and Personal Changes Created by the Revival.]**

The Assembly cannot believe, that a dispensation, by means of which, the ignorant are enlightened, the vicious reclaimed, the erroneous made to acknowledge and obey the truth, as it is in Jesus, the haughty infidel humbled, and brought to bow penitent and submissive before the cross of Christ, and the general aspect of society changed from dissoluteness and profanity to sobriety, order, and comparative purity, can be any other than a dispensation of the grace of God.

And as there appears to be growing evidence that these are the happy fruits of the above mentioned remarkable work, the Assembly cannot hesitate to recognise in it the same divine

power, which has in every age appeared, in a greater or smaller degree, to build up Zion; to confound the wisdom of this world, and to show that, when the great head of the Church will work, none can hinder him.

**[Attention to Prayer.]**

The Assembly consider it as worthy of particular attention, that most of the accounts of revivals, communicated to them, have stated that the institution of praying societies, or seasons of special prayer to God, for the out-pouring of the Spirit generally preceded the remarkable displays of divine grace, with which our land has been recently favoured. In most cases, preparatory to signal effusions of the Holy Ghost, the pious have been stirred up, to cry fervently and importunately, that God would appear to vindicate his own cause. The Assembly see in this a confirmation of the word of God, and an ample encouragement of the prayers and hopes of the pious, for future, and more extensive manifestations of divine power. And they trust, that the Churches under their care, while they see cause of abundant thankfulness, for this dispensation, will also perceive that it presents new motives to zeal and fervour, in applications to that throne of grace, from which every good and perfect gift cometh down.<sup>156</sup>

**Rev. John Preston. Rupert, Vermont.**

I have been settled in the ministry here between six and seven years, and till within a few months past, have habitually had the feelings that my labours were all in vain, and that my strength was spent for nought. From year to year, religion appeared declining, the church decreasing in numbers and graces, and iniquity abounding. A little more than one year

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<sup>156</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume Four. August, 1803. pages 68 – 69.

ago the darkness which intercepted my prospects of usefulness, and even my continuance here, arose to its height and appeared scarcely to admit the smallest gleam of hope. It now appeared a reality, that there could be no hope but from God.

In this hour of extremity a small number of the few remaining professors of religion amongst us, agreed to meet once a week for social prayer. For several weeks the number which attended was very small, some times not more than two or three. But these appeared strong in the faith and fervent in their prayer, the "spirit helping their infirmities with groanings which could not be uttered." The number of attendants soon began to increase, and their meetings became increasingly solemn; so that in September the number of religious conferences, or rather prayer meetings, in different parts of the Society, were multiplied to four in a week. – Religious assemblies on the Sabbath now became much more full, attentive and solemn than usual. A day of public fasting and prayer about this time was observed by the church and some others, and attended with a special degree of solemnity.

A few instances of serious impression had already appeared amongst us; but nothing very special occurred till some time in November, when on a sudden, the Spirit of the Lord appeared to come down upon us, "like a rushing mighty wind." Almost the whole society appeared to be shaken at once. Scarcely a family could be found in which there was not some earnestly enquiring what they should do to be saved. And scarce a countenance could be discovered, without evident marks of solemnity. Our praying meeting were soon multiplied to seven in a week, and in every neighbourhood were crowded and solemn to an amazing degree. No emotions, however, more violent than shedding of tears, and no appearance of wildness or

disorder occurred. Nothing was heard but the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit. Etc.<sup>157</sup>

These examples will serve to indicate to some degree at least the fervency of prayer which led up to the revivals in individual congregations and villages.

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<sup>157</sup> *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*. Volume Five. September, 1804. page 112..

## CHAPTER TWO.

1815 – 1821.

### PITTSFIELD, Mass.

But to return from this digression:- The excitement in a few minds, which I have already mentioned, [i.e. caused by a revival in the neighbouring town of Richmond] increasing, a private meeting was agreed on by three or four pious young men, in the latter part of March, the express object of which was prayer, for the outpouring of the Spirit upon this church and people. In this meeting, which for some time was attended almost every evening, these young brethren found themselves greatly strengthened in the resolution which they early formed, that ‘for Zion’s sake they would not hold their peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake they would not rest, until the righteousness thereof should go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.’ Other meetings, both male and female, were soon formed on the same plan, and were equally blessed to the souls of those who attended them. Their hearts were much enlarged in prayer, and the hope that God was about to ‘appear in his glory and build up Zion,’ which trembled and wavered for a time, now daily gathered new strength. This state of feeling, however, was by no means general in the church. But few, comparatively, as yet, manifested what I should call a *revival spirit*. Some were even more faithless than usual. They had seen hopeful appearances often, but had always been disappointed.

Thus they reasoned. But God “dealt not with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.” The sacred fire gradually extended itself on every side, warming one heart after another, till it was manifest that a revival had really

begun in the church. - Such confessions of unfruitfulness; such desire for the salvation of sinners; such “strong cryings and so many tears,” could not be mistaken. During the month of April, there were also some encouraging appearances in the congregation. Our assemblies on the Lord’s day, and at other seasons, gradually increased in numbers and solemnity; and before the close of the month, it was known to a few, that two or three individuals were beginning to ask ‘What they should do to be saved.’<sup>158</sup>

Nothing was ever plainer than that God has revived his work here, and has carried it on in answer to prayer. As long as the church remained stupid, there was nothing but death in the congregation. As soon as Christians began to pray fervently, there was a “noise and a shaking among the dry bones.” When Jacob wrestled, and said, “I will not let thee go except thou bless me,” then he prevailed. And during the whole summer, the state of the revival might be known by looking at the church, by inquiring how the work progressed among the people. When there was an extraordinary spirit of prayer, then many were awakened and brought into the kingdom. When prayer was less frequent and fervent, then the work appeared stationary, or retrograde.<sup>159</sup>

## **VERMONT, 1821.**

In the state of Vermont the Lord is carrying on a great work. A gentleman lately passing through the state, says, “that in about 50 towns in which revivals were progressing, it was

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<sup>158</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 5. 13th January, 1821. page 541. quoted from the *Christian Spectator*, probably for 1820.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.* page 544.

estimated that there were as many as seventeen hundred hopeful subjects of grace since the work began.”<sup>160</sup>

He related a remarkable instance in one town in answer to prayer. The Church were awakened, before the revival commenced, to an unusual spirit of prayer. They unitedly and fervently, and prevailingly plead for the out pouring of the Holy Spirit. Their prayers were answered by the simultaneous conviction of nearly a hundred persons in different parts of the town. Those who were awakened, continued in great distress for some time without one hopeful conversion, until the minister of the place admonished his people to pray for their relief. When they came before the Lord with this request, about 40 received comfort, nearly at the same time, and many are now rejoicing in the Lord.

### **Hints for Promoting a Revival of Religion.**

The *London Evangelical Magazine* has an important extract on this subject, from a sermon on Romans xv: 29, by the late Rev. Thomas Scott.

After explaining the preacher’s views of the Gospel, Mr. Scott shows what it is for a minister to “come in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel” – namely, with great success in the conversion of souls. “If all my parish were converted, and there were only one left in its sin, I would have a struggle with the devil for that one.”

We may inquire, says Mr. S., whether our modern preachers of the Gospel do so prominently hold out the peculiarities of Christianity, as the Apostle did; whether they come with the holy law of God as the ministration of condemnation in one hand, and the Gospel of Christ as the ministration of life in the other; whether they warn sinners, like

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<sup>160</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 6. 6th October, 1821 pages 301 – 302.

John Baptist, not to trust in any outward forms, and then point out to the Lamb of God; whether Christ crucified is the great subject of their instruction; Whether they say with St. Paul, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"It is the work of the Spirit to glorify Christ. May we not then ask, whether God the Spirit is glorified in his person and grace, in his love and power, in the work of conversion; whether we do not hold the doctrine of the Holy Spirit slightly. For if we do not honour the Spirit, how can we expect that he will honour our ministry? We must expect all success from his power alone. If a man trust in knowledge, talents, eloquence, human suasion, he will do nothing. It is our business indeed to do all we can in inviting, entreating, and instructing men; but when we have done all, it is the Spirit of God, who alone can quicken the dead and enlighten the blind; and if we depend not on him, we shall not, we cannot, succeed.

Some, on the other hand, may be inclined so to look to God, as to neglect the means which God has appointed to be used. A man may say, "The blessing must come from God; I can do nothing of myself, and therefore I will do nothing at all." This is not trusting God, but tempting him. Our speculating on God's commands instead of obeying them, is most criminal. If the Prophet Ezekiel had done this, when he was sent to prophesy to the dry bones, what would the Lord have answered him?

We do not expect this fullness of blessing, and are satisfied without it. There is a littleness in our faith and conception of things. We do not ask nor expect this fullness, we have no idea of it, it does not enter our minds. Can we wonder, then, that the Lord says to us, "According to thy faith be it unto thee." But the apostle went forth and expected and asked a fullness of blessing. When a man is in earnest, nothing

will satisfy him but this. Others may be satisfied without success. They may go through a formal set of observances, and be contented; instead of examining their ministry and their whole conduct, and saying, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me." If we can be satisfied without this enlarged blessing, certainly we shall never have it. If a man says, I have a large, attentive congregation; I have a good income; the people are obliging; my circumstances are comfortable – he is in a most dangerous state. It is the same as if a fisherman should be satisfied because he has a good net, and pleasant companions and fair weather; though he comes home empty. If anything but usefulness will satisfy us, I do not wonder we are not useful. We must thank God for this and that thing; but nothing must satisfy us but the conversion of sinners.

Our faithfulness and earnestness are more in the pulpit than in the closet. We preach Christ as if in earnest, and we go and pray as if not in earnest. There is but little wrestling with God for a blessing. There is a want of the spirit of prayer. Sometimes this may arise from humility; but it is a false one. St. Paul was most humble; yet most earnest in prayer, most persevering, most importunate; and so he obtained a fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.

There is a want of that holy heavenly temper, and that general circumspection of conduct, which would make us patterns of good works. Can we say, "Ye know how holily and justly and unblameable we behaved ourselves among you that believed." - Do we embody Christianity? – Are we men of God; heavenly, disinterested, dead to the pleasures, interests, and honours of this world? What would Paul say, if he were to come amongst us?<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Six. 20th October, 1821. pages 331 – 332.

## CHAPTER THREE

1821 to 1829

### **ONEIDA COUNTY REVIVAL, 1826.**

#### **SYNOD of ALBANY. Report – in part.**

The Synod of Albany held their annual meeting at Watertown, the first week in October, instant. [1826]

The churches are in most instances at peace among themselves. The means of grace are generally attended. The monthly concert of prayer is pretty uniformly observed; and charitable institutions of almost every name are fostered with no diminution of interest.

The Narrative in glancing upon the Presbyteries of Londonderry, Columbia, Troy, Albany, Otsego, Champlain, Oswego and St. Lawrence [found] nothing of much interest. Some of them have been favoured with partial revivals. (But there was one great example - two parishes in Oswego Presbytery saw three hundred conversions.)

But it is in the Oneida Presbytery that God has been pleased to display the riches of his grace in a very extraordinary manner. During the past year, within their bounds, there have been, it is believed, not less than 2,500 subjects of hopeful conversion. Nor has the work entirely subsided. During this season of refreshing, there has been such a spirit of prayer, as was never before witnessed in this region. God has enabled his people to agonize for the descent of the Holy Ghost; and he has given the most convincing evidence of the fact, that he is more ready to give the Holy Ghost to them that ask, than earthly parents are to give bread to their children. The means employed in carrying forward this work have been, the pointed preaching of the gospel, visiting from house to house, seasons

of fasting, meetings of anxious inquiry, and especially social and secret prayer. God has signally showed in this revival, that his kingdom is, by way of eminence, a kingdom of means; and that he will bless the means of his own appointment. While many of the congregations within the bounds of this Presbytery, have enjoyed such a season of refreshing as God has never before permitted them to witness, nearly all of them have shared more or less of the genial influence of this work. In some instances great opposition has been manifested, and especially by those who “hold the truth in unrighteousness.” But God has moved forward in his glory, clearly evincing that it is a vain thing to contend with the Almighty.<sup>162</sup>

### **Remarks on the Character of this Revival of Religion.**

5. This revival has been characterized by a remarkable spirit of prayer. Often it has been said – “Christians pray as they have never prayed before.” Many have been in deep distress, and felt what it was to *travail in birth* for souls. With this burden pressing upon their hearts, they have cried to God for help, feeling they could not let him go without a blessing, and where Christians have been united and persevering in their supplications, astonishing, and in some instances overwhelming influences of the Spirit have been witnessed. So great, and so general has been the excitement, that worldly business was in a considerable degree suspended, and religion was the common topic of conversation in all companies and in all places.

6. Unusual strength of faith in the promises and threatenings of God has been manifested in many of our churches. Christians have not only assented to the testimony of

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<sup>162</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Eleven. 28th October, 1826. page 245.

God, that there is a heaven and a hell; but they have seemed, in many instances, to have such a spiritual perception of these amazing truths, and others connected with them, that they have *rejoiced with trembling*. With the eye of faith open upon the eternal world, they have laid hold of the arm of the Lord, with a *grasp* which seemed to say – *It is a case of life and death with our friends and neighbours; we cannot be denied*. They have not been denied. The ear of the Lord was “open unto their prayer,” and “his arm brought salvation.”

7. An unusual spirit of prayer has prevailed among converts, and they have manifested a disposition to converse with their friends and others on the subject of religion. It has often been remarked of them, that they were born praying. Many of them appear to have the strength of spiritual manhood, and promise to be among the brightest ornaments of our churches.<sup>163</sup>

## **Some Experiences of Charles G. Finney in this period.**

### **De Kalb.**

I have stated that my last field of labor in St. Lawrence County was in De Kalb, and that the revival there was powerful for the scattered population that then existed in that new region of country. For several weeks before I left De Kalb to go to the Synod in Oneida County of which I have made mention, I was very strongly exercised in prayer, and had an experience then

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<sup>163</sup> Presbytery of Oneida. *A Narrative of the Revival of Religion in the County of Oneida, particularly in the Bounds of the Presbytery of Oneida in the Year 1826*. Utica. Published by the Presbytery. Page 37.

that was somewhat new to me at the time. I found myself so much exercised, and so borne down with the weight of immortal souls that I was constrained to pray without ceasing. I could not rest in the house, and was obliged to retire to the barn frequently through the day, where I could unburden my soul and pour my heart out to God in prayer. I had wonderful faith given to me at that time, and had some experiences that alarmed me. When alone I would wrestle and struggle, and my faith would rise till I would say to God that He had made a promise to answer prayer, and I could not, and would not, be denied. I would be so wrought up as to use such strong language to God in prayer, - I felt so certain that He would hear me, and that faithfulness to His promises, and to Himself rendered it impossible that He should not hear and answer, that frequently I found myself saying to Him, "I hope thou dost not think that I can be denied. I come with Thy faithful promises in my hand, and I cannot be denied."

At that time the Spirit of God made such an application of the promises to my mind, and so revealed their real meaning, as to lead me to understand better how to use them, and to what cases they were especially applicable, than I had ever understood before. I had been in the habit from my first conversion of having the Spirit in prayer lead me to such an appreciation of the promises, as I never should have gotten by any study of my own. I had very frequently had the promises so applied, had so applied and used them, as to find that they had a much wider application in their spirit than a mere critical examination of their letter would have warranted. I was led frequently to see that the New Testament writers quoted the promises of the Old Testament in such a way as to cover much more ground than the mere letter of the promises would have warranted. But this experience of mine at De Kalb was extraordinary in this respect. I cannot tell how absurd unbelief

looked to me, and how certain it was in my mind that God would answer prayer, - and those prayers that from day to day and from hour to hour I found myself offering in such agony and faith. I had no idea in my mind of the shape the answer would take, the locality in which the prayers would be answered, or the exact time of the answer. My impression was that the answer was near, even at the door; and I felt myself strengthened in the divine life, put on the harness for a mighty conflict with the powers of darkness, and expected soon to see a far more powerful outpouring of the Spirit of God in that new country where I had been labouring.<sup>164</sup>

### **Western.**

(a.) On Friday my mind was greatly exercised. I went off frequently into the church to engage in secret prayer, and had a mighty hold upon God. The news was circulated, and on Sabbath I had the church full of hearers. I preached all day, and God came down with great power upon the people. It was manifest to everybody that the work of grace had begun. I made appointments to preach in different parts of the town in school houses, and at the center, during the week; and the work increased from day to day. In the meantime my own mind was much exercised in prayer; and I found that the spirit of prayer was prevailing, especially among the female members of the church. Mrs. Brayton and Mrs Harris, the wives of two of the elders of the church, I found were almost immediately were greatly exercised in prayer. Each of them had families of unconverted children; and they laid hold in prayer with an earnestness that to me gave promise that their families must be converted. Mrs. Harris, however, was a woman of very feeble

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<sup>164</sup> Rosell and Dupuis (editors.) *The Memoirs of Charles G. Finney*. The Complete Restored Text. Grand Rapids. Academie Books – Zondervan. 1989. pages 138 - 139.

health, and had not ventured out much to any meeting for a long time. However, as the day was pleasant, she was out at the prayer meeting to which I have alluded, and seemed to catch the inspiration of that meeting, and took it home with her.

It was on the next week, I think, that I called in at Mr. Harris's, and found him pale and agitated. He said to me, "Brother Finney, I think my wife will die. She is so exercised in her mind that she cannot rest day or night, but is given up entirely to prayer." "She has been all the morning," said he, "in her room groaning and struggling in prayer; and I am afraid it will entirely overcome her strength." Hearing my voice in the sitting room she came out from her bedroom, and upon her face was a most unearthly, heavenly glow. Her countenance was lighted up with a hope and a joy that were plainly from heaven. She exclaimed, "Brother Finney, the Lord has come! This work will spread over all this region! A cloud of mercy overhangs us all; and we shall see such a work of grace as we have never yet seen."

Her husband looked surprised, confounded, and knew not what to say. It was new to him, but not to me. I had seen such scenes before; and believed that prayer had prevailed, nay, I felt sure of it in my own soul. The work went on, prevailed, until it began to exhibit unmistakable indications of the direction in which the Spirit of God was leading from that place.<sup>165</sup>

(b.) There was one passage of my own experience that, for the honor of God, I must not omit to relate ... I had preached and prayed almost continually during the time I had been at Mr. Gale's [at Western.] As I was accustomed to use my voice in prayer, and pray aloud, for convenience sake, that I might not be heard, I had spread a buffalo skin on the hay loft;

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<sup>165</sup> Rosell and Dupuis. *Ibid.* pages 147 – 148.

where I used to spend much of my time when not abroad visiting, or engaged in preaching, in secret prayer to God. Brother Gale had admonished me several times that if I did not take care I would go beyond my strength and break down. But the Spirit of prayer was upon me, and I would not resist him; and gave him scope, and let out my strength freely in pouring out my soul to God in prayer. It was November, and the weather was becoming cold. Brother Gale and I had been out visiting inquirers with his horse and buggy. We came home and went into the barn and put out the horse. After the horse was unharnessed, instead of going into the house, I crept up into the hay loft to pour out my burdened soul to God in prayer. I prayed until my burden left me. I was so far exhausted that I fell down upon the buffalo skin and lost myself in sleep. When my mind was relieved and the burden gone,, I must have fallen to sleep almost instantly, I judge from the fact that I had no recollection of any time elapsing at all after the struggle in my soul was over. Brother Gale went into the house; and I remained in the barn; and I remained in the barn so long that he became alarmed. The first I knew he came climbing up into the loft, and said, "Brother Finney, are you *dead*?" I awoke, and at first could give no account of why I was there asleep, and could form no idea of how long I had been there. But this I knew, that my mind was calm and my faith unwavering. The work would go on, of that I felt assured.<sup>166</sup>

### **Rome.**

I should say a few words in regard to the spirit of prayer which prevailed at Rome at this time. I think it was on the Saturday that I came down from Western to exchange with Mr. Gillett, that I met the church in the afternoon in a prayer

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid. page 151.

meeting in their house of worship. I endeavoured to make them understand that God would immediately answer prayer provided they fulfilled the conditions upon which he had promised that he would answer prayer, and especially if they believed in the sense of *expecting* Him to answer their requests. I observed that the church were greatly interested in my remarks, and their countenances manifested an intense desire to see an answer to their prayers. Near the close of the meeting I recollect making this remark. It was before there were railroads. I said to the church, "I really believe, if you will unite this afternoon in the prayer of faith to God for the immediate outpouring of his Spirit, that you will receive an answer from heaven sooner than you would get a message from Albany by the quickest post that you could send." I said this with great emphasis, and felt it; and I observed that the people were startled with my expression of earnestness and faith in respect to an immediate answer to prayer, that I made the remark without any misgiving. Nothing was said by any of the members of the church at the time; but I learned after the work had begun, that three or four members of the church, - Mr. George Huntingdon, brother of Henry Huntingdon,, and two or three other brethren, - called in at Mr. Gillett's study, and felt so impressed with what had been said about speedy answers to prayer that they determined to take God at His Word, and see whether He would answer while they were yet speaking. One of them told me afterwards that they had wonderful faith given them by the Spirit of God to pray for an *immediate answer*, and he added, "The answer *did* come quicker than we could have got an answer from Albany by the quickest post we could have sent." Indeed the town was full of prayer. Go where you would you heard the voice of prayer. Pass along the streets, and if two or three Christians happened to be together they were praying. Wherever they met they prayed. Wherever there was

a sinner unconverted, especially if he manifested any opposition, you would find two or three brothers or sisters agreeing to make him a particular subject of prayer; and it was very remarkable to see to what an extent God would answer prayer immediately.<sup>167</sup>

### **Utica.**

When I had been at Rome about twenty days, one of the elders in Mr. Aikin's church in Utica, a very prominent man and a very useful man, died; and I went down to attend the funeral. Mr. Aikin conducted the funeral exercises; and I learned from him that the spirit of prayer was already manifest in his congregation, and in that city. He told me that one of his principal ladies had been so deeply exercised in her soul about the state of the church, and of the ungodly in that city, that she had prayed for two days and nights almost incessantly, until her strength was quite overcome; that she had literally travail of soul to such an extent that when her own strength was exhausted she could not endure the burden of her mind unless somebody was engaged in prayer with her, upon whose prayer she could lean – some one who could express her desires to God. I understood this, and told Mr. Aikin that the work had already begun in her heart. He recognised it, of course, and wished me to commence labor with him and his people immediately.<sup>168</sup>

### **Troy.**

In this revival there was a very earnest spirit of prayer, as in all the rest that had preceded it. We had a prayer meeting from house to house daily at eleven o'clock. At one of those meetings I recollect that a Mr. Stowe, cashier of a bank in that

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid. pages 167 - 168.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid. page 172.

city, was so pressed by the spirit of prayer, that when the meeting was dismissed he was unable to rise from his knees, as we had all just been kneeling in prayer. He remained upon his knees, and writhed and groaned in agony. He said, "Pray for -- -, who was president of the bank of which he was cashier. This president was a rich, but an unconverted man. When it was seen that his soul was in travail for that man, the praying people knelt down and wrestled in prayer for his conversion. As soon as the mind of the cashier was so relieved that he could go home, we all retired; and soon after the president of the bank, for whom we prayed, expressed hope in Christ. He had not previous to this, I believe, attended any of the meetings, and it was not known that he was concerned about his salvation. But prayer prevailed, and God soon took his case in hand."<sup>169</sup>

### **Stephentown.**

(a.) The state of things in Stephentown now demanded that I should leave New Lebanon, and take up my quarters in Stephentown. I did so. The spirit of prayer in the meantime had come powerfully upon me, as he had for some time on Miss Sackett. The praying power so manifestly spreading and increasing, the work soon took on a very powerful type; so much so that the word of the Lord would cut the strongest men down and render them entirely helpless when sent home by the Holy Ghost. I could name many cases of this kind. One of the first that I recollect was on Sabbath, when I was preaching on the text, "God is love." There was a man by the name of Jowles, a man of strong nerves and of considerable prominence as a farmer in the town. He sat down almost immediately before me, as his pew was near to the pulpit. The first that I observed was that he fell, and seemed as if he was in a fit. He

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid. pages 209 – 210.

writhed in agony for a few moments, and groaned with deep feeling; but afterwards became still, and nearly motionless, but entirely helpless. He remained in this state until the meeting was out, and they took him home. He was very soon converted, and became a powerful instrument in influencing his friends to come to Christ. It was common afterwards for cases similar to this one to occur in those revivals.<sup>170</sup>

(b.) But before I cease speaking of Stephentown I should say, that both there and at New Lebanon the same means, and no other, were used that had been used and blessed in the revivals in central New York. The Word had the same prodigious power imparted to it by the Holy Ghost; and the conversions were of the same general type. The converts were clear, strong, zealous, and united. There was no appearance of heterodoxy among them, no tendency to fanaticism or anything objectionable that I ever perceived. I know not that any complaint was ever made in any quarter of there being anything disastrous or out of the way in those revivals. They were remarkably pure and powerful, and lasting in their results. If I recollect I received at one time about two hundred of the converts into the communion of the church.

I shall never forget the interest taken by the young converts in the Miss Sackett of whom I have spoken. She seemed to be regarded by them with peculiar affection. They had known of her instrumentality in getting me to go there, and they had seen her earnest soul pouring itself out in every direction for their salvation. They clung to her and around her in a very affectionate manner. She was young, and unaffected and simple-hearted as a child. But she was over-done. Her strength soon began to fail; and she lived, I believe, but a few months after the revival closed.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid. page 235.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. Page 242.

## **The Spirit of Prayer.**

**[Part of Roy McKenzie's thesis on Finney's teaching on prayer. Used with his permission.]**

The third theme central to Finney's doctrine of prayer is based on Romans 8:26-27. After clarifying that the text refers to the Holy Spirit, not the human spirit, and showing that he intercedes for the saints, Finney states that the Spirit is thus employed because of human ignorance. We do not know what the contents of our prayers should be. The Spirit of God makes intercession by:

1. Enlightening our minds, deeply gripping our souls with the truth and the actual state of things.

2. Making "the Christian feel the value of souls and the guilt and danger of sinners in their present condition."

3. Leading believers to apply Scriptural promises appropriate to the need.

4. Instilling in our minds a desire to "travail in birth" until a particular person yields to Christ. This intercessory infusing of and by the Spirit can happen when there is no specifically applicable Biblical warrant to pray, being his promised leading rather than a new revelation.

5. Imparting discernment of God's providential dealings and opportunities, so that some Christians "are often led to discern a revival, and pray for it in faith, when nobody else can see the least signs of it."

The strong *degree of influence* is "that the Spirit excites desire too great to be uttered except by groans. Something that language cannot utter – making the soul too full to utter its feelings by words, where the person can only groan them out to God, who understands the language of the heart." The test for distinguishing the genuineness of these continuing intense, influences is whether one's feelings towards the object of

prayer are truly benevolent; and also to check one's "spirit and temper" against the tenor and tone of the Bible, for the Spirit does not give "strange fantasies and crazy impulses." To obtain this genuine influence of the Spirit there must be:-1`

1. Fervent believing prayer for the Spirit according to Luke 11:13;
2. The nurturing of the least impressions, as God expects us to exert our own efforts;
3. A watchfulness for the blessing to come, with confessing and forsaking of sins;
4. A diligent endeavour to obey all the commandments of God.

While much is spoken about the Spirit's influence in conversion, Finney laments that so little is said about his influences in *prayer*. Thus the revivalist contended that much misunderstanding had arisen about the Prayer of Faith because "the Spirit's influences are entirely overlooked, which he exerts in leading an individual to the exercise of faith. It has been supposed that the passage in Mark 11:22 and 24, with other kindred promises on the subject of the Prayer of Faith, relate exclusively to miracles. And if the Spirit could lead the mind of an apostle to exercise faith in regard to a miracle, he can lead the mind of another Christian to exercise faith in regard to any other blessing, by a reference to the same general promise."

Believing that Christians are in danger of grieving the Holy Spirit on this matter, Finney then repeats the conditions upon which the prayer of faith can properly be exercised as given in [what McKenzie writes above on Prevailing Prayer and also on the Prayer of Faith.]

From this he strongly condemns using set forms of prayer, as this practice "*of course*" rejects the spontaneous leadings of the Spirit and destructively undermines the spirit of prayer. The concluding call is to understand this subject

because of its importance to usefulness for effective Christian service and for one's own sanctification. "Without such a spirit you will not be sanctified... If people know not the spirit of prayer, then they are very apt to be unbelieving in regards to the results of prayer... Those who have the spirit of prayer know when the blessing comes.

The Holy Spirit's inspiration and guidance of prayer is a Scriptural theme necessary in any properly balanced doctrine of prayer. However, Finney often uses the word "spirit", as in the above paragraph. It seems that "spirit" here means not the Holy Spirit or the human spirit, but an "ardent attitude" in prayer or of prayer. If this is so, then ultimately the Spirit of God is still the source of spiritual fervency. The next example of such a fervent attitude in prayer is that of the early Christians who were "filled with the Spirit" at Pentecost, and also subsequently (Acts 2:1-4, and verses 42-43, 4:31-32), enabling them to live as Paul later instructs "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord... faithful in prayer." (Romans 12:11-12.)<sup>172</sup>

### **Finney, on Father Nash, and a Spirit-led woman.**

4. The Spirit leads Christians to desire and pray for things of which nothing is specifically said in the Word of God. Take the case of an individual. That God is willing to save is a general truth. So it is a general truth that He is willing to answer prayer. But how shall I know the will of God respecting that individual – whether I can pray in faith according to the will of God for the conversion and salvation of that individual, or not? Here the agency of the Spirit comes in to lead the

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<sup>172</sup> Roy McKenzie. *The Doctrine and Practice of Prayer in the Theology of Charles G. Finney*. Master's thesis. Bible College of New Zealand. Auckland. 2005.

minds of God's people to pray for those individuals, and at those times, when God is prepared to bless them. When we know not what to pray for, the Holy Spirit leads the mind to dwell on some object, to consider its situation, to realise its value, and to feel for it, and pray, and "travail in birth," till the person is converted. This sort of experience, I know, is less common in cities than it is in some parts of the country, because of the infinite number of things which in cities divert the attention and grieve the Spirit.

I have had much opportunity to know how it has been in some districts. I was acquainted with an individual who used to keep a list of persons for whom he was especially concerned; and I have had the opportunity to know a multitude of persons, for whom he became thus interested, who were individually converted. I have seen him pray for persons on his list when he was literally in an agony for them; and have sometimes known him call on some other person to help him pray for such-a-one. I have known his mind to fasten thus on an individual of hardened, abandoned character, and who could not be reached in any ordinary way. In a town in the northern part of this State, where there was a revival, there was a certain individual who was a most violent and outrageous opposer. He kept a tavern, and used to delight in swearing at a desperate rate, whenever there were Christians within hearing, on purpose to hurt their feelings. He was so bad that one man said he should have to sell his place, or give it away, and move out of town, for he could not live near a man who swore so. This good man of whom I was speaking passed through the town, and, hearing of the case, was very much grieved and distressed for the individual. He took him on his praying list. The case weighed on his mind when he was asleep and when he was awake. He kept thinking about the ungodly man, and praying for him for days. And, the first we know of it, the tavern-keeper came into

a meeting, got up and confessed his sins, and poured out his soul. His bar-room immediately became the place where they held prayer meetings. In this manner the Spirit of God leads individual Christians to pray for things which they would not pray for, unless they were led by the Spirit; and thus they pray for things “according to the will of God.”

There was a woman in New Jersey, in a place where there had been a revival. She was very positive there was going to be another. She wanted to have “conference meetings” appointed. But the minister and elders saw nothing to encourage it, and would do nothing. She saw they were blind, and so she went forward, and got a carpenter to make seats for her, for she said she would have meetings in her own house; there was certainly going to be a revival. She had scarcely opened her house for meetings, before the Spirit of God came down with great power, and these sleepy church members found themselves surrounded all at once with convicted sinners. They could only say: “Surely the Lord is in this place; and we knew it not.” (Gen. 28:16.) The reason why such persons as this praying woman understand the indications of God’s will is not because of the superior wisdom that is in them, but because the Spirit of God leads them to see the signs of the times. And this, not by revelation; but they are led to see that converging of providences to a single point, which produces in them a confident expression of a certain result.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Charles G. Finney. *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*. Lecture vi. Division.iv. Section 4. [There are so many editions of Finney’s *Revival Lectures*, that it is better to refer to the section from which the quotation is made than to any page number.]

## **AGONIZING PRAYER.**

**Extract of a letter from a clergyman in New England to a gentleman in New York.**

In the calm moments of sober reflection, I am indeed an astonishment to myself. I am astonished at the conduct of Christians. I am astonished at the conduct of the world. And most of all, I am astonished at the conduct of those professors of religion who believe in the absolute necessity of Divine influence, connected with human effort, and do not bestir themselves when a going is heard in the tops of the mulberry trees. Sinners are convicted and converted when saints are wrestling in their behalf. In confirmation of this truth the following occurred not long since: A few Sabbaths ago, I preached a sermon showing that the spiritual interests of children must be dear to eminently pious parents. The day after, or the day but one after, news came that there was a revival of religion in Mount Pleasant Institution, Amherst, Massachusetts, in which two of my neighbours have each a son; and it was also stated, that one of these youth was distressed in view of his sins. From the other, nothing was heard. The parents of the latter at once became immensely interested in the spiritual state of their child. Though I was absent, both the father and mother came to my house in an agony of spirit, the like of which we had never on any occasion witnessed in them. So soon as I returned, I went to their house, and found them in a state of feeling in which I never expected to find them. Though praying persons, as we trust, their most earnest desire was to be guided aright in prayer. They felt that their prayers were good for nothing. The evening was spent exclusively in conversation in relation to their duty as parents, to their children, and in prayer for these youth. Day after day the struggle with them lasted, until the exhausted nature of one of the mothers imperiously demanded rest. At that period, as I

was sitting in my door, this mother came and put into my hand an opened letter, which announced the fact that both of the youth were *rejoicing in hope*. She fainted; and when she recovered, we mingled our tears together.

A short time since, I heard the following from an authentic source:- A kinsman of mine in the western part of the State has a large family. Two adults of the family were without hope of an interest in Christ. These children were absent from home for a few days, one in one place, and the other in another. The father was called to attend a religious meeting in another town. As he went from home, he became deeply anxious for the salvation of these children, as did his wife about the same time. Their anxiety on this account deprived them of sleep for two nights. On the third day the father returned, and found that one child had just been brought to rejoice in hope, and the other came home soon after, praising God. The difficulty with your church, and the difficulty with all of us, we do not agonize at the Throne of Grace for the salvation of sinners. It is of too little consequence with us whether they are converted or not.

*New York Observer.*<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Thirteen. 16th August, 1828, pages 190 – 191.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### BEFORE and DURING the 1831 REVIVAL

#### Charles Finney's Experiences.

I have not said much as yet of *the spirit of prayer* that prevailed in this revival, which I must not omit to mention. When I was on my way to Rochester, as we passed through a village some thirty miles east of Rochester, a brother minister whom I knew seeing me on board the canal boat, jumped on to have a little conversation with me, intending to ride but a little way and jump off and return. He however became so interested in conversation, and upon finding where I was going he made up his mind to keep on and go with me to Rochester; and he did so. He almost immediately fell under great conviction, and the work was very deep with him. We had been there but a few days when this minister became so convicted that he could not help weeping aloud at one time when he passed along the street. The Lord gave him a powerful spirit of prayer, and his heart was broken. As he and I prayed much together, I was struck with his faith in regard with what the Lord was going to do there. I recollect he would say, "Lord, I do not know how it is; but I seem to know that thou art going to do a great work in this city." The Spirit of prayer was poured out powerfully, so much so that some persons stayed away from the public services to pray, being unable to restrain their feelings under preaching.

And here I must introduce the name of a man, whom I shall have occasion to mention frequently, Mr. Abel Clary,. He was the son of a very excellent man, and an elder of the church where I was converted. He was converted in the same revival in which I was. He had been licensed to preach; but his spirit of

prayer was such, he was so burdened with the souls of men, that he was not able to preach much, his whole time and strength being given to prayer. The burden of his soul would frequently be so great that he was unable to stand, and he would writhe and groan in agony in a most wonderful manner. I was well acquainted with him, and knew something of the wonderful spirit of prayer that was upon him. He was a very silent man, as almost all are who have that wonderful spirit of prayer. The first I knew of his being at Rochester, a gentleman who lived about a mile west of the city called on me one day, and asked me if I knew a Mr. Abel Clary, a minister. I told him that I knew him well. "Well," said he, "he is at my house, and has been there for so long a time." – I forget how long, but nearly from the first of my being in Rochester. Says he, "I don't know what to think of him." I said, "I have not seen him at any of our meetings." "No," he replied, "he cannot go to meeting, he says. He prays nearly all the time, day and night," said he, "and in such an agony of mind that I do not know what to make of it. Sometimes he cannot even stand on his knees, but will lie prostrate on the floor and groan: and then throw himself upon the bed and roll from side to side, and groan and pray in a manner that quite astonishes me." I inquired what he said. He replied, "He does not say much. He cannot go to meeting he says; but his whole time is given to prayer." I said to the brother, "I understand it; please keep still. It will all turn out right; he will surely prevail."

I knew at the time a considerable number of men who were exercised in the same way. A Deacon Pond, of Camden, Oneida County; a Deacon Truman, of Rodman, Jefferson County, a Deacon Baker of Adams in the same county; this Mr. Clary, and many others among the men, and a large number of women, partook of the same Spirit, and spent a great deal of their time in prayer.

Brother, or as we called him, Father Nash, a minister who in several of my fields of labor came to me and aided me, was another of those men who had such a powerful spirit of prevailing prayer. This Mr. Clary continued in Rochester as long as I did, and did not leave it until after I had left. He never, that I could learn, appeared in public, but gave himself wholly to prayer.

There were a good many cases in Rochester in which people were exercised with this spirit of agonising travail of soul. I have said that the moral aspect of things was greatly changed by this revival. It was a young city, full of thrift and enterprise, and full of sin. The inhabitants were intelligent and enterprising in the highest degree; but as the revival swept through the town and converted the great mass of the most influential people both male and female, the change in the order, sobriety, and morality of the city was wonderful.

At a subsequent period, which I shall mention in its place, I was conversing with a lawyer who was converted in this revival of which I have been speaking, and who soon after had been made district attorney of the city, the same that some call prosecuting attorney. His business was to superintend the prosecution of criminals. From his position he was made thoroughly acquainted with the history of crime in that city. In speaking of the revival in which he was converted, he said to me many years afterwards: "I have been examining the records of the criminal courts, and I find this striking fact, that whereas our city has increased since that revival three-fold, there is not one third as many prosecutions for crime as there had been up to that time.

"Thus crime," he says, "has *decreased* two thirds, and the population has *increased* two thirds. This is," he said, "the wonderful influence that that revival had had upon the community." Indeed by the power of that revival public

sentiment has been moulded. The public affairs of the city have been, in a great measure in the hands of Christian men. The great weight of character has been on the side of Christ, and their public business had been conducted accordingly.<sup>175</sup>

### **The Second Visit to Auburn.**

I have spoken of Rev. Abel Clary as the praying man who was at Rochester. He had a brother, a physician, living in Auburn. I think it was the second Sabbath that I was at Auburn this time that I observed in the congregation the solemn face of this Rev. Abel Clary. He looked as if he was borne down with an agony of prayer. Being well acquainted with him, and knowing the great gift of God that was upon him, the Spirit of prayer, I was very glad to see him there. He sat in the pew with his brother, the Doctor, who was also a professor of religion, but who knew nothing by experience, I should think, of his brother Abel's great power with God. At intermission, as soon as I came down from the pulpit Brother Clary, with his brother the Doctor, met me at the pulpit stairs, and the Doctor invited me to go home with him and spend the intermission and get some refreshment. I did so. After arriving at his house we were soon summoned to the dinner table. We gathered about the table, and Dr. Clary turned to his brother and said, "Brother Abel, will you ask a blessing?" Brother Abel bowed his head and began audibly to ask a blessing. But a sentence or two had escaped him when he broke instantly down, moved suddenly back from the table, and fled to his bedchamber. The doctor supposed that he had been taken suddenly ill, and rose up and followed him. In a few moments he came back down and said, "Mr. Finney, Brother Abel wants to see you." Said I, "What ails him?" Said he, "I do not know; but he says *you* know. He

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid. pages 316 – 319.

appears in great distress, but I think it is the state of his mind.” I understood it in a moment, and got up and went to his room. He was in one of his seasons of travail of soul. He lay groaning upon the bed, and tossing from side to side; the Spirit making intercession for him with groanings which cannot be uttered. That is, his desires were altogether too great to be expressed in words, and his groans could be heard all over the house. I had no more than fairly got into the room when he made out to say, “**Pray**, Brother Finney.” I knelt down and helped him in prayer by leading his soul out for conversion of sinners. I continued to pray until his distress passed away, and then I returned to the dinner table. I think that Brother Clary did not make his appearance at the dinner table again that day. But I understood that this was the voice of God. I saw that the Spirit of prayer was upon him, and I felt his influence upon myself, and took it for granted that the work would take on a powerful type. It did so....

I stayed at this time at Auburn six Sabbaths, preaching, as I have said, twice on the Sabbath, and twice during the week, and leaving all the rest of the labor for the pastor and members of the church. Here, as at Rochester, there was at this time little or no open opposition. Ministers and Christians took hold of the work, and everybody that had a mind to work found enough to do, and good success in their labours. The pastor told me afterwards that he found that in the six weeks that I was there, five hundred souls had been converted. The means that were used were the same that had been used at Rochester. In this revival there was no appearance of fanaticism, or anything witnessed, that I know of to be regretted. This revival seemed to be only a wave of divine influence reaching Auburn from the

center at Rochester, whence such a mighty influence had gone out over the length and breadth of the land.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Ibid. pages 333 – 335.

## LATER DOCUMENTS

### **Editor's Comment.**

These "Later Documents" have been chosen simply to illustrate, as best we can, *the fervency of prayer* involved in the evangelistic work, and revivals, which they describe.

They come from the ministry of the Rev. Jedediah Burchard and his wife, in the mid-1830s, when he toured through some of the towns in Vermont, and he was involved in protracted meetings in some of these towns.

Burchard was a peculiar man in many ways, and he created a growing adverse reaction as his campaigns in Vermont proceeded. Sadly, it is for the adverse reactions that he is mostly remembered historically, and not for the degree of real revival power which existed in his work, from place to place.

His best campaigns in Vermont seem to have been those in which a revival had commenced in the local congregation before he arrived on the scene.

Perhaps one day I may be able to prepare a modest biography describing him and his work, as nothing of that kind has been published so far

### **WINDSOR (Baptist Church), VERMONT.**

Windsor, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1835.

To the Editor of the *Ch. Watchman*.

Dear Brethren, - It is a great pleasure that I communicate to you a brief notice of the work of God in this place.

Soon after my removal here indications became apparent that a work of grace was about to commence. There was an unusual spirit of prayer in the church, and a very serious

attention to the word in the congregation. Undoubtedly the faithful preaching which preceded the commencement of my labors here, together with the vigorous exertions of the church, were instrumental in preparing the way of the Lord.

Early in October last, a protracted meeting commenced, which continued with interest twenty days. In this, the different denominations in the village united. The preaching was principally performed by the Rev. Mr. Burchard, whose whole time has been devoted to such meetings, for a number of years. Though I could not conscientiously approve of all the *measures*, which were introduced in this meeting, still I believe that good was accomplished. For a vast amount of scriptural truth was brought to bear upon the consciences of men, and many Christians had a spirit of agonizing prayer for sinners. Therefore, as we might reasonably expect, the spirit of the Lord came down. How many were hopefully converted during the meeting, I am not able to say. When this special effort closed, it was supposed by many, that a reaction would follow, which would speedily terminate the revival. But I am happy to say, that it was far otherwise.

The church, over whose interests I am permitted to watch, began to feel that the continuance of the work, so far as means are concerned, depended on their efforts. Therefore they endeavored to work as faithfully, as though their exertions alone would convert sinners; and at the same time to depend on the Lord as entirely; as though they had done nothing. And their labors were not in vain in the Lord. Such a winter, I have never before witnessed. Scarcely a day has passed for four months, without increasing the number of joyful converts.

Our meetings for social prayer, and religious inquiry have been peculiarly blessed. While one room has been filled with anxious sinners, and another with praying Christians, the spirit of the Lord has come down with mighty power. Never

have I felt so sensibly the need of divine aid,, as when witnessing such a scene. Often have I been induced to stand still and see the salvation of God. For it sometimes seemed almost dangerous to speak or move, lest something should be done to hinder the workings of Jehovah.

Thus far, there has been an unusual freedom from mere animal excitement. In addressing the impenitent, the effort has been *first* to convince the *understanding*, and then to make appeals to the *heart*.

Therefore the cases of conviction have generally been characterized by clear views of the holiness, and justice of the divine law, and a great *self-loathing*.

Our baptizing seasons have been very solemn, and I trust profitable. Many received their first impressions while witnessing the administration of this delightful ordinance. Our first baptism was a scene long to be remembered. After an interval of about three years, we were again permitted to visit the water-side. There in the presence of a large and solemn assembly, by the kind assistance of Bro Tracy of Claremont, thirty-two were buried with Christ by baptism. Among them were found the grand-parent of 77, and the grand-child of 13. We have had frequent baptisms since. The whole number received since November is seventy-nine. Nearly twenty more have been received as candidates for baptism, and many others are indulging hopes in the Saviour, who will probably soon follow. Not far from fifty have united with the Congregational church, and about thirty with the Episcopalians.

I rejoice to say that the work is still going on. The voice of inquiry is yet heard. Especially in some parts of the town, the prospects are more encouraging than at any former period. The Temperance cause in this place has been greatly strengthened by this revival. Thus showing that the cause of Temperance and the cause of Christ are intimately connected.

May this work of God never cease, while there is an unconverted sinner among us.

Yours, &c., Elijah Hutchinson.<sup>177</sup>

## **GRAFTON, VERMONT**

Brother Richards, - Permit me, through the medium of your paper, to publish a short account of a recent work of grace among my people. The church in this place, though small, has generally been very harmonious in sentiment and action. But a little more than two years ago, the question came up in relation to the erection of a new house of worship. The members of the church and society were divided in respect to its location. This division produced a very unhappy and alarming state of things. We appeared at one time to be on the brink of ruin as a church and society. But there were some among us, who put their trust in the Lord and prayed for the peace of Jerusalem. They expected deliverance for Zion; but they knew not how it would come. While the clouds of darkness and doubt were thus hanging over us, He who sits above, and manages all human affairs, and who loves Zion far better than the most devoted Christian, had determined not to give his heritage to reproach; and was even then on his way to repair the breach, build up his cause, and bless his people.

The result of the division was, that one part of the church and society built a new meeting house, and the other thoroughly repaired the old one in connexion with other religious denominations. The time came, when the new house was to be dedicated, and it was thought advisable in connexion with the dedication, to hold a protracted season of worship.

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<sup>177</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 19. 21st March 1835. pages 685 – 686.

This meeting was held in the month of September last, and was continued eight days. Neighbouring brethren in the ministry by invitation came and assisted. A principal effort in this meeting was to restore peace and harmony to the church. This effort was crowned with the divine blessing. Most, if not all, of the members were led to feel that the cause of religion and the salvation of souls, was far more valuable than party prejudices and local prepossessions. And feeling thus, they were led to mutual confession and forgiveness; and to unite their prayers and efforts for the upbuilding of the cause of God. The meeting was a very pleasant, happy and useful meeting. The Spirit of Peace was truly in the midst of us, not only restoring peace to the church, but also reconciling sinners unto God through the blood of the everlasting covenant. There were during the meeting several hopeful conversions, and the exercises left a very salutary impression upon the people generally. From that time there appeared to be an unusual spirit of prayer among the people of God, and an earnest expectation of greater things still to come. Much anxiety was manifested by Christians for their impenitent friends and neighbours - especially was this the case with many of the sisters of the church, whose companions were living without God in the world. This was the state of things during the autumn. It was expected that the old house, which was undergoing repairs, at this time, would be ready to be occupied about the first of January. Of course as we had held a protracted meeting in the new house, we must hold one too in the other. Accordingly one was appointed to commence the last week in December, - and the Rev. J. Burchard, who was then labouring in Springfield, was invited to be present and assist in the exercises. This being known, it excited very general attention. And the ten thousand reports and stories, which were afloat concerning the *man*, induced every body to wish to see

and hear for themselves. It was evident from the operation of things, that there was great alarm in the camp of Satan. Such a systematic effort of lying could not be put forth without the agency of the father of lies. There was to be heard the hum of preparation, as though on the eve of battle. On the one side there was the restlessness, and bustle, and agitation, as is always the case when men are dissatisfied with themselves; and seek relief from this unpleasant feeling by finding fault with every body and every thing. Men in public places would rage and rave against ministers, and Christians, and meetings, and then go home, as they afterwards confessed, to spend a sleepless night in horrible forebodings. On the other side there was the voice of humble, holy, reverential prayer, becoming more deep-felt and earnest every hour.

Our meeting commenced several days before Mr. Burchard arrived. During this time Christians were made sensible that they had been placing too much dependence on an arm of flesh, and were led to humble themselves before God and look to him alone. Mr. B. arrived on Friday. Saturday the meeting was well attended and solemn, as it had been before. Sabbath the house was filled to overflowing, and sinners were bowing under the mighty influences of the Spirit of God. A deep and awful solemnity filled the place. The congregation appeared as though they felt that eternity was opening to their view, and many, it is believed, found the sanctuary to be the very gate of Heaven. From this time the work seemed to go on with increased power for ten or twelve days. God's Spirit is represented as descending like the showers, that water the earth. This effusion was like one of those mighty showers which happen in mid-summer. The whole face of nature seems renewed in a few hours, and continues to brighten after the shower is past. Many came from neighbouring towns and shared in the rich grace which was shed upon this people. As

the apparent result of this meeting, 250 professed to submit to God. An addition of 117 has at this time and since been made to the church. There are several more who design making a public profession. Many family altars have been erected, and many households have joy and peace, and seem to be walking in the statutes of the Lord. About one half of the professed submissions were of persons from other towns, many of whom have united with the churches.

We had, during the meeting, several days of fasting and prayer, and three communion seasons, all of which seemed to be blessed. It is now more than six months since the meeting closed; and the more I have seen of the results, the more I am satisfied that it was a genuine work of the Holy Spirit, and the greater appears to be the duty of this church to express their gratitude to God by being more devoted to his cause and service.

The instructions of Mrs. Burchard produced a very happy, and we hope in many instances, saving impression upon the minds of the children who were under her care. All the glory belongeth unto God, who worketh and none can hinder him.

M. B. Bradford. Grafton, August 6, 1835.<sup>178</sup>

## **WOODSTOCK, VERMONT.**

(From the *Vermont Chronicle*.)

“There is joy,” said the Savior, “in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.”

Surely, then, if on earth there be a scene above all others, to which the eye of the Christian or the gaze of the celestial spirits will be turned with an intensity of interest, it is

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<sup>178</sup> *Vermont Chronicle*. Thursday, 20th August, 1835. pages 133 – 134.

that of a church just returning from the field of labor, bearing her golden sheaves and shouting her harvest home. This, God, who is rich in mercy, has permitted us to witness. And now, for the glory of his name, the honor of the Great Head of the church, and the encouragement of his saints, we are bound to make known his deeds among the people, and talk of all his wondrous works.

Before entering, however, upon a narrative of recent interesting occurrences among us, it will be proper to sketch briefly the history of this church during the last three years. In the autumn of 1831, a protracted meeting commenced in this place under very favorable auspices, and in its progress was owned and blessed by the Great Head of the church. The people though destitute of a settled pastor, had, for several months previous, enjoyed the faithful labors of the Rev. Rufus A. Putnam, now of Chichester, N.H. And, under God, to his many prayers and unwearied exertions chiefly, they owe the happy results of that meeting. Near its close, the writer, according to previous invitation, visited the place as a candidate for settlement, and entered with trembling into this whitened field of labor. In January, 1832 he was ordained pastor of the Congregational church and society. The good work which had commenced with the protracted services of the autumn previous, continued to progress with varied degrees of interest and power.

Through the whole of the ensuing year the Son of Peace abode with us; the spirit of grace and supplication remained in the hearts of the church. The evening conference and prayer meetings, as also the weekly meeting for inquiry, were well attended. Every week, with scarcely an exception, new cases of conviction and conversion were brought to notice, and not a communion season passed without the addition of such we trust as shall be saved to the church of the Redeemer. The whole

number of persons admitted to the church by profession during the year ending September, 1832, was 56.

Encouraged by these circumstances, the church voted to hold a second protracted meeting, which was accordingly commenced precisely one year from the first. It was not, however, as richly blessed. Still, the results were good, and the number of hopeful conversions amounted to about 20.

A few months passed on, and the delightful harmony which had hitherto prevailed in the church, gave way to unhappy jealousies, followed at length by the more open manifestation of an unbrotherly feeling, that soon marred the peace and prosperity of our Israel. Formal votes and disciplinary measures could not perfectly restore that heaven-born charity "which suffereth long, and is kind." The removal of one difficulty but gave place to another, and trouble after trouble followed in quick succession, like the hurrying messengers of the tried patriarch. Thus it continued with us for more than a year. But early in the last summer the Spirit of God was manifestly present, arousing here and there a Christian brother or a beloved sister to an unusual engagedness in prayer. These holy influences increased and spread among us, and the hopes of those who had still remembered Zion in all her afflictions, and wept and prayed for her in secret places, were greatly revived.

It was in consequences of appearances so favorable, that, after some consultation with a few of the brethren, the pastor appointed a protracted evening prayer meeting, as preparatory, should providence and the results of the meeting so direct, to other more public protracted services. It was well attended, and continued for nearly three weeks without interruption. It resulted, we believe, in much good. The spirit of prevalent wrestling prayer in the church was greatly increased, and several of the brethren and sisters from that time

until the dear hour when the blessing came, went day and night with their hearts heavy within them.

Nearly at the same time an interesting boy, the only son of his mother, and she a widow, was removed from life under circumstances peculiarly painful. The effect of this strange dispensation upon the young companions and play-mates of the deceased was obviously beneficial, solemnizing the mind and disposing them to listen with a deep interest to the warnings and invitations of the gospel. At the Sabbath school concert in November, I addressed the children present on the duty of daily secret prayer, and related in connection an incident an anecdote illustrating the benefits of *social* prayer. These remarks deeply interested them at the time, and several of the boys agreed among themselves to commence immediately a social prayer meeting, which was accordingly done. Between 20 and 30 usually met from week to week at the house of some brother in the church. Cheered by these indications of awakened interest among the children, I publicly requested all the boys, who were willing to meet me for the purpose of prayer and religious conversation, to come to my house upon an appointed evening. This I continued to do from time to time. The attendance at each successive interview continually increased, and at the last, but a short time previous to the protracted meeting, more than sixty boys were present. Some of them were deeply convinced of sin by the Holy Ghost, while a few indulged a trembling hope in the only Saviour, and are now members of the church. These meetings will not, I trust, be soon forgotten. They were always marked with a deep solemnity, a fixed and almost breathless attention,, and a peculiar tenderness of feeling. At times, while addressing them upon the claims of God's law; their character in his sight, and the all-sufficiency and worth of the Saviour, for the moment I could not proceed, overcome with my own emotions, and interrupted by the expressions of feeling

on the part of my little auditors. We wept together. One of our meetings closed with the judgment hymn – “O there will be mourning,” sung by the children with an evident effect on their young hearts. We parted in silence and in tears. As I closed the door after them, my heart breathed a prayer over these dear children, that in the last great day, they may be counted among the jewels, that shall ever adorn the brow of our Redeemer.

About the middle of November the church voted to hold a protracted meeting, and to invite the Rev. J. Burchard to conduct it, under the superintendence of the pastor. In the mean time the spirit of grace and supplication, which during the summer and autumn had been peculiarly marked among us, was greatly increased. How often was I told by some dear brother or sister of the church – “Sir, I never knew before what is meant by agony in prayer. I could not sleep the last night. I could do nothing but weep and pray, and pray and weep, all the night long, for the church and for sinners.” We felt, indeed, that the crisis for our beloved Zion was at hand, and every day the conviction became more deep and irresistible, that unless God should speedily appear in his mercy, to build us up, judgments more awful than any we had yet experienced must befall us. This it was, that nerved the soul of many a dear brother and sister to a more intense feeling, and a wrestling agony in prayer.

About eight weeks before the protracted meeting, a committee of twelve were appointed to visit every member of the church, but especially for the purpose of bringing together those who were known to cherish towards each other unkindness of feeling, in the hope, that by prayer and conversation with them, every existing difficulty might be removed. At the same time we commenced the observing of a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, once a week. Immediately the manifestations of Jehovah’s presence and blessing increased upon us. By the breath of the Almighty was

one trouble after another swept entirely away, and the whole host of God's elect prepared to move onward in the good work with harmony and energy of action. So mighty had the blessed Spirit prevailed in this long-troubled church.

Under these favorable auspices, our protracted meeting commenced, Feb. 10th. The *first* day God was there. We felt it. Prejudices were in a good degree removed, and the way more perfectly prepared for an abundant blessing. The work went on in each succeeding day with increasing majesty and power. The meetings were well sustained, crowded to the last. On Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, we closed the holy convocation. Five months have now passed since its close, and we still say *the results are very precious*. There has been nothing like reaction. Peace is within our borders, and He, who loveth Zion, remembers us still to bless us.

The revival pervaded, in a marked degree, the higher and middle ranks of society. Men of wealth, talents and influence have bowed to the holy supremacy of Immanuel, God with us. Very few of the converts with whom I am acquainted, have experienced anything like the *rapture* of pardon. The general characteristics of the work upon their hearts have been, rather clear and just apprehensions of sin, their enormity and ill-desert, accompanied by great self-loathing on its account. Another peculiarity is a readiness to work for Christ, with a feeling that now they are not their own, but His, who has bought them with his precious blood. Never, never may this truth be forgotten by them.

As another result of this revival, I cannot forbear noticing the unusual degree of harmony and co-operation among different evangelical denominations in this place. The hearts of Christians have been knit together. They have prayed and labored as one, and God has blessed them as one. *Hundreds* have professed submission to Christ. Of these

nearly two hundred belong to adjacent towns. One hundred and sixteen have been received into the Congregational church in this place, by profession; about fifty, if I am informed correctly, into the Episcopal church, and others have connected themselves with the Methodists. More remain to be gathered into the fold.

In connection with what has been said, respecting the result of the protracted meeting, a passing notice is due to the labors of Mrs. Burchard in the department of children. A large number of these little ones under her especial charge, received instruction from day to day suited to their infantile capacities, which will not, we trust, be soon forgotten, but continue to bring forth fruit after the endeared instructress shall have rested from her labors. Had no other benefit resulted from her efforts, the feeling awakened in behalf of this interesting portion of our community, and the exertions for their best welfare, to which they have aroused *mothers*, especially, would surely form no unimportant item in the amount of good effected. But this is not all. There are children here – and a goodly number – who, we cannot doubt, have consecrated the dew of their youths to the blessed Saviour. The artless story of what God has wrought for them, as told in the simplicity of childhood, and the development of their feelings in confidence to their most intimate friends, will draw tears from the eye of that Christian who has imbibed, in any measure, the spirit of Him who taketh the lambs in his arms and folded them in his bosom. Some of them look forward with increasing interest to the work of the ministry, and may yet be found treading in the footsteps of Parsons, and of Fisk, planting the banner of the gospel in “the land where the patriarchs rest, and where the bones of the prophets are laid.”

The doctrines preached during the protracted meeting, were in substance those which I had learned in my childhood at

the feet of the lamented Payson, and which in later years have been confirmed by the illustrations and arguments of my revered instructors at the school of Andover.

The Divine sovereignty, Jehovah's eternal purpose in the salvation of the soul, the sinner's guilt, his wretched and lost condition, his voluntary and continued disobedience of the righteous law of God, and as the first consequence thereof, his exposure while in a state of impenitence and unbelief, to "everlasting destruction from the presence of God and the glory of His power;" the free and gracious atonement wrought out by the vicarious sufferings of the Lamb of God; His eternal deity, and his prevalent intercessions with the Father; the only terms of reconciliation and pardon, viz. repentance towards God, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the unconditional surrender of the heart at the foot of the cross – these all were repeatedly, earnestly and powerfully, brought home to the hearts and consciences of sinners, and blessed to the salvation of many. But more prominently, if that were possible, than all the rest, and in the fore-ground of the harmonious picture, was placed the godhead of "the eternal Spirit, third person of the adorable Trinity;" the absolute necessity of his gracious influences in the conviction and conversion of the sinner, and the consequent dependence of both saint and sinner upon his mighty arm. Never have I felt more deeply my own insignificance, and the nothingness of the creature, as an instrument in the salvation of souls. The infinite fullness of the Godhead and the office-work of the blessed Spirit arose to an importance never realized before. And like a drop melting away on the bosom of the waters, *self* was lost in God, the great All in All.

Through the mighty working of the good Spirit, scenes interesting beyond description were daily witnessed in the house of God during the continuance of the protracted services. But more than all, at the inquiry meeting, to which the fore-

noon of each day was exclusively devoted, the presence and power of God were made manifest in a wonderful degree. That room, and the interesting scenes witnessed there, will never be forgotten. Hereafter, on the plains of Paradise, it will be remembered with exceeding joy as the birth-place of immortal souls. There was no undue excitement, no outbreking of highly wrought feeling – nothing, save now and then the unbidden tear stealing down the cheek, the stifled sob, the suppressed sighing of a heart bowed and broken under its mighty burden. Usually a stillness deep and awful pervaded the room, as if the angel of retribution were there, spreading the scroll of his past life before the sinner. And there were seasons, when nothing it seemed could be said or done, but to wait and see the salvation of our God. The place was made dreadful with his immediate presence, and in some measure we realized the feelings of Moses, when, standing on the burning mount before the great “I AM,” pavillioned in the clouds, he exclaimed, “I exceedingly fear and quake.”

The measures introduced during the meeting were in some particulars *novel*, and in their first effect *startling*; and yet, when better understood, commending themselves to the good man’s heart and conscience, from their consonance with sound philosophy and the word of God, and from the powerful and beneficial results produced. They were never attended with any great excitement. I have been permitted to witness revivals of greater, and others of less power; but not, equally important in its results, accompanied with less apparent animal feeling. A similar remark was made by several of my brethren.

One of the more prominent and most successful measures was the practice of presenting verbal and written requests for prayer, in the public assembly, and in the inquiry room. The effect, in the first place, upon those who asked, was greatly beneficial – tending at every repetition of their requests,

to increase the interest already felt for the beloved objects of their solicitude – especially as all were requested to accompany prayer with action; to see and converse with their friends, if near, - if distant, to write them. But this is not the only happy result. Very many requests were presented, and many gracious answers returned.

Prayer indeed has wrought wonders here. But we have much yet to learn of its prevalent power with God – its *omnipotence*, I had almost said. How little is there of that strong and persevering faith, that, planting itself on the rock of God's eternal promise, settles there with the determination not to let the Angel of the covenant go, until he bless us. There is much, far too much, of criminal, practical unbelief in the church of God, that will not take him at his word. And although he has said that, more cheerfully than ever parent gave the bread of life to his hungering children, He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him – yet we are slow of heart to believe, that what the Eternal, the immutable One has said, he will do. Did we trust our Father in heaven, and rely upon his unfailing promise with the same confidence we cherish towards our fellow men, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath the heart of man conceived, the great and glorious things, that would be, not *spoken* merely, but *done*, also, for our beloved Zion.

I have said that the measures introduced in the progress of the meeting, were in some particulars *novel*. Indulge me in one or two remarks on this point.

I would not be understood as the advocate of everything new under the sun; yet now, in this boasted age of moral and intellectual improvement, it is quite too late to write down *Novelty* as a sufficient and unanswerable objection to the advances of science and Christianity. Religion itself is indeed eternal as the throne of its God. But the mere *circumstantials* of religion, the mode of its presentation, to the mind, and the

means by which it may be made to bear, with all its holy energy, upon the heart and conscience of the sinner, are questions of expediency, in regard to which men may, and do, honestly differ. But is it not obvious that a new spirit must be breathing into the heart of the church, a new energy infused, new and more efficient methods adopted, if ever the glorious things God hath spoken of Zion, shall be fully accomplished. How comparatively powerless the gospel is now! How far from producing the results which characterized the Apostolic ministry. Why the difference? They depended no less than we, on the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. They *felt* their dependence *more*. They better understood the prevalent power of prayer with God. They better knew the luxury of self-denying effort for their Master's sake. And counting all things but dross in comparison with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, their Lord – to Jews they became as Jews, to the Greeks as Greeks, that by all means they might save some. Let the church but rise to the fervor of apostolic panting, and the energy of apostolic action, and the question will no longer be – are the measures new, or are they old? But will they promote the glory of God – the honor of His Son Jesus Christ, and the salvation of immortal souls? Nay, the church will be on the alert to discover new and more successful means of presenting the truth, and bringing about the great and desired result – the world's conversion.

Long ago, I verily believe, had this spirit but lived and burned in the hearts of Christians, had the church of the Redeemer more closely followed in the footsteps of Him whose meat and drink it was to do His Father's will – the world would have been supplied with the ministry of reconciliation, and filled with the light of the knowledge of his truth. Long ago would the chains, which have bound our earth in the thralldom of sin and Satan, have been broken, and the shout of her

ransomed sons and daughters, like the voice of many waters, have reached the ear, and shaken the throne of the Eternal. But alas! It is not so. And instead of this, the coldness, the apathy, and the selfishness of Christians, have caused already the ruin of unnumbered millions.

O! Why is it thus? When shall the Levites, who bear the vessels of the Lord, and they who minister at the altar, glow more and more with the spirit of apostles and martyrs. When shall we have done with unhallowed contentions about men and measures, and by harmonious energetic action, seek to accomplish the work, which our Father has given us to do? God speed the day, when “the watchmen on the walls of Zion shall see eye to eye;” heart shall be knit to its fellow heart; “they shall lift up the voice together shall they sing, for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem.”

ROBERT SOUTHGATE.<sup>179</sup>

## **ROYALTON, VERMONT.**

Messrs. Editors, - I have thought it my duty to publish a brief notice of what God has done for this church the season past, for his own glory and for the encouragement of the friends of Zion.

The Congregational church in Royalton has been often blessed with seasons of special revival. A shower of spiritual blessings has recently fallen upon it by which many hearts have been made glad. In 1831 there was a general revival in town. From Sept., 1831 to Sept., 1832, 93 were added to the church by profession. During the last winter, many of the members became sensible that they were in a state of spiritual lethargy,

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<sup>179</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume 20. 5th September, 1835. pages 218 – 21.

and were evidently moved by the Holy Spirit to awake from their slumbers. The reviving influences of the Spirit were enjoyed in some of the neighbouring churches, and a large portion of this church began to feel the necessity of "preparing the way of the Lord." Lectures and conferences were more fully attended, and some impenitent sinners manifested anxiety about their spiritual interests. In February the church resolved to make preparations for a protracted meeting. A day of fasting and prayer was appointed, which was observed weekly most of the time till the protracted meeting commenced. Neighbourhood and family prayer meetings were also appointed, and many of these meetings were seasons of deep and solemn interest. A large committee, appointed by the church, visited nearly every family in town, a measure which was evidently productive of great good. Much effort was made to purify the church. Gospel discipline was revived, some erring members were reclaimed, and some excommunicated. Meetings of all kinds were full and solemn, and during the spring some embraced the hope of heaven through the blood of Christ, and commenced the song of salvation.

A protracted meeting commenced on the 23rd of June, when by previous invitation of the church, Rev. J. Burchard arrived, and in concert with the Pastor, pursued the measures usually introduced by him in similar meetings. He did most of the public *preaching*, but was essentially aided by the counsel and cheerful co-operation of the neighbouring clergymen. In no instance did he introduce any measure in opposition to the views of the Pastor and the church. He invariably consulted them, and the ministering brethren when present, in regard to the whole operation.

At the very commencement of the meeting, there was an evident display of the power of divine truth. The house was full and awfully solemn. On the second day of the meeting the

inquiry room, (a large room in the Academy,) was nearly filled, and 27 professed submission to God. The meeting continued 21 days, during the first ten of which, more than 200 professed to give their hearts to the Saviour. The whole number of professed submissions was more than 250 adults, about half of whom were from other towns. None were reckoned as converts or Christians, who merely *professed* submission to God, yet nearly all who professed thus to do, give satisfactory evidence that they have been born of the Holy Spirit.

During the continuance of the meeting, the audience was large, and at times the concourse of people was so immense, that it was impossible for all to get into the meeting-house; yet there was a remarkable stillness, and not the least accident is known to have occurred. No doubt many were present who were altogether opposed to the measures adopted and the doctrines preached; yet nothing worth the name of opposition was manifested, from the commencement to the close of the meeting. Those who were mere spectators, generally were respectful and gentlemanly in their deportment. Deep solemnity pervaded the great mass of mind present, and the general sentiment was, "God's power is here displayed." Christians prayed in the Holy Ghost, and many who had been long hardened in rebellion against God, were brought to cry out, in the language of the humble publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

The sinner's guilt and duty, the claims of God's law, the plan of salvation by Christ, our entire dependence on the blood of atonement, free moral agency and divine sovereignty, the eternal Deity of Christ, and all the leading doctrines of the reformation were constantly and clearly exhibited. The absolute necessity of regeneration by the special power of the Holy Spirit, without which all human effort, all means, all preaching and praying are utterly vain, was urged first, midst

and last, in the pulpit and in the inquiry room. There was no effort to excite mere animal feeling; every appeal was mainly to the judgment and conscience, and it may truly be said that there was no *excitement*, in the usual acceptance of that term. It seemed impossible for an individual to misunderstand the nature of the transactions in which he was engaged; every possible effort was made to prevent self-deception. Those who professed to give their hearts to God, generally seemed to understand clearly that they were making a covenant with the invisible omniscient Jehovah, and that their vows were to have a solemn bearing upon their eternal destiny. This was what God wrought through an instrumentality of his own appointment, and to him be all the glory.

Mrs. Burchard's labours with mothers and children were greatly blessed of God. Many mothers were brought to feel as they never did before, the dread responsibility of their relation, to exercise stronger faith in the promises of a *covenant-keeping God*. Some awaked as from a dream, and began to labour for the conversion of their children, believing that, under God, it depended on them whether their children, while yet very young, should become the subjects of renewing grace, and many dear children, we trust, are seemingly converted, and long will they cherish a grateful remembrance of that *friend*, who was instrumental in leading them to the blessed Saviour.

In respect to the general results of those efforts, 105 have been added to the Congregational church by profession. Among this number is the oldest man in town, (90,) two others about 80, several in middle life, 22 male and 18 female heads of families, six teachers of district schools, and most of the young people who attend upon the ministrations of the gospel. The youth of the Academy shared in the blessing, and probably five or six who have recently united with the church, will eventually become preachers of the everlasting gospel. Others it is

expected will soon unite with the church, while some, it is to be feared, will wait for another revival, or for the summons of death to awaken them to a sense of their duty. There have been some hopeful conversions since the protracted meeting closed, the church were never more harmonious, never loved one another and the cause of Christ more fervently, and never seemed more highly to value the importance of the settled ministry. When assembled together we are forcibly reminded of the beautiful exclamation, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

The blessed influence of this revival has been felt in other towns in the vicinity, in some of which God is now displaying the triumphs of his grace.

In conclusion, I cannot forbear remarking that were Christians to enter cordially into the work of God, willing to adopt any means consistent with the word of God, and which are manifestly blest in the conversion of men, without giving preference either to old or new measures, any farther than is seen in them an adaptation to accomplish the great end of the gospel ministry, the light of truth, and the millennial glory of the church would doubtless spread more rapidly over the world, and the moral darkness which now covers a great portion of the earth would quickly flee away. President Edwards said, "We live in those latter days, wherein we may be specially warranted to expect that things will be accomplished concerning which it will be said *who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things?* When will the world be converted to Christ by the present progress of the spiritual warfare? Will the devil give up his strongholds without a desperate struggle? May the Great Head of the Church unite all Christians in harmonious, untiring efforts, consistent with his truth, for the promotion of his glory, the salvation of this lost world. In behalf of the church,

A. C. Washburn, Pastor.  
Royalton, 26th September, 1835.<sup>180</sup>

## SHOREHAM, VERMONT

God, in the plenitude of his mercy, has recently poured the blessings of his Spirit upon the people of this place. In the hope that a statement of some of the most interesting circumstances of this work of God may excite other churches to labour and pray for similar blessings, I send you the following account.

Before entering upon my narrative, permit me to refer briefly to the state of religion here for a few years past. The present pastor commenced his labours in this place in October, 1833. For more than two years previous to this, the church has been destitute of a settled pastor. They had not for a long time been favoured with a general revival of religion. The state of piety was very low. The church had diminished in numbers nearly 100 by deaths and removals. Many had gone out from us to people the regions of the West. When I came here the church appeared to be very much discouraged. Nothing specially worthy of mention occurred until last winter and spring, when appearances began to be more favourable. During this time several who had indulged hopes in former years were revived and united themselves with the church, and there were a few cases of hopeful conversion. In the summer, however, it was apparent that the spirit of piety began to decline. There was manifestly but little fervent prayer for the conversion of sinners. This state of things continued until about the 1st of October, when our Consociation met at New Haven [Vermont]. From the narratives there given, it appeared

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<sup>180</sup> *Vermont Chronicle*. 1st October, 1835. page 158.

that during the year, with a single exception, the churches had fallen into a deplorable state of lukewarmness and inactivity. The dark prospects hanging over us appeared deeply to affect the hearts of ministers and delegates present. Two evenings of our session were spent wholly in prayer and conversation relative to what should be done to revive religion among us.

In view of our declensions, the Consociation resolved to hold in all our churches what in this region have been called circular conferences. Our plan was to have all the ministers attend, with a considerable number of lay delegates from each church. These meetings were holden every week, spending one whole day and evening in one town, and moving the next day to a neighbouring society to attend a similar meeting. This plan brought all our ministers, and a considerable portion of the members of our churches, into action, and the effect was evidently salutary.

Our first meeting of this kind was held in Shoreham early in October, in which it was evident that God was present with ministers and people. These meetings continued to increase in interest as they were holden successively in Weybridge, Bridport, Cornwall, New Haven, and Middlebury. They seemed to be preparing the way for a revival of God's work in these churches, when Rev. J. Burchard came to this place and commenced a protracted meeting on Tuesday, the 27th of October last. On Thursday of the same week we held our first meeting of inquiry, and though few were present, it was evident that the Spirit of God was there. It was not however until Saturday that the whole church appeared to be humbled deeply for their sins, and took hold of the work in earnest.

God then appeared in our midst in the majesty of his power and grace, and sinners were seen daily bowing to the supremacy of Jesus Christ. While many Christians and

ministers in the churches around were praying for us, and many of them participating with us in the labours of this joyful revival, the work went on until the 11th of November, when on account of a pressing call for Mr. Burchard's services at Middlebury the meeting was brought to a close, having been continued sixteen days. During this favoured season 200 persons professed to submit their hearts to God, about 70 of whom reside in other towns. Had the meeting continued another week, doubtless this number would have been considerably increased. Since the commencement of this work 95 members have been added to this church, some have united with other churches, and others will probably soon make a profession.

One thing worthy of notice in this work is, that with a very few exceptions, those who have been in the habit of attending public worship with us, have been made the hopeful subjects of grace. Our meeting likewise brought out many to attend on these extraordinary means, who have not heretofore been constant attendants at the house of God. Those who were with us daily from its commencement to its close, are now for the most part rejoicing in hope.

The means used were similar to those employed by Mr. Burchard in other places, and of which full accounts have been given to the public. The measures in many respects were *new* to Christians in this region, and on this account *startling* to some at first; but when their novelty had passed away, and the church had learned their design and come fully into them, they were eminently blessed of God.

A general and most interesting moral change has been wrought in my congregation. In preaching, I have now, with a few exceptions, to address an assembly of Christians. Much interest was felt for our choir of singers. During our meeting, united prayer was several times offered on their behalf. For a

few Sabbaths past I trust that they have all lifted up their hearts as well as voices in the songs of Zion. In our supplications, our Roman Catholic population were not forgotten. Several of them, we believe, now worship God in spirit and in truth. From the success attending our feeble efforts in their behalf, we are greatly encouraged to labour for the conversion of this class of people.

There is at present a good degree of engagedness in the church. A delightful harmony prevails; such a union has not existed among us for many years. Had not a sinner been converted, the elevated tone of feeling and the energy of action in the church would abundantly repay us for all the labour which has been performed, and all the time which has been spent in this meeting. Since its close we have re-organized our Sabbath school with more than twice the number of scholars we ever had in it before. A greater interest in the benevolent objects of the day has been excited. Our collection which we have just taken up for foreign missions, amounts to double the sum which we raised last year. Of the appearance of the converts in this revival, it may perhaps be premature to say much at present. Before they emerged into hope, they did not appear in general to have so deep and overwhelming a sense of sin as many whom I have seen in other revivals. This difference perhaps may be attributed in part to the clearness of the instructions given in relation to the way of salvation, and the manner in which immediate submission was urged upon the sinner. While sinners were exhorted now to give their hearts to God, and Christians were praying for them, they seemed to be brought into the kingdom, without that prolonged struggle, and that deep anguish, which were often experienced when the soundness of a sinner's conversion was judged by the degree of distress and agony previously suffered. This difference may be accounted for on the ground of their yielding the controversy

with God so soon. Notwithstanding this difference, the converts appear now to have a deep sense of their own sinfulness, and so far as I am able to judge, bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and are going deeper into experience of divine things. While they appear to be sufficiently meditative and studious to know the will of God, they are likewise *active* in doing his will.

One of the great excellencies of our meeting was that more than half of the preaching was addressed directly to Christians; and no small portion of the instructions given were adapted to form an elevated Christian character. Foremost among the doctrines held forth was that of dependence upon the Eternal Spirit, not to make the sinner *able* but to make him *willing* in the day of God's power. In all that we did, we endeavoured to go first to God for help. Every second day was observed by us as a day of fasting and prayer, till near the close of our meeting. And it is difficult to contemplate that on one day, while we were fasting and praying, two large churches at a distance, separated from us by mountains, and without any previous arrangement as to the day, were doing the same on our behalf, all bowing down before the eternal throne for the descent of the Spirit of God in Shoreham. No sooner had this free-will offering been made, and the incense of our united prayers ascended on high, than the blessings of heaven came down upon us in richer profusion than ever before.

On the next day – 35 persons professed to have given their hearts to God; a day richer in blessings to this people than any they had ever before seen.

In connexion with dependence upon God, which we placed first, midst, and last, we held out prominently the scripture doctrine of immediate repentance, and we endeavoured so to shape our measures as to carry out this doctrine into practice. We came to the sinner saying, Be ye

now reconciled to God. Will you now give your heart to him? And God we believe was with us pressing his own claim, and many we trust felt to acknowledge it, saying, I do give my soul away to him forever.

Whatever danger there may be apprehended from such a measure, there is none we think to be feared in an atmosphere of prayer. Out of that atmosphere, no measures can avail anything. They are not unfrequently instruments which turn against those who use them.

Our object was not to make the sinner say I submit, and then to set him down as certainly converted; (for we considered no one so, without further evidence;) but to bring God's claims upon him in such a way that he could evade them no longer; so as to break up that "indecision and determination not to act" which cleave like a second nature to those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Every minister conversant with revivals, finds his greatest obstacle to success in the indecision of the sinner; in his determination not to move, unless compelled by an irresistible influence. This it was our object to remove by calling upon him to say what he would do. If we judged correctly, no means under God have proved so effectual. When we come to the sinner and say to him, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," he is brought to a stand. Thus did Baxter, who brought the gospel to bear with such mighty power upon whole masses of society. We learn his practice from what he says: "Strive to bring all your exhortations to an issue. – If you reprove a sin, cease not till the sinner *promises* you to leave it and the occasion of it. If you are exhorting to a duty, urge for a *promise* to set upon it *presently*."

When we consider the number of our congregation, which has never been large, and our location, which is not favourable to the convening of great assemblies, and when we take into the account the opposing influences with which we

have to contend, we regard this as a great and glorious work. Ministers and churches have considered this as a very unpromising field for labour. It was not expected by them that much could be done here. But God has been with us, and has gloriously triumphed over the powers of darkness. It was a favourable circumstance that before our meeting commenced there was a kind of revival atmosphere surrounding many of our towns; a spirit excited by the circular conferences, to which allusion has already been made. It gave us the benefit of the prayers, sympathies, and labours, of Christians and ministers in the vicinity. The work has not been confined to this place, but is extending on every side. In connexion with the meeting here, and the one in Middlebury, which followed it, it is supposed that in nine or ten towns, including those named, as many as six hundred souls have passed from death unto life within seven or eight weeks past.

Before closing this communication, permit me to say that Mrs. Burchard's labours among the ladies and children were highly appreciated, and that the benefit derived from her instructions will not be soon forgotten.

Josiah F. Goodhue.

Shoreham, 16 December, 1835.<sup>181</sup>

## **EVALUATION in 1842.**

The Rev. Albert Barnes, leading 'New School' Presbyterian minister and author, believed that revivals of religion "are the most remarkable phenomena of our times, and that they have done more than any other single cause to form the public mind in this country. Large portions of the community have been shaken to their centre by these religious

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<sup>181</sup> *Vermont Chronicle*. 31st December, 1835. page 210.

movements; and society has received some of its most decided directions from these deep and far-pervading revolutions.

If they are the genuine work of God; if they accord with the statements in the Bible; if they are such results as he has a right to expect under the preaching of the Gospel, [every Christian] is bound, by all the love which he bears to his Saviour and to the souls of men, to desire and pray for their increase and extension.”

Many Christians in 1842 regarded the revivals as the glory of the age, and as identified with all that is cheering in the prospect of the conversion of the world to God. Some saw in them the last hope of this [American] republic against a tide of ills that is rolling in with rapid and desolating surges upon us.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> Albert Barnes. *Revival Sermons*. (ed. A. Weston.) London. William Tegg. 1865. (Pranava reprints.) pages 56 – 58.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE KEY FACTOR

#### THE REVIVAL SPIRIT.

In proportion as Christians are awakened to the reality of spiritual things, they become zealous for the honour of God; and when they look around them, and see his authority contemned, his mercy slighted, and the Saviour rejected, and the Holy Spirit grieved, their souls were moved with holy indignation. Thus felt Elijah, when Israel had slain the prophets of the Lord, and digged down his altars; and David was so deeply grieved when he beheld the transgressors, and his tears ran down like rivers. Jeremiah wept in secret places for the pride and iniquity of his people. This feeling is so pleasing to God, that, on one occasion, in the vision of the prophet, the angel was directed to “set a mark upon the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done” in the land; and the avenging spirits were forbidden to come near any man upon whom was the mark. Accordingly we find that just in proportion as Christians are received, they manifest that spirit. They have clearer views of the great evil of sin, as committed against a God of infinite holiness and immeasurable love. Their emotions kindle as they behold the mass of immortal minds around them, debased with earth, grovelling after carnal delights; forgetful of the Being who upholds, sustains, and supplies them from day to day; and they weep as they think of the Saviour they love, so slighted, despised, and rejected. This fills their souls with agony, and they seek some secret place to weep, to humble themselves before God, and offer up their earnest supplications that He would appear to revive his work.

Whenever this feeling begins to increase in the church, it is an indication that God is near.

*Boston Recorder.*<sup>183</sup>

### **Editorial Comment.**

The key factor flowing from the historical documents we have arrayed here, and which is also, I believe, the key message this history has for great revival movements in the future, is this. - *There are two main things which stand in the way of seeing a similar great revival in the twenty-first century.*

The *first* is that praying Christians, and all others as well, are not sufficiently aware of the great spiritual realities of the eternal world. The size and importance of them does not weigh upon us enough. We are too self-oriented, and too engrossed in much smaller things close nearby.

The *second* is that praying Christians, and all others as well, do not take seriously enough the Great Commandments. **So our VERY GREAT SIN is LACK OF LOVE for God, and for others.**

If we loved the heavenly Father more, we would be loaded down with concern that God desires all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. We would desire greatly that the Father should be more glorified in the Son, and that human society should be filled with the fruit of the Holy Spirit. – that the earth should be filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the seas.

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<sup>183</sup> *Religious Intelligencer*. Volume Twenty-One. 27th May, 1837. page 832.

If we loved Jesus Christ more, we would desire greatly that the merits of His sacrifice might provide the benefits of salvation to as many people as possible, and that more and more of life in this world should be brought into captivity to Christ.

If we loved the Holy Spirit more, we would hunger and thirst to see Him convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment to come, and to see the love of God shed abroad in the lives of more people, and to a much greater degree. This is the reason why He has come into the world. This is His office work.

If we loved sufficiently our relatives, neighbours and friends, as well as other people who do not fit into these categories, we would be greatly concerned lest their sins should bring them “to this place of torment.” Positively, we would be greatly concerned for them to know the length, breadth, depth and height of God’s love, which passes understanding.

## **The Spirit of Prayer.**

### **How Shall We Get this Influence of the Spirit?**

1. It must be sought by earnest, believing prayer. Christ says: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?” (Luke 11:13). Does any one say, I have prayed for it, and it does not come? It is because you do not pray aright. “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts” (James 4:3). You do not pray from right motives. A professor of religion, and a principal member in a Church, once asked a minister what he thought of his case; he had been praying week after week for the Spirit, and had not found any benefit. The

minister asked what was his motive in praying? He replied that “he wanted to be happy.” He knew those who had the Spirit and he wanted to enjoy his mind as they did. Why, the devil himself might pray so! That is mere selfishness. The man, when this was shown him, at first turned away in anger. He was convinced he was a hypocrite, and that his prayers were all selfish, dictated only by a desire for his own happiness. David prayed that God would uphold him by His free Spirit, that he might teach transgressors and turn sinners to God. A Christian should pray for the Spirit that he might be more useful and glorify God more; not that he himself might be more happy. This man saw clearly where he had been in error, and he was converted. Perhaps many here have been making just the same mistake. You ought to examine and see if your prayers are not tinged with selfishness.

2. Use the means adapted to stir up your minds on the subject, and to keep your attention fixed there. If a man prays for the Spirit, and then diverts his mind to other objects, he tempts God, he swings loose from his object, and it would be a miracle if he should get what he prays for. How is a sinner to get conviction? Why, by thinking of his sins. That is the way for a Christian to obtain deep feeling – by thinking upon the object. God is not going to pour these things on you without any efforts of your own. You must cherish the slightest impressions. Take the Bible, and go over the passages that show the condition and prospects of the world. Look at the world, look at your children, and your neighbours, and see their condition while they remain in sin; then, persevere in prayer and effort till you obtain the blessing of the Spirit of God to dwell in you. This was the way, doubtless, that Dr. Watts came to have the feelings which he has described in his hymn:

My thoughts on awful subjects dwell,

Damnation and the dead;  
What horrors seize the guilty soul  
Upon a dying bed!

Look, as it were, through a telescope that will bring it up near to you; look into hell, and hear them groan; then turn the glass upwards and look into heaven, and see the saints there, in their white robes, with their harps in their hands, and hear them sing the song of redeeming love; and ask yourself: "Is it possible that I should prevail with God to elevate the sinner there?" Do this, and if you are not a wicked man, and a stranger to God, you will soon have as much of the spirit of prayer as your body can sustain.

3. You must watch unto prayer. You must keep a lookout, and see if God grants the blessing when you ask Him. People sometimes pray, and never look to see if the prayer is granted. Be careful, also, not to grieve the Spirit of God. Confess and forsake your sins. God will never lead you as one of His hidden ones, and let you into His secrets, unless you confess and forsake your sins. Be not always confessing and never forsaking too. Make redress wherever you have committed an injury. You cannot expect to get the spirit of prayer first, and repentance afterwards. You cannot fight it through so. Professors of religion who are proud and unyielding, and justify themselves, never will force God to dwell with them.

4. Aim to obey perfectly the written law. In other words, have no fellowship with sin. Aim at being entirely above the world; "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. 5:48). If you sin at all, let it be your daily grief. The man who does not aim at this, means to live in sin. Such a man need not expect God's

blessing, for he is not sincere in desiring to keep all His commandments.<sup>184</sup>

## **REVIVAL – WHEN? NOW!**

Many people pray for revival, knowing that we cannot produce it ourselves, and acknowledging that it must come from God. They then look to God, and say, we must persevere until God answers our prayers in His own time and way. While there is much value in this attitude, there is also a trap in this situation which is a major test for us. The days, months and years drag by, while we persevere in our prayer, without any sign of an answer. And so we reveal ourselves to be people who have been satisfied with a situation where there is no revival, despite all our talk. Our prayers have not been answered, and our needs have not been supplied in a timely manner.

The need is now, and the answer is needed now. If time passes, and no revival comes, then our prayers to meet the present need are not answered. This should galvanise us into a greater intensity of prayer and concern, and make us agonize before God in the face of our need. Otherwise we have proved that we were not really concerned enough about the need, and we were satisfied to allow “no revival” to continue.

Fervency in prayer, as shown in many of the documents in this section, is a prayer offered to God in DESPERATION. We feel the need, as a matter of urgency, and we need the answer NOW. We cannot be satisfied with anything less than God meeting us at the point of need. This is the point of wrestling, as Jacob wrestled with the angel, saying, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” God answers our prayers when we are desperate, and when we will not be denied.

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<sup>184</sup> Finney. *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*. Lecture VI, Division VII.

God has promised to supply all of our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Phil.4:19). The same is implied in the first verse of Psalm 23. “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” God can easily answer our prayers quickly, especially when He prompts our minds to rely upon a promise such as:- “Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear.” (Isaiah. 65:24.)

With this urgency in prayer must also go the humble prayer, that God will graciously save us from making mistakes. It is very easy to misunderstand our whole situation, and many details, and for us to be open to spiritual deception. So desperation and humility must go hand in hand. [Ed.]

### **Holy Desire.**

4. *Effectual prayer for an object implies a desire for that object commensurate with its importance.* If a person truly desires any blessing, his desires will bear some proportion to the greatness of the blessing. The desires of the Lord Jesus Christ for the blessing He prayed for were amazingly strong, amounting even to agony.<sup>185</sup>

### **When Shall a Revival be Expected?**

1. When Christians are excited to frequency and fervency in prayer, it is a circumstance in favour of a revival of religion.

When God accomplishes great things for his church and people, it is usually preceded by extraordinary prayer. It is the language of his children, “Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of Hosts.” “They that make mention of the Lord keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”

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<sup>185</sup> Finney. *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*. Lecture IV, part 1, No.4.

They are fervent, incessant, and importunate in their supplications at the throne of grace. Prayer is the appointed way of obtaining blessings. And there is an indissoluble connection between the means and the blessings. It was thus ordained in the councils of eternity. When God promised in Ezekiel a new heart and a new spirit, he said, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel," meaning his church, "to do it for them." Said the Saviour to his disciples, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "And it shall come to pass," said God to his Prophet, "that before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." It was while the disciples prayed on the Day of Pentecost, that the place where they were assembled was shaken with a mighty wind, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, - three thousand were converted.

Not an instance of united, humble, ardent, believing, and persevering prayer for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit can be found, which has not been owned and blessed of God. As soon as Zion travails, she brings forth her children. "God will arise, and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favour her, yes, the set time is come, when his servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof." "And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

When Christians, therefore, are engaged in supplication for a revival of religion; when they carry the case to God, with whom is the residue of the Spirit, agonize in prayer, and take hold of the covenant, it is an indication, that God is about to bless them in the desires of their hearts. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayers."<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> W. Cogswell. *The Harbinger of the Millennium*. Boston. Peirce and Parker. 1833. pages 271 - 272.

## SUGGESTIONS for 2013

This history of what happened, and of what God did, in 1792 – 1845, is a brutal challenge to our powerless and ineffective Christianity today. What can any one person do?

Start learning how to pray. Start praying for your family members, neighbours and friends to be converted to Christ. Prepare a list of their names. Pray without making judgments about them. Pray that the very best God has to give them will be their experience.

Pray for the help of the Holy Spirit, that you may pray in the name of Jesus Christ, fervently, effectively, and in faith.

Join others in doing this. Support strongly the prayer meeting in your church and fellowship.

There are now a number of large organisations which promote united prayer for the nation, and especially for the revival of religion.

One of these is the Australian Prayer Network, which can be contacted on [apn@ausprayernet.org.au](mailto:apn@ausprayernet.org.au)

Another is the Intercessors for New Zealand. Their email address is [ifnz@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ifnz@xtra.co.nz), and their postal address is at P.O. Box 3399, Wellington, 6140. New Zealand.

Similar organisations exist in the United States of America, and in many other countries.

David Bryant's book, *Concerts of Prayer*, listed in the Bibliography, also has many good suggestions in it.

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