

## EDWARDS ON REVIVAL

### Section 3

# **This Work Further Illustrated in Particular Instances**

But to give a clear idea of the nature and manner of the operation of God's Spirit, in this wonderful effusion if it, I would give an account of two particular instances. The first is an adult person, a young woman whose name was Abigail Hutchinson. I fix upon her especially, because she is now dead, and so it may be more fit to speak freely of her than of living instances: though I am under far greater disadvantages, on other accounts, to give a full and clear narrative of her experiences, than I might of some others; nor can any account be given but what has been retained in the memories of her friends, of what they have heard her express in her lifetime.

She was of an intelligent family: there could be nothing in her education that tended to enthusiasm, but rather to the contrary extreme. It is in no way the temper of the family to be ostentatious of experiences, and it was far from being her temper. She was, before her conversion, to the observation of her neighbors, of a sober and inoffensive conversation; and was a still, quiet, reserved person. She had long been infirm of body, but her infirmity had never been observed at all to incline her to be notional or fanciful, or to occasion any thing of religious melancholy. She was under awakenings scarcely a week, before there seemed to be plain evidence of her being savingly converted.

She was first awakened in the winter season, on Monday, by something she heard her brother say of the necessity of being in good earnest in seeking regenerating grace, together with the news of the conversion of the young woman before mentioned, whose conversion so generally affected most of the young people here. This news wrought much upon her, and stirred up a spirit of envy in her towards this young woman, whom she thought very unworthy of being distinguished from others by such a mercy; but withal it engaged her in a firm resolution to do her utmost to obtain the same blessing. Considering with herself what course she should take, she thought that she had not a sufficient knowledge of the principles of religion to render her capable of conversion; whereupon she resolved thoroughly to search the Scriptures; and accordingly immediately began at the beginning of the Bible, intending to read it through. She continued thus till Thursday: and then there was a sudden alteration, by a great increase of her concern in an extraordinary sense of her own sinfulness, particularly the sinfulness of her nature, and wickedness of her heart. This came upon her, as she expressed it, as a flash of lightning, and struck her into an exceeding terror. Upon which she left off reading the Bible, in course, as she had begun; and turned to the New Testament, to see if she could not find some relief there for her distressed soul.

Her great terror, she said, was, that she had sinned against God: her distress grew more and more for three days; until she saw nothing but blackness of darkness before her, and her very flesh trembled for fear of God's wrath: she wondered and was astonished at herself, that she had been so concerned for her body, and had applied so often to physicians to heal that, and had neglected her soul. Her sinfulness appeared with a very awful aspect to her, especially in three things; viz. her original sin, and her sin in murmuring at God's providence in the weakness and afflictions she had been under, and in want of duty

to parents, though others had looked upon her to excel in dutifulness. On Saturday, she was so earnestly engaged in reading the Bible and other books, that she continued in it, searching for something to relieve her, till her eyes were so dim that she could not know the letters. While she was thus engaged in reading, prayer, and other religious exercises, she thought of those words of Christ, wherein He warns us not to be as the heathen, that think they shall be heard for their much speaking; which, she said, led her to see that she had trusted to her own prayers and religious performances, and now she was put to a nonplus, and knew not which way to turn herself, or where to seek relief.

While her mind was in this posture, her heart, she said, seemed to fly, to the minister for refuge, hoping that he could give her some relief. She came the same day to her brother, with the countenance of a person in distress, expostulating with him, why he had not told her more of her sinfulness, and earnestly inquiring of him what she should do. She seemed that day to feel in herself an enmity against the Bible, which greatly affrighted her. Her sense of her own exceeding sinfulness continued increasing from Thursday till Monday and she gave this account of it: That it had been her opinion, till now, she was not guilty of Adam's sin, nor any way concerned in it, because she was not active in it; but that now she saw she was guilty of that sin, and all over defiled by it; and the sin which she brought into the world with her, was alone sufficient to condemn her. On the Sabbath day she was so ill, that her friends thought it best that she should not go to public worship, of which she seemed very desirous: but when she went to bed on the Sabbath night, she took up a resolution, that she would the next morning go to the minister, hoping to find some relief there. As she awakened on Monday morning, a little before day, she wondered within herself at the easiness and calmness she felt in her mind, which was of that kind she never felt before. As she thought of this, such words as these were in her mind: The words of the Lord are pure words, health to the soul, and marrow to the bones: and then these words, The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin; which were accompanied with a lively sense of the excellency of Christ, and His sufficiency to satisfy for the sins of the whole world. She then thought of that expression, It is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun; which words then seemed to her to be very applicable to Jesus Christ. By these things her mind was led into such contemplations and views of Christ, as filled her exceeding full of joy. She told her brother, in the morning, that she had seen (i.e. in realizing views by faith) Christ the last night, and that she had really thought that she had not knowledge enough to be converted; but, says she, God can make it quite easy! On Monday she felt all day a constant sweetness in her soul. She had a repetition of the same discoveries of Christ three mornings together, and much in the same manner, at each time, waking a little before day; but brighter and brighter every day.

At the last time, on Wednesday morning, while in the enjoyment of a spiritual view of Christ's glory and fullness, her soul was filled with distress for Christless persons, to consider what a miserable condition they were in. She felt a strong inclination immediately to go forth to warn sinners; and proposed it the next day to her brother to assist her in going from house to house; but her brother restrained her, by telling her of the unsuitableness of such a method. She told one of her sisters that day, that she loved all mankind, but especially the people of God. Her sister asked her why she loved all mankind. She replied, Because God has made them. After this, there happened to come into the shop where she was at work, three persons who were thought to have been lately converted: her seeing of them, as they stepped in one after another, so affected her, and so drew forth her love to them, that it overcame her, and she almost fainted. When they began to talk of the things of religion, it was more than she could bear; they were obliged to cease on that account. It was a very frequent thing with her to be overcome with the flow of affection to them whom she thought godly, in conversation with them, and sometimes only at the sight of them.

She had many extraordinary discoveries of the glory of God and Christ; sometimes, in some particular attributes, and sometimes in many. Her mind was so swallowed up with a sense of the glory of God's truth and other perfections, that she said, it seemed as though her life was going, and that she saw it was easy with God to take away her life by discoveries of Himself. Soon after this she went to a private religious meeting, and her mind was full of a sense and view of the glory of God all the time. When the exercise was ended, some asked her concerning what she had experienced, and she began to give an account, but as she was relating it, it revived such a sense of the same things, that her strength failed, and they were obliged to take her and lay her upon the bed. Afterwards she was greatly affected, and rejoiced with these words, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain! She had several days together a sweet sense of the excellency and loveliness of Christ in His meekness, which disposed her continually to be repeating over these words, which were sweet to her, meek and lowly in heart, meek and lowly in heart. She once expressed herself to one of her sisters to this purpose, that she had continued whole days and whole nights, in a constant ravishing view of the glory of God and Christ, having enjoyed as much as her life could bear. Once, as her brother was speaking of the dying love of Christ, she told him, she had such a sense of it, that the mere mentioning of it was ready to overcome her.

Once, when she came to me, she said that at such and such a time, she thought she saw as much of God, and had as much joy and pleasure, as was possible in this life; and that yet, afterwards, God discovered Himself far more abundantly. She saw the same things as before, yet more clearly, and in a far more excellent and delightful manner; and was filled with a more exceeding sweetness. She likewise gave me such an account of the sense she once had, from day to day, of the glory of Christ, and of God, in His various attributes, that it seemed to me she dwelt for days together in a kind of beatific vision of God; and seemed to have, as I thought, as immediate an intercourse with Him, as a child with a father. At the same time, she appeared most remote from any high thought of herself, and of her own sufficiency; but was like a little child, and expressed a great desire to be instructed, telling me that she longed very often to come to me for instruction, and wanted to live at my house, that I might tell her what was her duty.

She often expressed a sense of the glory of God appearing in the trees, the growth of the fields, and other works of God's hands. She told her sister who lived near the heart of the town, that she once thought it a pleasant thing to live in the middle of the town, but now, says she, I think it much more pleasant to sit and see the wind blowing the trees, and to behold in the country what God has made. She had sometimes the powerful breathings of the Spirit of God on her soul, while reading the Scripture; and would express her sense of the certain truth and divinity thereof. She sometimes would appear with a pleasant smile on her countenance. She often used to express how good and sweet it was to lie low before God, and the lower (says she) the better! and that it was pleasant to think of lying in the dust, all the days of her life, mourning for sin. She was wont to manifest a great sense of her own meanness and dependence. She often expressed an exceeding compassion, and pitiful love, which she found in her heart towards persons in a Christless condition. This was sometimes so strong, that, as she was passing by such in the streets, or those that she feared were such, she would be overcome by the sight of them. She once said, that she longed to have the whole world saved; she wanted, as it were, to pull them all to her, she could not bear to have one lost.

She had great longings to die, that she might be with Christ: which increased until she thought she did not know how to be patient to wait till God's time. But once, when she felt those longings, she thought with herself, If I long to die, why do I go to physicians? Whence she concluded that her longings for death were not well regulated. After this she often put it to herself, which she should choose, whether to

disposed to say these words: I am quite willing to live, and quite willing to die; quite willing to be sick, and quite willing to be well; and quite willing for any thing that God will bring upon me! And then, said she, I felt myself perfectly easy, in a full submission to the will of God. She then lamented much, that she had been so eager in her longings for death, as it argued want of such a resignation to God as ought to be. She seemed henceforward to continue in this resigned frame till death.

After this, her illness increased upon her: and once after she had before spent the greater part of the night in extreme pain, she waked out of a little sleep with these words in her heart and mouth; “I am willing to suffer for Christ’s sake, I am willing to spend and be spent for Christ’s sake; I am willing to spend my life, even my very life, for Christ’s sake!” And though she had an extraordinary resignation with respect to life or death, yet the thoughts of dying were exceeding sweet to her. At a time when her brother was reading in Job, concerning worms feeding on the dead body, she appeared with a pleasant smile; and being asked about it, she said, It was sweet to her to think of her being in such circumstances. At another time, when her brother mentioned the danger there seemed to be, that the illness she labored under might be an occasion of her death, it filled her with joy that almost overcame her. At another time, when she met a company following a corpse to the grave, she said, it was sweet to her to think that they would in a little time follow her in like manner.

Her illness, in the latter part of it, was seated much in her throat; and an inward swelling filled up the pipe, so that she could swallow nothing but what was perfectly liquid and but very little of that, with great and long strugglings. That which she took in fled out at her nostrils, till at last she could swallow nothing at all. She had a raging appetite for food; so that she told her sister, when talking with her about her circumstances, that the worst bit would be sweet to her; but yet, when she saw that she could not swallow it, she seemed to be as perfectly contented without it, as if she had no appetite. Others were greatly moved to see what she underwent, and were filled with admiration at her unexampled patience. At a time when she was striving in vain to get down a little of something liquid, and was very much spent with it; she looked upon her sister with a smile, saying, O sister, this is for my good! At another time, when her sister was speaking of what she underwent, she told her, that she lived a heaven upon earth for all that. She used sometimes to say to her sister, under her extreme sufferings, It is good to be so! Her sister once asked her, why she said so; why, says she, because God would have it so: it is best that things should be as God would have them: it looks best to me. After her confinement, as they were leading her from the bed to the door, she seemed overcome by the sight of things abroad, as showing forth the glory of the Being who had made them. As she lay on her death-bed, she would often say these words, God is my friend! And once, looking upon her sister with a smile, said, O sister, How good it is! How sweet and comfortable it is to consider, and think of heavenly things! and used this argument to persuade her sister to be much in such meditations.

She expressed, on her death-bed, an exceeding longing, both for persons in a natural state, that they might be converted, and for the godly, that they might see and know more of God. And when those who looked on themselves as in a Christless state came to see her, she would be greatly moved with compassionate affection. One in particular, who seemed to be in great distress about the state of her soul, and had come to see her from time to time, she desired her sister to persuade not to come any more, because the sight of her so wrought on her compassions, that it overcame her nature. The same week that she died, when she was in distressing circumstances as to her body, some of her neighbors who came to see her, asked if she was willing to die! She replied, that she was quite willing either to live or die; she was willing to be in pain; she was willing to be so always as she was then, if that was the will of God.

She willed what God willed. They asked her whether she was willing to die that night. She answered, Yes, if it be God's will. And seemed to speak all with that perfect composure of spirit, and with such a cheerful and pleasant countenance, that it filled them with admiration.

She was very weak a considerable time before she died, having pined away with famine and thirst, so that her flesh seemed to be dried upon her bones; and therefore could say but little, and manifested her mind very much by signs. She said she had matter enough to fill up all her time with talk, if she had but strength. A few days before her death, some asked her, Whether she held her integrity still? Whether she was not afraid of death? She answered to this purpose, that she had not the least degree of fear of death. They asked her why she would be so confident? She answered, If I should say otherwise, I should speak contrary to what I know. There is, said she, indeed, a dark entry, that looks something dark, but on the other side there appears such a bright shining light, that I cannot be afraid! She said not long before she died, that she used to be afraid how she should grapple with death; but, says she, God has showed me that He can make it easy in great pain. Several days before she died, she could scarcely say any thing but just Yes, and No, to questions that were asked her; for she seemed to be dying for three days together. But she seemed to continue in an admirably sweet composure of soul, without any interruption, to the last, and died as a person that went to sleep, without any struggling, about noon, on Friday, June 27, 1735.

She had long been infirm, and often had been exercised with great pain; but she died chiefly of famine. It was, doubtless, partly owing to her bodily weakness, that her nature was so often overcome, and ready to sink with gracious affection; but yet the truth was, that she had more grace, and greater discoveries of God and Christ, than the present frail state did well consist with. She wanted to be where strong grace might have more liberty, and be without the clog of a weak body; there she longed to be, and there she doubtless now is. She was looked upon amongst us, as a very eminent instance of Christian experience; but this is but a very broken and imperfect account I have given of her: her eminency would much more appear, if her experiences were fully related, as she was wont to express and manifest them, while living.

But I now proceed to the other instance, that of the little child before mentioned. Her name is Phebe Bartlet, <sup>1</sup>daughter of William Bartlet. I shall give the account as I took it from the mouth of her parents, whose veracity none who know them doubt of.

She was born in March, 1731. About the latter end of April, or beginning of May, 1735, she was greatly affected by the talk of her brother, who had been hopefully converted a little before, at about eleven years of age, and then seriously talked to her about the great things of religion. Her parents did not know of it at that time, and were not wont, in the counsels they gave to their children, particularly to direct themselves to her, being so young, and, as they supposed, not capable of understanding. But after her brother had talked to her, they observed her very earnestly listen to the advice they gave to the other children; and she was observed very constantly to retire, several times in a day, as was concluded, for secret prayer. She grew more and more engaged in religion, and was more frequent in her closet; till at last she was wont to visit it five or six times a day: and was so engaged in it, that nothing would at any time divert her from her stated closet exercises. Her mother often observed and watched her, when such things occurred as she thought most likely to divert her, either by putting it out of her thoughts, or

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<sup>1</sup> She was living in March, 1789, and maintained the character of a true convert.

otherwise engaging her inclinations; but never could observe her to fail. She mentioned some very remarkable instances.

She once of her own accord spoke of her unsuccessfulness, in that she could not find God, or to that purpose. But on Thursday, the last day of July, about the middle of the day, the child being in the closet, where it used to retire, its mother heard it speaking aloud; which was unusual, and never had been observed before. And her voice seemed to be as of one exceedingly importunate and engaged; but her mother could distinctly hear only these words, spoken in a childish manner, but with extraordinary earnestness, and out of distress of soul, pray, blessed Lord, give me salvation! I pray, beg, pardon all my sins! When the child had done prayer, she came out of the closet, sat down by her mother, and cried out aloud. Her mother very earnestly asked her several times what the matter was, before she would make any answer; but she continued crying, and writhing her body to and fro, like one in anguish of spirit. Her mother then asked her, whether she was afraid that God would not give her salvation. She then answered, Yes, I am afraid I shall go to hell! Her mother then endeavored to quiet her, and told her she would not have her cry, she must be a good girl, and pray every day, and she hoped God would give her salvation. But this did not quiet her at all; she continued thus earnestly crying, and taking on for some time, till at length she suddenly ceased crying, and began to smile, and presently said with a smiling countenance, Mother, the kingdom of heaven is come to me! Her mother was surprised at the sudden alteration, and at the speech; and knew not what to make of it; but at first said nothing to her. The child presently spoke again, and said, There is another come to me, and there is another, there is three; and being asked what she meant, she answered, One is, Thy will be done, and there is another, Enjoy Him for ever; by which it seems, that when the child said, There is three come to me; she meant three passages of her catechism that came to her mind.

After the child had said this, she retired again into her closet, and her mother went over to her brother's, who was next neighbor; and when she came back, the child, being come out of the closet, meets her mother with this cheerful speech; I can find God now! referring to what she had before complained of, that she could not find God. Then the child spoke again and said, I love God! Her mother asked her, how well she loved God, whether she loved God better than her father and mother. She said, Yes. Then she asked her, whether she loved God better than her little sister Rachel. She answered, Yes, better than any thing! Then her elder sister, referring to her saying she could find God now, asked her, where she could find God. She answered, In heaven. Why, said she, have you been in heaven? No, said the child. By this it seems not to have been any imagination of any thing seen with bodily eyes, that she called God, when she said, I can find God now. Her mother asked her, whether she was afraid of going to hell, and if that had made her cry? She answered, Yes, I was; but now I shan't. Her mother asked her, whether she thought that God had given her salvation: she answered, Yes. Her mother asked her. When? She answered, Today. She appeared all that afternoon exceeding cheerful and joyful. One of the neighbors asked her, how she felt herself. She answered, I feel better than I did. The neighbor asked her, what made her feel better. She answered, God makes me. That evening, as she lay a-bed, she called one of her little cousins to her, who was present in the room, as having something to say to him; and when he came, she told him, that heaven was better than earth. The next day, her mother asked her what God made her for? She answered, To serve him; and added, Every body should serve God, and get an interest in Christ.

At night, a certain minister, who was occasionally in the town, was at the house, and talked with her of religious things. After he was gone, she sat leaning on the table, with tears running from her eyes; and

being asked what made her cry, she said, I was thinking about God. The next day, being Saturday, she seemed a great part of the day to be in a very affectionate frame, had four turns of crying and seemed to endeavor to curb herself, and hide her tears, and was very backward to talk of the occasion. On the Sabbath day she was asked, whether she believed in God; she answered, Yes. And being told that Christ was the Son of God, she made ready answer, and said, I know it.

From this time there appeared a very remarkable abiding change in the child. She has been very strict upon the Sabbath; and seems to long for the Sabbath day before it comes, and will often in the week time be inquiring how long it is to the Sabbath day, and must have the days between particularly counted over, before she will be contented. She seems to love God's house, and is very eager to go thither. Her mother once asked her, why she had such a mind to go? whether it was not to see fine folks? She said, No, it was to hear Mr. Edwards preach. When she is in the place of worship, she is very far from spending her time there as children at her age usually do, but appears with an attention that is very extraordinary for such a child. She also appears very desirous at all opportunities to go to private religious meetings; and is very still and attentive at home, during prayer, and has appeared affected in time of family prayer. She seems to delight much in hearing religious conversation. When I once was there with some strangers, and talked to her something of religion, she seemed more than ordinarily attentive; and when we were gone, she looked out very wistfully after us, and said, I wish they would come again! Her mother asked her, Why? Says she, I love to hear 'em talk.

She seems to have very much of the fear of God before her eyes, and an extraordinary dread of sinning against Him; of which her mother mentioned the following remarkable instance. Some time in August, the last year, she went with some bigger children to get some plums in a neighbor's lot, knowing nothing of any harm in what she did; but when she brought some of the plums into the house, her mother mildly reproved her, and told her that she must not get plums without leave, because it was sin: God had commanded her not to steal. The child seemed greatly surprised, and burst out in tears, and cried out, I won't have these plums! and turning to her sister Eunice, very earnestly said to her, Why did you ask me to go to that plum tree? I should not have gone, if you had not asked me. The other children did not seem to be much affected or concerned; but there was no pacifying Phebe. Her mother told her, she might go and ask leave, and then it would not be sin for her to eat them; and sent one of the children to that end; and, when she returned, her mother told her that the owner had given leave, now she might eat them, and it would not be stealing. This stilled her a little while; but presently she broke out again into an exceeding fit of crying. Her mother asked her, What made her cry again? Why she cried now, since they had asked leave? What it was that troubled her now? And asked her several times very earnestly, before she made any answer; but at last said, It was because, because it was sin. She continued a considerable time crying; and said she would not go again if Eunice asked her an hundred times; and she retained her aversion to that fruit for a considerable time, under the remembrance of her former sin.

She sometimes appears greatly affected, and delighted with texts of Scripture that come to her mind. Particularly about the beginning of November, that text came to her mind, Rev. 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in, and sup with him, and he with me." She spoke of it to those of the family with a great appearance of joy, a smiling countenance, and elevation of voice; and afterwards she went into another room, where her mother overheard her talking very earnestly to the children about it; and particularly heard her say to them, three or four times over, with an air of exceeding joy and admiration, Why, it is to sup with God. Some time about the middle of winter, very late in the night, when all were a-bed, her mother perceived that she

was awake, and heard her, as though she was weeping. She called to her, and asked her what was the matter. She answered with a low voice, so that her mother could not hear what she said; but thinking that it might be occasioned by some spiritual affection, said no more to her: but perceived her to lie awake, and to continue in the same frame, for a considerable time. The next morning she asked her, whether she did not cry the last night. The child answered, Yes, I did cry a little, for I was thinking about God and Christ, and they loved me. Her mother asked her, whether to think of God and Christ loving her made her cry? She answered, Yes, it does sometimes.

She has often manifested a great concern for the good of others' souls: and has been wont many times affectionately to counsel the other children. Once, about the latter end of September, the last year, when she and some others of the children were in a room by themselves, husking Indian corn, the child, after a while, came out and sat by the fire. Her mother took notice that she appeared with a more than ordinary serious and pensive countenance; but at last she broke silence, and said, I have been talking to Nabby and Eunice. Her mother asked her what she had said to them. Why, said she, I told them they must pray, and prepare to die; that they had but a little while to live in this world, and they must be always ready.

She has discovered an uncommon degree of a spirit of charity, particularly on the following occasion. A poor man that lives in the woods, had lately lost a cow that the family much depended on; and being at the house, he was relating his misfortune, and telling of the straits and difficulties they were reduced to by it. She took much notice of it, and it wrought exceedingly on her compassion. After she had attentively heard him awhile, she went away to her father, who was in the shop, and entreated him to give that man a cow: and told him, that the poor man had no cow! that the hunters, or something else, had killed his cow! and entreated him to give him one of theirs. Her father told her that they could not spare one. Then she entreated him to let him and his family come and live at his house: and had much more talk of the same nature, whereby she manifested bowels of compassion to the poor.

She has manifested great love to her minister: particularly when I returned from my long journey for my health, the last fall. When she heard of it, she appeared very joyful at the news, and told the children of it, with an elevated voice, as the most joyful tidings; repeating it over and over. Mr. Edwards is come home! Mr. Edwards is come home! She still continues very constant in secret prayer, so far as can be observed, for she seems to have no desire that others should observe her when she retires, being a child of a reserved temper. Every night, before she goes to bed, she will say her catechism, and will by no means miss. She never forgot it but once, and then, after she was a-bed, thought of it, and cried out in tears, I hadn't said my catechism! and would not be quieted till her mother asked her the catechism as she lay in bed. She sometimes appears to be in doubt about the condition of her soul; and when asked, whether she thinks that she is prepared for death, speaks something doubtfully about it. At other times she seems to have no doubt, but when asked, replies, Yes, without hesitation.

In the former part of this great work of God amongst us, till it got to His height, we seemed to be wonderfully smiled upon and blessed in all respects. Satan seemed to be unusually restrained; persons who before had been involved in melancholy, seemed to be as it were waked up out of it; and those who had been entangled with extraordinary temptations, seemed wonderfully freed. And not only so, but it was the most remarkable time of health that ever I knew since I have been in the town. We ordinarily have several bills put up, every Sabbath, for sick persons; but now we had not so much as one for many Sabbaths together. But after this it seemed to be otherwise.



When this work of God appeared to be at its greatest height, a poor weak man who belongs to the town, being in great spiritual trouble, was hurried with violent temptations to cut his own throat, and made an attempt, but did not do it effectually. He, after this, continued a considerable time exceedingly overwhelmed with melancholy; but has not for a long time been very greatly delivered, by the light of God's countenance lifted up upon him, and has expressed a great sense of his sin in so far yielding to temptation; and there are in him all hopeful evidences of his having been made a subject of saving mercy. In the latter part of May, it began to be very sensible that the Spirit of God was gradually withdrawing from us, and after this time Satan seemed to be more let loose, and raged in a dreadful manner. The first instance wherein it appeared, was a person putting an end to his own life by cutting his throat. He was a gentleman of more than common understanding, of strict morals, religious in his behavior, and a useful and honorable person in the town; but was of a family that are exceedingly prone to the disease of melancholy, and his mother was killed with it. He had, from the beginning of this extraordinary time, been exceedingly concerned about the state of his soul, and there were some things in his experience that appeared very hopeful; but he durst entertain no hope concerning his own good estate. Towards the latter part of his time, he grew much discouraged, and melancholy grew again upon him, till he was wholly overpowered by it, and was in a great measure past a capacity of receiving advice, or being reasoned with to any purpose. The devil took the advantage, and drove him into despairing thoughts. He was kept awake at nights, meditating terror, so that he had scarce any sleep at all for a long time together; and it was observed at last, that he was scarcely well capable of managing his ordinary business, and was judged delirious by the coroner's inquest. The news of this extraordinarily affected the minds of people here, and struck them as it were with astonishment. After this, multitudes in this and other towns seemed to have it strongly suggested to them, and pressed upon them, to do as this person had done. And many who seemed to be under no melancholy, some pious persons who had no special darkness or doubts about the goodness of their state—nor were under any special trouble or concern of mind about any thing spiritual or temporal—had it urged upon them as if somebody had spoke to them, Cut your throat, now is a good opportunity. Now! now! So that they were obliged to fight with all their might to resist it, and yet no reason suggested to them why they should do it.

About the same time, there were two remarkable instances of persons led away with strange enthusiastic delusions; one at Suffield, and another at South Hadley. That which has made the greatest noise in the country was the conduct of the man at South Hadley, whose delusion was, that he thought himself divinely instructed to direct a poor man in melancholy and despairing circumstances, to say certain words in prayer to God, as recorded in Psalm 116:4, for his own relief. The man is esteemed a pious man. I have seen this error of his, had a particular acquaintance with him, and I believe none would question his piety who had such acquaintance. He gave me a particular account of the manner how he was deluded, which is too long to be here inserted; but, in short, he exceedingly rejoiced, and was elevated with the extraordinary work carried on in this part of the country; and was possessed with an opinion, that it was the beginning of the glorious times of the church spoken of in Scripture. He had read it as the opinion of some divines, that many in these times should be endued with extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and had embraced the notion, though he had at first no apprehensions that any besides ministers would have such gifts. But he since exceedingly laments the dishonor he has done to God, and the wound he has given religion in it, and has lain low before God and man for it.

After these things, the instances of conversion were rare here in comparison of what they had before been, though that remarkable instance before noticed of the little child, was after this. The Spirit of God,

not long after this time, appeared very sensibly withdrawing from all parts of the country, though we have heard of the work going on in some places of Connecticut, and that it continues to be carried on even to this day. But religion remained here, and I believe in some other places, the main subject of conversation for several months after. And there were some turns, wherein God's work seemed to revive, and we were ready to hope that all was going to be renewed again; yet, in the main, there was a gradual decline of that general, engaged, lively spirit in religion, which had been. Several things have happened since, which have diverted people's minds, and turned their conversation more to other affairs; particularly his Excellency the Governor's coming up, and the Committee of general court, on the treaty with the Indians.—Afterwards, the Springfield controversy; and since that, our people in this town have been engaged in the building of a new meeting-house. Some other occurrences might be mentioned, that have seemed to have this effect. But as to those who have been thought converted at this time, they generally seem to have had an abiding change wrought on them. I have had particular acquaintance with many of them since; and they generally appear to be persons who have a new sense of things, new apprehensions and views of God, of the divine attributes of Jesus Christ, and the great things of the gospel. They have a new sense of their truth, and they affect them in a new manner; though it is very far from being always alike with them, neither can they revive a sense of things when they please. Their hearts are often touched, and sometimes filled, with new sweetnesses and delights; there seems to express an inward ardor and burning of heart, like to which they never experienced before; sometimes, perhaps, occasioned only by the mention of Christ's name, or some one of the divine perfections.

Some who before were very rough in their temper and manners, seemed to be remarkably softened and sweetened. And some have had their souls exceedingly filled, and overwhelmed with light, love, and comfort, long since the work of God has ceased to be so remarkably carried on in a general way; and some have had much greater experiences of this nature than they had before. There is still a great deal of religious conversation continued in the town, amongst young and old; a religious disposition appears to be still maintained amongst our people, by their holding frequent private religious meetings; and all sorts are generally worshipping God at such meetings on Sabbath nights, and in the evening after our public lecture. Many children in the town still keep up such meetings among themselves. I know of no one young person in the town who has returned to former ways of looseness and extravagance in any respect; but we still remain a reformed people, and God has evidently made us a new people.

I cannot say that there has been no instance of any one person who has conducted himself unworthily; nor am I so vain as to imagine that we have not been mistaken in our good opinion concerning any; or that there are none who pass amongst us for sheep, that are indeed wolves in sheep's clothing; and who probably may, some time or other, discover themselves by their fruits. We are not so pure, but that we have great cause to be humbled and ashamed that we are so impure; nor so religious, but that those who watch for our halting, may see things in us, whence they may take occasion to reproach us and religion. But in the main, there has been a great and marvelous work of conversion and sanctification among the people here; and they have paid all due respect to those who have been blest of God to be the instruments of it. Both old and young have shown a forwardness to hearken not only to my counsels, but even to my reproofs, from the pulpit.

A great part of the country has not received the most favorable thoughts of this affair; and to this day many retain a jealousy concerning it, and prejudice against it. I have reason to think that the meanness and weakness of the instrument, that has been made use of in this town, has prejudiced many against it; nor does it appear to me strange that it should be so. But yet the circumstances of this great work of God

is analogous to other circumstances of it. God has so ordered the manner of the work in many respects, as very signally and remarkably to show it to be His own peculiar and immediate work; and to secure the glory of it wholly to His almighty power, and sovereign grace. And whatever the circumstances and means have been, and though we are so unworthy, yet so has it pleased God to work! And we are evidently a people blessed of the Lord! For here, in this corner of the world, God dwells, and manifests His glory.

Thus, Reverend Sir, I have given a large and particular account of this remarkable affair; and yet, considering how manifold God's works have been amongst us, it is but a very brief one. I should have sent it much sooner, had I not been greatly hindered by illness in my family, and also in my own person. It is probably much larger than you expected, and, it may be, than you would have chosen. I thought that the extraordinary nature of the thing, and the innumerable misrepresentations which have gone abroad of it, many of which, doubtless, have reached your ears, made it necessary that I should be particular. But I would leave it entirely with your wisdom to make what use of it you think best, to send a part of it to England, or all, or none, if you think it not worthy; or otherwise to dispose of it as you may think most for God's glory, and the interest of religion. If you are pleased to send any thing to the Rev. Dr. Guyse, I should be glad to have it signified to him, as my humble desire, that since he and the congregation to which he preached, have been pleased to take so much notice of us, as they have, that they would also think of us at the throne of grace, and seek there for us, that God would not forsake us, but enable us to bring forth fruit answerable to our profession, and our mercies; and that our "light may so shine before men, that others seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven."

When I first heard of the notice the Rev. Dr. Watts and Dr. Guyse took of God's mercies to us, I took occasion to inform our congregation of it in a discourse from these words—A city that set upon a hill cannot be hid. And having since seen a particular account of the notice which the Rev. Dr. Guyse and his congregation took of it, in a letter you wrote to my honored uncle Williams, I read that part of your letter to the congregation, and labored as much as in me lay to enforce their duty from it. The congregation were very sensibly moved and affected at both times.

I humbly request of you, Reverend Sir, your prayers for this county, in its present melancholy circumstances, into which it is brought by the Springfield quarrel; which, doubtless, above all things that have happened, has tended to put a stop to the glorious work here, and to prejudice this country against it, and hinder the propagation of it. I also ask your prayers for this town, and would particularly beg an interest in them for him who is,

Honored Sir, With humble respect,

Your obedient Son and Servant,

Jonathan Edwards.

*Northampton,*

*November 6, 1736*