

A new history of the Baptist Missionary Enterprise primarily from the original sources.

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Part I

The Foundation and beginnings of Baptist Missionary
effort in India Mid. 18th century to November 11th,
1793

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Preface

A brief account of my missionary experiences is as follows. I was present at the 1972 Olympics in Munich and was at the complex the day after the terrorist attack. I was part of a large missionary group of about a thousand other young people. Shortly after that I was set apart as the leader of a small group from the same interdenominational missionary organization. The Lord Jesus was pleased to save me a few months before this, but I knew little of what the Bible taught. I was so poorly trained that when I first had the opportunity of preaching the gospel to a group from a native village in Tanzania. I suddenly found that I had no knowledge of what the gospel was! All we had been taught was salvation by works. We were rather violently attached and had to flee. Later our vehicle completely broke down in the middle of Tanzania. God in his mercy had some Scandinavian missionaries rescue us and take us in at their compound. For some weeks, I had violent dysentery. In this condition I was driven many miles over the bush country to a large gathering of African Christians. I cast myself upon God to use me as he saw fit. I was enabled to speak through an interpreter to this large congregation. I remained sick for some time afterward. We made our way via a local bus to Zambia where some of the local churches let me speak. Shortly after this we found that our plane reservations were useless so we each had to find our own way out of Zambia to where we wished to go.

Some years later I was at an interdenominational Bible college in Cape Town South Africa. Here again there was little or no real teaching of what the gospel was. This was because so many 'Christian' systems had to be accommodated. The first thing I remember having to do was to write a sermon on John 3:16. My Calvinistic approach did not seem to be in line with what the instructor had in mind. At one point before I left before the end of term an incident was engraved upon my mind. One of the students with his wife and family were ordained as overseas missionaries. I knew this man well enough to be certain that any views he had upon the gospel were completely erroneous. Even worse he showed no sign of conversion. I was devastated with the fact that this Bible school was blissfully happy to send them away full of self-confidence and pride. This was one, among other reasons I withdrew early from such a place.

These experiences along with other factors led me to an early interest in missions. Because my wife and I were both baptized and so called '*Particular*' Baptists. I was very interested in William Carey and the Baptist enterprise he was part of. They too were supposed to be '*Particular*' Baptists. Over the years I gathered many resources about those involved in this early missionary movement. Despite my best efforts over the years, I failed to gain a foothold in understanding Carey or the enterprise. Carey's enquiry seemed unassailable. What I needed was a key or keys to unlock what to me was a mystery. God provided the necessary information from two sources. The first, and most important, was a deeper understanding the covenant of mercy¹ and of the Gospel. The Lord God used both the ministry of James Wells and that of Peter Meney, to whom I am greatly indebted. The second which acted as a catalyst is a book about the life of John Thomas. This is one of the primary resources I am using.

Finally, in giving the personal details I have it is not my desire or intention to bring any credit to myself. God in his providence chose the paths I should take and gave abundant free grace for all my needs. It is not prideful to speak of what is true, but it is rather part of being humble. All the glory goes to God.

¹ Among a multitude of scriptures see 2 Timothy 1:6-10 "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Introduction

Paul in second Timothy 2:16, 17² writes: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” For example, the two books of Timothy and Titus gives us eternal guidance of who God will approve or disapprove to carry on his work in the Church. The fact is that sinful mankind is opposed to God’s word and rule. Mankind by their very nature knows only one thing: Hatred of God and rejection of his plan of salvation. A large part of Paul’s ministry was taken up in opposing such error in all its forms with constant reference to the Old Testament Scriptures. God’s word as found in the sixty-six books of the standard Protestant Bible is his full and final authoritative word to mankind. In order to find favor with God any teaching, actions, organizations etc. are subject to and confined to what God has revealed in the Bible. Anything opposed to God’s word is an anathema to God.

A good example of a correct use of the Bible is the “Great Commission” as it was given to the original apostles:

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.³

The first and foremost fact to acknowledge is that this is a command given by the Lord Jesus Christ. It is based entirely upon Christ’s sovereign power not man’s effort. Because of Christ’s finished work of the redemption of his bride, the church, success is certain. Those who are sent are representatives of the trinity: Father, Son and Holy Ghost and all that is implied in that. What has been revealed by Christ in the Bible is what is to be taught and that alone. This command is not limited to the original eleven apostles. Under the conditions set by Christ himself properly called and Holy Spirit sent ministers carry on this task. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the apostle Paul tells us how this commission was then and is now to be obeyed:

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was

² Unless other stated all scripture verses are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

³ Matthew 28:16- 20

not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.⁴

Paul again tells us:

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but **to preach the gospel**⁵: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For **the preaching of the cross** is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.⁶

The Lord Jesus himself in Isaiah repeatedly tell us that he will save and he alone. As well as the fact that those for whom Christ did not specially call there is no salvation. For example:

I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him. But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. **There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.**⁷

Preaching the true Gospel of Jesus Christ is God's method to save sinners. Without preaching or preaching without the gospel is not evangelism. It is rebellion against God and his Holy Word (see footnote).⁸

My purpose in this work is to use God's holy word as the ruler to measure what has become known as the "Modern Missionary Movement" as represented by the Baptist missionary enterprise. Part one, (part two etc. will follow if the Lord enables me) examines the foundations upon which the Enterprise was built. To the utmost of my ability I am using facts, often in the missionaries' own words. The wealth of facts, though often not used or misused, is immense.

My conclusions differ greatly from the widespread myths which have been common since the 'Enterprise' started. In fact, it was the statement of the early Baptist members that they were rejecting the old paths and instituting something else instead. Thus, the false cry of "hyper-Calvinism" is raised whenever Biblical truth is presented.

The Bible gives all the glory to God: God will save only His elect the rest are "vessels of wrath"

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore, hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast

⁴ 1 Corinthians 15: 1- 11

⁵ Unless otherwise noted all bold or underlined emphasis are by me and are not part of the original text.

⁶ 1 Corinthians 1:17-19

⁷ Isaiah 57:18 - 21

⁸ We must remember that God is sovereign. If he chooses, he can and does save sinners in other ways. However, salvation in any form must include knowledge of Christ and personal God given faith in His atonement. God Himself sometimes imparts these truths to sinners apart from preaching. Witnessing is one such form. The point is that preaching is clearly revealed by God as his means of saving sinners. Replacing that with work, almost exclusively, on translations is not of God.

thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?⁹

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but **to preach the gospel**: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For **the preaching of the cross** is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.¹⁰

Without Love, as God sees it in the heart, all a man does, even to die for others, is valueless in God's eyes. God tells us:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity¹¹ suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.¹²

⁹ Romans 9:14- 21

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 1:17–19

¹¹ "Love" in modern English

¹² 1 Corinthians 13:1–7

Chapter one

David Brainerd (and Johnathan Edwards): their importance to the Baptist enterprise.



The first and rather obvious question is why is David Brainerd included in this history of the Baptist enterprise? The answer is simple: His influence upon the early Baptist mission enterprise was far greater than what has been acknowledged in the various historical accounts. Also, Brainerd and Johnathan Edwards relationships and the fact that Edwards was a primary influence on the '*Enterprise*' makes this necessary to include both. Later, in the chapters dealing with the founding and theological basis for the enterprise more information on this subject will come to light. For now, I want to give just two little known quotations as examples of his importance in this regard.

The first is from an essay by A. de M. Chesterman in which he compares the journals of both Carey and Brainerd. He starts off in the following manner:

In the judgment of many, the journals of David Brainerd and William Carey are not in the same literary class, but they may be usefully studied alongside each other. **The early letters and the**

Enquiry of William Carey reveal that he followed Brainerd's lead in several ways. The journals also contain many similarities. It is likely that Carey would have kept no journal hut for Brainerd's example. His may be regarded as a sequel to the earlier one. Not only so, but a number of successive Baptist missionaries, notably William Ward, would not have handed down their valuable records had the lead not been given by Brainerd. This would appear to apply also to other denominations and their representatives on the field. **In the writer's judgment it is time that we gave full credit to 'Brainerd as an originator, in this respect, of the most instructive means to a living understanding of the Christian missionary and his work.** The journal of the running battle throws a light which little else can. Even the daily trivialities and the repetition of them yield a perspective not gleaned elsewhere. In the case of Brainerd and Carey the double emphasis on some aspects of their experience may both help to understand origins and pass a needed message from two of the greatest pioneers.

David Brainerd recorded his experience amongst North American Indians in journal form covering the period April 1st, 1742, towards the time of his death October 9th, 1747. The journal was kept by order of the Society (in Scotland) for Propagating Christian Knowledge. He also kept a private diary, some of which he ordered to be destroyed a few days before his death. Only the journal is under consideration here although, as usually published, the diary and journal appear to merge a little towards the close. The fact that the two records were originally kept separately carried the great advantage of making the journal ready for publication when written. **The falling of this seed could not have been more timely. The soil had been hostile. A few were questioning the use of the theological top-dressing that God would convert the heathen in His own time. What Brainerd sowed through his journal was so utterly innocent and of the Lord that it could not be refused.** Subsequent keepers of journals would have done better to have kept the private diary apart. Quotations here are from the 1798 edition edited by Jonathan Edwards and, where so stated, from the 1826 edition. In this study the comparisons made touching the authors are sought to be other than of literary merit. Brainerd's journal, although a beginning, approaches completeness while Carey's is a slender beginning with remarkable possibilities in embryo¹³.

Chesterman boldly states that "What Brainerd sowed through his journal was so utterly innocent and of the Lord that it could not be refused. "This sort of spiritual and intellectual refuse is so prevalent that it simply must be exposed in order for the glory of God though Jesus Christ to take its place.

The other is from Lewis's Life of John Thomas¹⁴:

Ram Basu's conversation betokened also a deep conviction of the truth of the gospel, and there was reason to hope he might soon be an acknowledged follower of Christ. Brainerd's interpreter in the Indian language was one of the first converts made by that celebrated missionary, and Mr. Thomas rejoiced in this parallel with his own experience.¹⁵

Basu was never converted but was shown to be a fraud. Notwithstanding this fact, he was kept on and paid for many years by Carey. His influence upon the mission was immense as will be discovered in the following chapters. Brainerd and his example carried great weight with Thomas as well as Carey etc.

¹³ A. de M. Chesterman, "The Journals of David Brainerd and of William Carey," Baptist Quarterly 19.4 (October 1961): 147-148.

¹⁴ "The Life of John Thomas" by C. B. Lewis. London Macmillan & Co., 1873. This is freely available in the public domain, at: <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/e6fwpxbk>

¹⁵ Life of Thomas pages 111, 112

Many attribute “great success” to David Brainerd’s missionary efforts among the American Indians. For example, Carey in his famous Enquiry and the Rev. Horatius Bonar in his preface to the “The life of David Brainerd” referenced below. Two current sources from the internet illustrate the low and high numbers of possible converts.

First from Wikepeia:

His Legacy

Impact on the church and mission

He made a handful of converts, but became widely known in the 1800s due to books about him.[18] His Journal was published in two parts in 1746 by the Scottish Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.[citation needed]

Much of Brainerd's influence on future generations can be attributed to the biography compiled by Jonathan Edwards and first published in 1749 under the title of An Account of the Life of the Late Reverend Mr. David Brainerd.[19][20] It gained immediate recognition, with eighteenth-century theologian John Wesley urging: 'Let every preacher read carefully over the Life of David Brainerd'.[21] From the eighteenth century, missionaries also found inspiration and encouragement from the biography. Gideon Hawley wrote in the midst of struggles:

'I need, greatly need, something more than humane [human or natural] to support me. I read my Bible and Mr. Brainerd's Life, the only books I brought with me, and from them have a little support'.[22] ¹⁶

Secondly from a copyrighted short biography of Brainerd by Ed Rese from Whoesomewords.org. The number of converts from that source is 85. It is however foolish to judge any man’s ministry by the supposed number of “converts” they made. Only God can truly regenerate and convert. True salvation comes from God’s use of the preached gospel of the person and work of Jesus Christ. Vast numbers of so-called ministers or missionaries preach or teach what Paul calls “another gospel”:

To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto **another gospel**: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.¹⁷

It is my firm contention that the ‘gospel’ David Brainerd believed in and preached was indeed “another gospel” If true this has serious, indeed eternal consequences both to him and to all who exalt him and his missionary efforts. Scrutinizing Brainerd’s own words, Edward’s comments and Bonar’s preface on this subject is my purpose in this chapter. I will be concentrating on two related subjects regarding Brainerd. These are: What is his understanding of what righteousness is? Secondly what can we learn from the little we are told about his

¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Brainerd Footnotes to the quotation above: 18: "Did You Know?". Christian History & Biography. 90: 2. Spring 2006; 19: Pettit, Norman, 'Prelude to mission: Brainerd's expulsion from Yale', The New England Quarterly, 59 (1986), page 28; 20: Noll, Mark, 'Jonathan Edwards: Christian history timeline – Passing the torch', Christian History & Biography, 77 (2003); 21: Piper, John, Tested By Fire: The Fruit of Suffering in the Lives of John Bunyan, William Cowper and David Brainerd (Inter-Varsity Press, 2001) p 131; 22: Quoted in Piper, p. 132:.

¹⁷ Galatians 1:5 - 11

conversion? It is essential for this purpose to know what the nature of conversion and of saving faith are. It's imperative to establish a firm foundation biblically, doctrinally and personally on this doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ and the redemption God has provided through Christ to his church.

The following quotation is from a Topical analysis of the Bible keyed to the New International Version of the Bible. Nothing will be lost by using the King James version instead.

The Nature of Saving Faith

1. Saving Faith Is More Than Intellectual Acknowledgment

John 2:23–25; John 3:1–5; Acts 8:13–24; James 2:19

2. Saving Faith Is More Than Emotional Assent

Ps. 106:12–13; Ezek. 33:31–32; Matt. 13:20–21; John 8:29–31

3. Saving Faith Is a Personal Relationship of Trust in Christ as Lord and Savior

Matt. 11:28–30; John 1:12; John 4:13–14; John 6:53–58; John 8:12; John 14:1; John 20:31; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9–10; 1 John 3:23; 1 John 5:5; Rev. 3:20

B. The Object of Saving Faith

1. God Is the Object of Saving Faith

2 Chron. 20:20; Ps. 4:5; Ps. 9:10; Ps. 31:6; Ps. 37:3; Ps. 119:65–66; Isa. 26:4; Isa. 43:10; Isa. 50:10; Mark 11:22; John 12:44; Heb. 6:1; Heb. 11:1, 6; 1 Pet. 1:21

2. Christ Is the Object of Saving Faith

John 1:12; John 3:16; John 6:29; John 9:35–38; John 11:27; John 12:36; John 14:1, 6; John 20:27, 31; Acts 8:37–38; Acts 16:31; Acts 20:21; Rom. 10:9–10; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 1:13; 1 Thess. 4:14; 1 Tim. 1:16; 1 Tim. 4:10; 2 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 10:39; 1 John 3:23; 1 John 5:10–13¹⁸

The following is from a sermon titled “Saving Faith” by Mr. James Wells on 1 Peter 2:7: “Unto you therefore which believe his is precious.” Please note that this passage from 1 Peter is not listed in the list above. The fact is that there are innumerable scriptures on this subject. I am here just scratching the surface as it were.

We notice, then, true believers, “Unto you therefore which believe.” Everything turns upon this point; if we are believers, then well with us; if we are not, then woe be unto us. **But then there are so many forms of belief; how shall we distinguish the true from the false? This is a matter of vast and essential importance.** I will therefore try to give a threefold representation of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. First, the description given by the apostle Peter in connection with our text. He said of Jesus Christ, “To whom coming as unto a living stone.” This appears to refer to the Israelites in the wilderness; when they were brought into a state of destitution, where it appeared to them that they must die of thirst, and water flowed from the rock; and they from two things, first, from the thirst they had; and secondly, from the knowledge of where the living waters were, came unto this rock, this living stone. “This rock,” the apostle said, “was Christ;” So that we have the authority of divine inspiration to take a spiritual view of the same. **Where there is true faith in Christ, there will be a thirst for God. It was their thirst that brought them to the rock, connected with the fact that they knew where the living waters were flowing. It was not any external law, it was not any rule of duty, it was not any human persuasion; it was simply their thirst that brought them.** Let us come down to our own consciences and feelings upon this matter. Can we look back at the time when we began to desire to be Christians, when we began to desire that the Lord would teach us and guide us in the good and right way; and when we thus began to desire to be Christians, and to desire to know the Lord? Did that desire increase until it came to what is **described in a great many places in the word of God as a thirst for God? “My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come to appear before God?” Nothing**

¹⁸ Elwell, W. A., & Buckwalter, D. (1996). Topical analysis of the Bible: with the New International Version (Vol. 5). Baker Book House.

but believing from this internal experience will keep you firm in believing, because, if you are persuaded that certain things are your duty, and you follow them as a duty, someone may come and persuade you that not that course of things, but another course of things is your duty; and thus, while you think one line of things to be your duty today, you may think another line of things entirely opposite to be your duty tomorrow. Hence the many theories we have of religion; and if you think it your duty to be after the Calvinistic order today, you may think it your duty to be after the Wesleyan order tomorrow; and then after some other order. **Thus, what uncertainty there is in a mere duty religion!** But when you come into a conviction of your lost and ruined condition, what will be your feeling? Just as the Israelite saw and felt, and had not a single shadow of a doubt, but was as sure as he was of his existence, **that if the Lord did not interpose and give them water to drink they certainly must perish, let this be expressive of your spiritual experience; for where there is this you are brought to feel and know that without that mercy that flows by the Rock, Christ Jesus (and ever remember that the rock carries with it the idea not only of stability, but of perfection; “he is a Rock, and his work is perfect”) you are as convinced as you are of your own existence that without that mercy of God that comes by the perfect work of Christ, without that grace of God that comes by the perfect work of Christ, without that promise of God that comes by the perfect work of Christ, and without the power of the Spirit of God to pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground, that without this you shall as surely be lost as that you exist. Are you got thus far?**

Later in the same sermon he preached the following:

We will now go to another item of faith. “You also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.” Here the simile is changed; the stone is retained, but the position altered. Just now he was the rock, sending forth living waters; now he becomes the foundation upon which the people of God are to build. “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone;” there is the stability; “a tried stone;” and no person under the heavens was ever tried as the dear Redeemer was. **In all his trials did he ever show one symptom of weakness, so as to sink? Never. How impregnable did he prove to be! how sound in all parts! He was a tried stone.** The Old Testament saints had to look for eternal salvation by him that had not yet been actually tried. He had not yet been actually tried as to whether he could or would magnify the law or not; he had not yet been actually tried as to whether he could bear the sins of countless millions of sinners, put those sins away, rise triumphant from the dead, and ascend to heaven. But the time came, and he was tried, and came off more than conqueror. “A precious corner stone, a sure foundation;” there is a certainty about it. But the point we want is the building upon it. **What is meant by digging deep, and building your house upon the rock? It is this, that all of us, until divinely taught and severely tried, have some false confidence or another, and we are pretty sure to build upon this foundation by our duties, our morality, soundness of moral character; various materials men use, and they seem pretty good in their eyes; and we are damned almost to eternity if we have not something perfectly solid and sound of our own with which to build. That is their way of looking at it. The dear Savior tells us to build a tower, and then directly says, “Except a man forsake all that he has, he cannot build.” What do you think of that? You are to build, and yet you are to forsake everything you have, or else you cannot build; you are to build a tower, and yet unless you leave everything you cannot build. Isaiah understood this secret; we will take his account and see what it is to build aright upon this foundation. The Lord said, by Isaiah, “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.” If you asked Saul of Tarsus the meaning of that, he would tell you the line and plummet there mean the law of God; and when the Lord came to try Saul of Tarsus by the righteous law of God, and the Lord let the plummet have its proper swing, so as to show**

whether the work was upright, Saul found out he was as crooked as sin could make him, as Satan could make him, and as far from being right as the devil himself.¹⁹

Notice Wells' words on the dependence upon "duties" rather than the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jonathan Edwards, the first and foremost advocate of Brainerd, was thoroughly conscious of the fact that this was and is a very serious issue. Was Brainerd for or against God? Was it self-appointed righteousness and zeal or a divine calling which motivated him? Edwards realized how important this matter was. He devoted pages and pages of his own comments to justifying and glorifying Brainerd. I believe that Edwards efforts and not the diary itself led to much of Brainerd's fame.

In his preface to the edition, I am using the Rev. Horatius Bonar. shows clearly that he knew that Brainerd's diary needed both justification for its usefulness as well as dealing with the serious problems with Brainerd's gospel. He is, I believe, more honest than Edwards. He makes an important observation concerning the lack of the importance of Christ and other deficiencies in Brainerd:

We do not ask any one to take his life as a perfect life, or his experience as a perfect experience; nor do; we set him up as a model or measure by which our Christianity is to be shaped. In many points we mark imperfection. We can trace in it an undue tendency; to the subjective in religion. We can observe an occasional leaning to the dark and gloomy, not without a slight touch of something approaching to mysticism. We can at times suspect the existence of something unhealthy, and even feverish, in his spiritual system. We can observe a less frequent reference to Christ, both personally and officially, than we think scriptural. We can afford to make all these deductions, and yet we hold up his life and experience as fitted above those of many to be of service in the present day.²⁰

Another instance is a quotation Bonar gives from somebody by the name of Rauschenbusch. Bonar quotes from this man's memoir: "He who is acquainted with spiritual life will know from experience how necessary is daily obedience to that word of Jesus, **let a man deny himself; if he indulge his own desires, if he do not crucify them, then does spiritual life decline.**"²¹ Bonar was all in favor of this, however it is pure salvation by human effort. The very thing the Lord was speaking against. The scripture he is referring to is either Luke 9:23 or Matthew 16:24. In Matthew it reads as follows: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." The emphasis is all upon the Lord Jesus Christ and not just upon human effort. To be sure human response and effort is important, but it is only a part of what Jesus is talking about. Dr. John Gill brings out the balance on his comments of the verse in Matthew:

Ver. 24. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, &c. Knowing that they had all imbibed the same notion of a temporal kingdom, and were in expectation of worldly riches, honour, and pleasure; he took this opportunity of preaching the doctrine of the cross to them, and of letting them know, that they must prepare for persecutions, sufferings, and death; which they must expect to endure, as well as he, if they would be his disciples: if any man will come after me: that is, be a disciple and follower of him, it being usual for the master to go before, and the disciple to follow after him: now let it be who it will, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, young or old, male or female, that have any inclination and desire, or have took up a resolution **in the strength of grace**, to be a disciple of

¹⁹ Both quotations are from the same sermon: "Saving Faith" by Mr. James Wells preached on Sunday March 13th, 1870. This sermon can be found free of any copy right at:

https://www.surreytabernaclepulpit.com/files/Sermons/JamesWells/1870_71/SAVING%20FAITH.html

²⁰ The life of David Brainerd Missionary to the Indians, by Jonathan Edwards: Edinburgh, Johnstone and Hunter 1853, Preface page xiii

²¹ The life of David, Preface page xxi

Christ, let him deny himself: let him deny sinful self, ungodliness, and worldly lusts: and part with them, and his former sinful companions, which were as a part of himself: let him deny righteous self, and renounce all his own works of righteousness, in the business of justification and salvation; let him deny himself the pleasures and profits of this world, when in competition with Christ; let him drop and banish all his notions and expectations of an earthly kingdom, and worldly grandeur, and think of nothing but reproach, persecution, and death, for the sake of his Lord and Master: and take up his cross; cheerfully receive, and patiently bear, every affliction and evil, however shameful and painful it may be, which is appointed for him, and he is called unto; which is his peculiar cross, as every Christian has his own; to which he should quietly submit, and carry, with an entire resignation to the will of God, in imitation of his Lord: and follow me; in the exercise of grace, as humility, zeal, patience, and self-denial; and in the discharge of every duty, moral, or evangelical; and through sufferings and death, to his kingdom and glory. The allusion is, to Christ's bearing his own cross, and Simeon's carrying it after him, which afterwards came to pass.²²

Bonar immediately continues from the quote above²³ and in one sense he is quite correct when he says:

The whole life of Brainerd is a comment upon this (*the quotation from Rauschenbusch*). There are no foolish ideas about self-annihilation, such as we find in the schools of mysticism; yet there is what is more scriptural and more 'difficult of attainment, the regulation of **self**, the subordination of **self**, the expansion of **self**, from being a piece of hateful grovelling earthliness to a generous and heavenly **feeling**, which has but one desire and aim, that God may be glorified.

Brainerd undeniably desired to glorify God that is not debatable. The question is how did he seek to accomplish this? Scripture has only one answer: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."²⁴ One thing is absolutely required of man and that is not something he can do anything at all to achieve. Jesus tells a man called Nicodemus, steeped in the Law, that "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."²⁵

Bonar goes to the heart of this matter telling his readers that what he says must be taken by faith and not by Biblical truths. In the context of mentioning the word "Christ" twice he tells us that we cannot compare Brainerd's life with many of the great saints he mentions²⁶. He then goes on in part:

How, then, did Brainerd witness a good confession, honouring God and putting the adversary to shame?

He did so, we would say, not by the success of his labours, though that was great²⁷, but by that life of marvellous nearness to and **strange** intimacy with God which he lived during his brief day on earth. It is in living **such a life** that we witness a good confession, and bring **special glory to the name of that God** whose we are and whom we serve. It is not, perhaps, easy to understand how a veiled life like this should be so glorifying, nor how it should be, that the most hidden parts of it should be sometimes the most glorifying of all; yet such, we are assured, is the sober truth....²⁸

²² Gill, J. (1809). An Exposition of the New Testament (Vol. 1, pp. 188–189). Mathews and Leigh

²³ "He who is acquainted with spiritual life will know from experience how necessary is daily obedience to that word of Jesus, let a man deny himself; if he indulge his own desires, if he do not crucify them, then does spiritual life decline."

²⁴ John 14:6

²⁵ John 3:7, 8

²⁶ These include Whitefield, Edwards, Knox, Luther

²⁷ He only made relatively few converts. His success comes more from Edwards and people like Bonar.

²⁸ The Life of David, page xxviii

Bonar used words like “strange intimacy”, “special glory” and “most hidden parts”. He was, therefore, aware that Brainerd’s supposed godliness was something that must be believed in even though it was highly unusual. In other words, we must just believe that it was biblical.

Very possibly the reader may be thinking: this is all very well but what did Brainerd write? What are the verifiable facts? Can you prove what you are saying?

First, what can we learn about Brainerd’s ‘conversion’?

Unfortunately, Brainerd only speaks of his conversion a few times so that we are dependent on Edwards to some extent as he speaks a great deal about it.

Brainerd’s first writes as follows:

... But some time in the winter 1732, I was something roused out of carnal security, by I scarce know what means at first; but was much excited by the prevailing of a mortal sickness in Haddam. I was **frequent, constant**, and something **fervent in duties**, and took delight in reading, especially Mr Janeway’s Token for Children; I felt sometimes much **melted in duties**, and **took great delight in the performance of them**; and I sometimes hoped that I was converted, or at least in a good and hopeful way for heaven and happiness, **not knowing what conversion was. The Spirit of God at this time proceeded far with me; I was remarkably dead to the world, and my thoughts were almost wholly employed about my soul’s concerns**; and I may indeed say, “Almost I was persuaded to be a Christian ”²⁹

Brainerd is reminiscing in the above quote. He says at this early stage in his life he did not know what conversion was. In other words, at the time he was writing these words he now knew what it was. He is condemned by his own words here as it is all about human actions. A fallen man’s reflection on how, without being regenerated, he was almost saved.

It is important to realize his state of mind before the ‘conversion’, to know what change actually took place. Writing about events some years later he says:

Some time in the beginning of winter 1738, it pleased God, on one Sabbath-day morning, as I was walking out for **some secret duties** (as I remember), to give me on a sudden such a sense of my danger, and the wrath of God, that I stood amazed, and my former good frames (that I had pleased myself with) all presently vanished; and from the view that I had of my sin and vileness, I was much distressed all that day, fearing the vengeance of God would soon overtake me. I was much dejected, and kept much alone, and sometimes begrudged the birds and beasts their happiness, because they were not exposed to eternal misery, as I evidently saw I was. And thus, I lived from day to day, being frequently in great distress. Sometimes there appeared mountains before me to disturb my hopes of mercy, and the work of conversion appeared so great, I thought I should never be the subject of it; but used, however, to pray and cry to God, **and perform other duties with great earnestness**, and hoped by some means to make the case better. And though I hundreds of times renounced all pretenses of any worth in my duties (as I thought), even in the season of the performance of them, and often confessed to God that I deserved nothing for the very best of them but eternal condemnation; **yet still I had a secret latent hope of recommending myself to God** by my religious

²⁹ Ibid, pages 2, 3

duties, and when I prayed affectionately, and my heart seemed in some measure to melt, I hoped God would be thereby moved to pity me; my prayers then looked with some appearance of goodness in them, and I seemed to mourn for sin, and then I could in some measure venture on the mercy of God in Christ (as I thought), though the preponderating thought and foundation of my hope was some imagination of goodness in my heart melting's, and flowing of affections in duty, and (sometimes) extraordinary enlargements therein. Though at some times the gate appeared so very strait, that it looked next to impossible to enter, yet at other times I flattered myself that it was not so very difficult, and hoped I should by diligence and watchfulness soon gain the point. Sometimes, after enlargement in duty and considerable affection, I hoped I had made a good step towards heaven, and imagined that God was affected as I was, and that he would hear such sincere cries (as I called them); and so sometimes, when I withdrew from secret duties in great distress, I returned something comfortable, and thus healed myself with my duties.³⁰

The many disappointments and great distresses and perplexity I met with, put me into a most horrible frame of contesting with the Almighty; with an inward vehemence and virulence, finding fault with his ways of dealing with mankind. I found great fault with the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, and my wicked heart often wished for some other way of salvation than by Jesus Christ. And being like the troubled sea, and my thoughts confused, I used to contrive to escape the wrath of God by some other means, and had strange projections, full of atheism, contriving to disappoint God's designs and decrees concerning me, or to escape God's notice and hide myself from him. But when, upon reflection, I saw these projections were vain and would not serve me, and that I could contrive nothing for my own relief, this would throw my mind into the most horrid frame, to wish there was no God, or to wish there were some other God that could control him, &c. These thoughts and desires were the secret inclinations of my heart, that were frequently acting before I was aware but, alas! they were mine although I was affrighted with them, when I came to reflect on them. When I considered of it, it distressed me to think that my heart was so full of enmity against God, and it made me tremble, lest God's vengeance should suddenly fall upon me. I used before to imagine my heart was not so bad as the Scriptures and some other books represented. Sometimes I used to take much pains to work it up into a good frame, a humble, submissive disposition, and hoped there was then some goodness in me: but, it may be on a sudden, the thoughts of the strictness of the law, or the sovereignty of God, would so irritate the corruption of my heart, that I had so watched over, and hoped I had brought to a good frame, that I would break over all bounds, and burst forth on all sides, like floods of water when they break down their dam. **But being sensible of the necessity of a deep humiliation in order to a saving close with Christ, I used to set myself to work in my own heart those convictions that were requisite in such a humiliation;** as, for instance, a conviction that God would be just, if he cast me off forever, and that if ever God should bestow mercy on me, it would be mere grace, though I should be in distress many years first, and be never so much engaged in duty; that God was not in the least obliged to pity me the more for all past duties, cries, and tears. These things I strove, to my utmost, to bring myself to a firm belief of, and hearty assent to, and hoped that now I was brought off from myself, and truly humbled and bowed to the divine sovereignty, and was wont to tell God in my prayers that now I had those very dispositions of soul that he required, and on which he showed mercy to others, and there-upon to beg and plead for mercy to me. But when I found no relief and was still oppressed with guilt and fears of wrath, my soul was in a tumult, and my heart rose against God, as dealing hardly with me. Yet then my conscience flew in my face, putting me in mind of my late confession to God of his justice in my condemnation, &c. And this giving me a sight of the badness of my heart, threw me again into distress, and **I wished I had watched my heart more narrowly, to keep it from breaking out against God's dealings with me;** and I even wished I had not pleaded for mercy on account of my humiliation, because

³⁰ Ibid. pages 4, 5

thereby I had lost all my seeming goodness. Thus, scores of times, I vainly imagined myself humbled and prepared for saving mercy.³¹

The two quotations above are excellent examples of how he strived to save himself. This also is a place to notice how he often uses words that *'sound right'* because they are scriptural terms. The all-important fact is that it is of no value whatsoever to speak of such things without a regenerated heart. Even the devils confessed as much about God.

The following quote is the only reference I could find where Brainerd speaks of someone specific being the means of his conversion. This and his explanation of what happened during his conversion are of vital importance. His explanation will follow below after some remarks about a famous minister at that time. These reflections on his experiences seem to be for the period of 1738 to 1739. The date of his 'conversion' seems to be July 18,19 1739. He says:

I read the calls of Christ made to the weary and heavy laden, but could find no way that he directed them to come in. I thought I would gladly come in if I knew how, **though the path of duty** directed to were never so difficult. I read Mr. Stoddart's Guide to Christ (which I trust was, in the hand of God, the happy means of my conversion), and my heart rose against the author, for though he told me my very heart all along while under convictions, and seemed to be very beneficial to me in his directions, yet here he failed, he did not tell me anything I could do that would bring me to Christ, but left me as it were with a great gulf between me and Christ, without any direction to get through. For I was not yet effectually and experimentally taught that there could be no way prescribed, whereby a natural man could, **of his own strength**, obtain that which is supernatural, and which the highest angel cannot give.³²

Apparently Stoddart's Guide was the "happy means" of his later conversion. At this point, however, he rebelled against Stoddart's teaching. How, exactly, this helped in his conversion is not so certain. A very brief look at what Stoddart taught my help. I think it is only necessary here to give a few quotations to reveal his utter, yes total lack of belief of any of the doctrines of grace and total dependency on the works of men instead. As directed by his teacher, Satan, he sometimes speaks of things like God's decree, man's inability to turn to God, Christ's righteousness etc. All this is but a smokescreen to give false credence to his doctrines which go from extreme Arminianism to almost verge upon Pelagianism. The effects of such teaching can clearly be seen in Brainerd. Here are the quotations I have chosen. I am referring here to just this one book of Stoddart's as it is this work which is pertinent to understanding Brainerd.

... It is the duty of men to love God, and to repent of sin; and it is the duty of sinners to labour that they may love God and repent of sin, &c.; but it is not in their power to work up their hearts to the love of God, and godly sorrow. They should labour to be convinced they cannot do it.

Third. Sometimes it is much to be suspected that they do not reform all that is amiss. And in this case; I. The danger of a natural condition is to be solemnly set before them. Though their terrors seem to be great, yet they need to be greater. Men must have so much terror, as to bring them to a separation from sin. Therefore, there is need to represent their danger in the most lively and dreadful way, that the sense thereof may pierce their hearts deeply. **If they be but thoroughly scared, they will be brought to a universal reformation, Is. ii. 20, 21.**

³¹ Ibid. pages 6 - 8

³² Ibid. page 9

II. They are to be urged to reformation. Their duty in this matter is to be particularly pressed upon them. Their consciences must be stirred to part with all sin, as Christ urges the Jews, Matt. 5:29. If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out? For, **the neglect of reformation will put a stop to the work: and they will not get forward in the work of humiliation, till they are reformed.** As the first concoction prepares for the second, so reformation does for humiliation.' Men must overcome the next and more immediate difficulties before they overcome those that are remote. He that will not part with sinful practices, will not yield himself into the hands of justice. **If they do not reform, they put the work to a stand;** yea, such men do aggravate their own sorrows; for trouble will lie upon them till their hearts are brought to be enabled; and their terrors will be multiplied, if they belong to God, **till they are persuaded to reform.** Psalm 32:8. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day.³³

When men have comfortable scriptures come to them, they are apt to take them as tokens of God's love. But men must first be brought unto Christ, by accepting the offer of the Gospel, before they are fit for such manifestations. **God's method is first to make the soul accept the offers of grace, and then to manifest his good estate unto him.**³⁴

He must be sure to attend his duty, whatever ill use his heart may be ready to make of it. **He must not scare himself from his duty, because he is ready to trust in it. Duty must be done; God's command must be attended to, whatever be the consequence of it.**³⁵

If the man were willing, what keeps him from Christ? The difficulty lies in the will, if the will be conquered, the man is conquered. **Yea, faith in Christ is an act of the will.** Faith is a choosing of Christ for his Saviour. Christ is offered to men, and many encouragements are presented before them. And **when once the will is gained to accept the offer, the man does believe on Christ.** If men are willing, the difficulty would be at an end. They cannot be willing until they are able. They are not willing **until the will is strengthened** to comply with God's call.³⁶

Notice that according to Stoddard man's will is not affected by either Adam's sin or the sinner's own sin. All it needs is to be strengthened! This is in direct contradiction to what the Scriptures teach. For example, Romans 9:16: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." And John. 3:5-7 "Jesus answered, Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, You must be born again."

Stoddard replaces the gospel of the free gift of faith by grace through Christ with human responsibility (both the sinners and the ministers). He replaces grace with law and puts the unbearable burden of sin back upon the sinner. This should have driven Brainerd to Christ, but such was not the case. Instead, it cast him back upon himself for salvation. His '*conversion experience*' seems to have had little real effect upon him for the character or tenor of his diary remains very much the same before and after it. It's necessary to examine closely what he says about this experience to get at just what the change was. Before the section quoted below, he spends a considerable amount of time talking about his duties and efforts to save himself. He then continues:

But, after a considerable time spent in such like exercises and distresses, one morning, while I was walking in a solitary place, as usual, I at once saw that all my contrivances and projections to effect

³³ A Guide to Christ by Solomon Stoddard, A.M. Princeton, N. J. Published by William D'Hart; Pages 36-37

³⁴ A guide, Page 40

³⁵ Ibid. 117

³⁶ Ibid. 121

or procure deliverance and salvation for myself were utterly in vain; I was brought entirely to a stand, as finding myself totally lost. I had thought many times before that the difficulties in my way were very great, but now **I saw, in another and very different light, that it was forever impossible for me to do anything towards helping or delivering myself.** I then thought of blaming myself, that I had not done more and been more engaged, while I had opportunity (for it seemed now as if the season of doing was forever over and gone); but I instantly saw, that let me have done what I would, it would no more have tended to my helping myself, than what I had done; that I had made all the pleas I ever could have made to all eternity, and that all my pleas were vain. The tumult that had been before in my mind, was now quieted; and I was something eased of that distress which I felt, while struggling against a sight of myself and of the divine sovereignty. I had the greatest certainty that my state was forever miserable, for all that I could do; and wondered, and was almost astonished, that I had never been sensible of it before, In the time while I remained in this state, **my notions respecting my duties were quite different from what I had ever entertained** in times past. **Before this, the more I did in duty, the more I thought God was obliged to me, or at least the more hard I thought it would be for God to cast me off;** though at the same time I confessed, and thought I saw, that there was no goodness or merit in my duties. But now the more I did in prayer or any other duty, the more I saw I was indebted to God for allowing me to ask for mercy; for I saw it was self-interest had led me to pray, and that **I had never once prayed from any respect to the glory of God.** Now I saw there was no necessary connection between my prayers and the bestowment of divine mercy, that they laid not the least obligation upon God to bestow his grace upon me, and that there was no more virtue or goodness in them, than there would be in my paddling with my hand in the water (which was the comparison I had then in my mind) and **this because they were not performed from any love or regard to God.** I saw that I had been heaping up my devotions before God, fasting, praying, etc., pretending, and indeed really thinking, at some times, **that I was aiming at the glory of God, whereas I never once truly intended it, but only my own happiness.** I saw, that as I had never done anything for God, I had no claim to lay to anything from him, but perdition, on account of my hypocrisy and mockery. **Oh, how different did my duties now appear from what they used to do!** I used to charge them with sin and imperfection; but this was only on account of the wanderings and vain thoughts attending them, and not because I had no regard to God in them; for this I thought I had: but when I saw evidently that I had regard to nothing but self-interest, then they appeared vile mockery of God, self-worship, and a continual course of lies; so that I saw now there was something worse had attended my duties than barely a few wanderings, for the whole was nothing but self-worship, and a horrid abuse of God.

I continued, as I remember, in this state of mind from Friday morning till the Sabbath evening following, July 12, 1739, when I was walking again in the same solitary place where I was brought to see myself lost and helpless (as was before mentioned), and here, in a mournful, melancholy state, was attempting to pray, but found no heart to engage in that or any other duty. My former concern, and exercise, and religious affections were now gone. I thought the Spirit of God had quite left me, but still was not distressed, yet disconsolate, as if there was nothing in heaven or earth could make me happy. And having been thus endeavoring to pray (though being, as I thought, very stupid and senseless) for near half an hour (and by this time the sun was about half an hour high, as I remember), then, as I was walking in a dark thick grove, **unspeakable glory seemed to open to the view and apprehension of my soul:** I do not mean any external brightness, for I saw no such thing, nor do I intend any imagination of a body of light, somewhere away in the third heavens, or anything of that nature, but **it was a new inward apprehension or view that I had of God, such as I never had before, nor any thing which had the least resemblance to it.** I stood still and wondered and admired! I knew that I never had seen before anything comparable to it for excellency and beauty; **it was widely different from all the conceptions that ever I had had of**

God, or things divine. *I had no particular apprehension of any one person in the Trinity, either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost; but it appeared to be divine glory that I then beheld:* and my soul rejoiced with joy unspeakable to see such a God, such a glorious Divine Being; and I was inwardly pleased and satisfied, that he should be God over me for ever and ever. My soul was so captivated and delighted with the excellency, loveliness, greatness, and other perfections of God, that I was even swallowed up in him; at least to that degree, that I had no thought (as I remember) at first about my own salvation, and scarce reflected there was such a creature as myself. *Thus God, I trust, brought me to a hearty disposition to exalt him, and set him on the throne, and principally and ultimately to aim at his honour and glory, as King of the universe.*

I continued in this state of inward joy and peace, yet astonishment, till near dark, without any sensible abatement, and then began to think and examine what I had seen and felt sweetly composed in my mind all the evening following. I felt myself in a new world, and everything about me appeared with a different aspect from what it was wont to do. **At this time, the way of salvation opened to me with such infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency, that I wondered I should ever think of any other way of salvation, was amazed that I had not dropped my own contrivances, and complied with this lovely, blessed, and excellent way before. If I could have been saved by my own duties, or any other way that I had formerly contrived, my whole soul would now have refused. I wondered that all the world did not see and comply with this way of salvation, entirely by the righteousness of Christ.** The sweet relish of what I then felt, continued with me for several days, almost constantly, in a greater or less degree; I could not but sweetly rejoice in God, lying down and rising up. The next Lord's day I felt something of the same kind, though not so powerful as before. **But, not long after, I was again involved in thick darkness and under great distress, yet not of the same kind with my distress under convictions. I was guilty, afraid, and ashamed to come before God; was exceedingly pressed with a sense of guilt: but it was not long before I felt (I trust) true repentance and joy in God.**³⁷

In what I believe to be the two most important statements that Brainerd made at this time are the following: "I had no particular apprehension of any one person in the Trinity, either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Ghost; but **it appeared** to be Divine glory that I then beheld." And at the head of the next paragraph: "**Thus God, I trust, brought me to a hearty disposition to exalt him, and set him on the throne, and principally and ultimately to aim at his honor and glory, as King of the universe.**"³⁸ It is important to take notice of Brainerd's statement that this supposed sight of God's glory was in his mind only. That does not, however, really alter the facts as he states them. Therefore, he specially states that God showed him His glory apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of the obvious scriptures that come to mind are Matthew 28:18 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." John 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." And Acts 4:12 "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Scripture tells us plainly that no man can see God at any time except through the Lord Jesus Christ:

And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, shew me **thy glory**. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD

³⁷ Ibid. pages, 11- 14

³⁸ Life of David, page 13

before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live³⁹.

Take note that Brainerd gives no place at all to the Lord Jesus except to say, “this way of salvation, entirely by the righteousness of Christ” Instead he pridefully boasts of his supposed personal God given authority to place God on his throne. God was never at any time off his throne. Every knee shall bow to him: “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”⁴⁰ Such language as Brainerd uses is an anathema to God. Placing God on the throne is part of this quote: “Thus God, I trust, brought me to a hearty disposition to exalt him, and set him on the throne, and principally and ultimately to aim at his honour and glory, as King of the universe.” This is as self-righteous, self-important, God dishonoring and Christ disowning etc. as possible. He places himself as the sovereign and God as subject to his will and desire.

Brainerd, near the end of his short life states his views of what he calls “the doctrines of grace”. Thus, he wrote in his diary for June 18th, 1746 (or possibly 1747) the following account while he was very ill.

How I was, the first day or two of my illness, with regard to the exercise of reason, I scarcely know; but I believe I was something shattered with the violence of the fever, at times; but the third day of my illness, and constantly afterwards, for four or five weeks together, I enjoyed as much serenity of mind, and clearness of thought, as perhaps I ever did in my life; and **I think my mind never penetrated with so much ease and freedom into divine things as at this time; and I never felt so capable of demonstrating⁴¹ the truth of many important doctrines of the gospel as now. And as I saw’ clearly the truth of those great doctrines, which are justly styled the doctrines of grace; so I saw with no less clearness, that the essence of religion consisted in the soul’s conformity to God, and acting above all selfish views, for his glory, longing to be for him, to live to him, and please and honour him in all things; and this from a clear view of his infinite excellency and worthiness in himself, to be loved, adored, worshipped, and served by all intelligent creatures.** Thus I saw, that when a soul loves God with a supreme love, he therein acts like the blessed God himself, who most justly loves himself in that manner; so when God’s interest and his are become one, and he longs that God should be glorified, and rejoices to think that he is unchangeably possessed of the highest glory and blessedness, herein also he acts in conformity to God; **in like manner**, when the soul is fully resigned to, and rests satisfied and contented with, the divine will, here it is also conformed to God.⁴²

There is in fact nothing at all relating to the “doctrines of grace” in this or in the context. All this is really a form of paganism something like how the supposed converted Roman Catholic people of many parts of South American ‘*worship*’ a God of their own making. They take some parts of what the Catholics taught them and combine that with their pagan past. It’s all an absolute abomination to God.

How then does Brainerd defend such self-important nonsense? He says:

I saw further, that as this divine temper, whereby the soul exalts God, and treads self in the dust, is wrought in the soul by God’s discovering his own glorious perfections in the face of Jesus Christ to it, by the special influences of the Holy Spirit, so he cannot but have regard to it, as his own work; and as it is his image in the soul, he cannot but take delight in it. Then I saw again, that if

³⁹ Exodus 33:17

⁴⁰ Philippians 2:10, 11

⁴¹ RCS: note this important word, instead of understanding he says demonstrating.

⁴² Life of David, page 224

God should slight and reject his own **moral image**, he must needs deny himself; which he cannot do. And thus I saw the stability and infallibility of this religion; and that those who are truly possessed of it, have the most complete and satisfying evidence of their being interested **in all the benefits of Christ's redemption**, having their hearts conformed to him; and that these, and **these only, are qualified for the employments and entertainments of God's kingdom of glory**, as none but these have any relish for the business of heaven, which is to ascribe glory to God, and not to themselves; and that God (though I would speak it with great reverence of his name and perfections) cannot, without denying himself, finally cast such away.⁴³

He gives no scriptural references in this multi-page reasoning; nor is that even possible because such human reasoning is not supported by scripture which instead condemns it. Any goodness in us is the result of Christ's work alone and provides total redemption. We are dead to sin because we are seen by God as having the righteousness of Christ himself. This is part of what the work of grace in salvation accomplished completely. Scripture attributes nothing to man but all to Christ:

Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.⁴⁴

Brainerd's doctrine puts us back under the law for our salvation. God's truth puts us under grace, under the person and work of Christ alone. And again: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."⁴⁵

Amazingly, despite all the evidence given above and much of a similar vein, in his (Edwards) "Reflections and Observations on the Preceding Memoirs"⁴⁶ he goes into some detail in seeking to defend Brainerd's salvation. He embraces and glorifies conversion without Christ! Here is one quotation from Edwards more will follow later in this chapter.

His first discovery of God or Christ, at his conversion, was not any strong, idea of any external glory or brightness, or majesty and beauty of countenance, or pleasant voice; **nor was it any supposed immediate manifestation of God's love to him in particular**; nor any imagination of Christ's smiling face, arms open, or words immediately spoken unto him, as by name revealing Christ's love to him, either words of Scripture, or any other; **but a manifestation of God's glory, and the beauty of his nature, as supremely excellent in itself**, powerfully drawing and sweetly captivating his heart, bringing him to a hearty desire to exalt God, set him on the throne, and give, him supreme honour and glory, as the King and Sovereign of the universe; and also a new sense of the infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency of the way of salvation by Christ, powerfully engaging his whole soul to embrace this way of salvation, and to delight in it. **His first faith did not consist in believing that Christ loved him, and died for him, in particular.** His first comfort was not from any secret suggestion of God's eternal love to him, or that God was reconciled to

⁴³ Ibid pages 224, 225.

⁴⁴ Romans 6:8-14

⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 1:30

⁴⁶ Life of David. starts on page 266

him, or intended great mercy for him, by any such texts as these, “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. Fear not, I am thy God,” &c., or in any such way. On the contrary, when God’s glory was first discovered to him, it was without any thought of salvation as his own. His first experience of the sanctifying and comforting power of God’s Spirit did not begin in some bodily sensation, any pleasant, warm feeling in his breast, that he (as some others) called the feeling the love of Christ in him and being full of the Spirit. **How exceeding far were his experiences at his first conversion from things of such a nature!**

And if we look through the whole series of his experiences, from his conversion to his death, we shall find none of this kind. I have had occasion to read his diary over and over, and very particularly and critically to review every passage in it; and I find no one instance of a strong impression on his imagination, through his whole life; no instance of a strongly impressed idea of any external glory and brightness, of any bodily form or shape, any beautiful, majestic countenance; no imaginary sight of Christ hanging on the cross, with his blood streaming from his wounds, or seated in heaven on a bright throne, with angels and saints bowing before him; or with a countenance smiling on him, or arms open, to embrace him, no sight of heaven, in his imagination, with gates of pearl, and golden streets, and vast multitudes of glorious inhabitants with shining garments; no sight of the book of life opened; with his name written in it; no hearing of the sweet music made by the songs of heavenly hosts; no hearing God or Christ immediately speaking to him; nor any sudden suggestions of words or sentences, either words of Scripture or any other, as then immediately spoken or sent to him; no new objective revelations, no sudden strong suggestions of secret facts. **Nor do I find any one instance in all the records he has left of his own life, from beginning to end, of joy excited from a supposed immediate witness of the Spirit, or inward immediate suggestion that his state was surely good, that God loved him with an everlasting love, that Christ died to him in particular,** and that heaven was his, either with or without a text of Scripture; no instance of comfort by a sudden bearing in upon his mind, as though at that very time directed by God to him in particular, any such kind of texts as these, “Fear not, I am with thee, It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom, You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you., I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine., Before thou wast formed in the belly, I knew thee,” &c. No supposed communion and conversation with God carried on in this way; **no such supposed tasting of the love of Christ. But the way he was satisfied of his own good estate, even to the entire abolishing of fear, was by feeling within himself the lively actings of a holy temper and heavenly disposition, the vigorous exercises of that divine love which cast out fear. This was the way he had full satisfaction soon after his conversion** (see his diary on October 18 and 19, 1740). And we find no other way of satisfaction through his whole life afterwards, and this he abundantly declared to be the way, the only way, that he had complete satisfaction, when he looked death in the face; in its near approaches.⁴⁷

Saving Faith and the related subject of assurance of faith

Brainerd changes the subject and starts discussing what saving faith is and where he derived his personal assurance of faith. This quotation follows immediately after the one above of Brainerd’s diary..

The next thing I had then to do, was to inquire whether this was my religion; and here God was pleased to help me to the most easy remembrance and critical review of what had passed (in course,

⁴⁷ Ibid pages 269 - 270.

of a religious nature) through several of the latter years of my life; and **although I could discover much corruption attending my best duties, many selfish views and carnal ends, much spiritual pride and self-exaltation, and innumerable other evils which compassed me about, I say, although I now discerned the sins of my holy things, as well as other actions, yet God was pleased, as I was reviewing, quickly to put this question out of doubt, by showing me that I had from time to time acted above the utmost influence of mere self-love; that I had longed to please and glorify him, as my highest happiness, &c. And this review was, through grace, attended with a present **feeling** of the same divine temper of mind; I felt now pleased to think of the glory of God, and longed for heaven, as a state wherein I might glorify God perfectly, rather than as a place of happiness for myself; and this feeling of the love of God in my heart, which I trust the Spirit of God excited in me afresh, was sufficient to give me full satisfaction, and make me long, as I had many times before done, to be with Christ. I did not now want any of the sudden suggestions, which many are so pleased with, “That Christ and his benefits are mine; that God loves me,” &c., in order to give me satisfaction about my state; no, my soul now abhorred those delusions of Satan, which are thought to be the immediate witness of the Spirit, while there is nothing but an empty suggestion of a certain fact, without any gracious discovery of the divine glory, or of the Spirit’s work in their own hearts; I saw the awful delusion of this kind of confidences, as well as of the whole of that religion which they usually spring from, or at least are the attendants of, the false religion of the late day (though a day of wondrous grace), the imaginations, and impressions made only on the animal affections, together with the sudden suggestions made to the mind by Satan, transformed into an angel of light, of certain facts not revealed in Scripture; these, and many like things, I fear, have made up the greater part of the religious appearance in many places.**

These things I saw with great clearness, when I was thought to be dying. And God gave me great concern for his church and interest in the world, at this time, not so much because the late remarkable influence upon the minds of people was abated, and almost wholly gone, as because that false religion, those beats of imagination, and wild and selfish commotions of the animal affections, which attended the work of grace, had prevailed so far. This was that which my mind dwelt upon, almost day and night; and this, to me, was the darkest appearance, respecting religion, in the land; for it was this chiefly that had prejudiced the world against inward religion. **And I saw the great misery of all was, that so few saw any manner of difference between those exercises that were spiritual and holy, and those which have self-love only for their beginning, centre, and end.**⁴⁸

A little later on the same page of the book, after speaking of writing letters he writes about his efforts at this time. After this Edwards adds some very important particulars on this subject. What springs to my mind are the words of Jesus Christ when he says: “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”⁴⁹

Besides this, I had many visitants, with whom, when I was able to speak, I always conversed of the things of religion: and was peculiarly disposed and assisted in distinguishing between the true and false religion of the times; there was scarce any subject, that has been matter of debate in the late day, but what I was at one time or other brought to a sort of necessity to discourse upon, and show my opinion in, and that frequently before numbers of people; and especially I discoursed repeatedly **on the nature and necessity of that humiliation, self-emptiness, or full conviction of a person’s being utterly undone in himself, which is necessary in order to a saving faith,**

⁴⁸ Ibid. pages 225 - 226

⁴⁹ Matthew 12:34

and the *extreme difficulty of being brought to this, and the great danger there is of persons taking up with some self-righteous appearances of it.* The danger of this I especially dwelt upon, being persuaded that **multitudes** perish in this hidden way, and because so little is said from most pulpits to discover any danger here, **so that persons being never effectually brought to die in themselves, are never truly united to Christ, and so perish. I also discoursed much on what I take to be the essence of true religion, endeavoring plainly to describe that Godlike temper and disposition of soul, and that holy conversation and behaviour, that may justly claim the honour of having God for its original and patron. And I have reason to hope, God blessed my way of discoursing and distinguishing to some, both ministers and people; so that my time was not wholly lost.**

To me at least there is a glaring inconsistency in what Brainerd said above. First, he says that a “full conviction of a person’s being utterly undone in himself” is “necessary” (in other words essential) to have saving faith. Then he speaks of “the extreme difficulty of being brought to this.” A question must be asked and answered at this point. Where does “the extreme difficulty” come from? It can only come from one of two places: 1. From the person. 2. From God. If we say it’s from the person, then there is work that must be done by her or him towards their being prepared. This means God is not sovereign and Christ’s work is not complete without man’s help. This is in fact a form of self-righteousness. How can this be as Brainerd warns against any “self-righteous appearances” 2. If we turn and say the difficulty lies with God? This again denies God’s sovereignty as nothing is difficult to God. See Jeremiah 32:27 “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?”

The fact that he is talking about self-righteousness apart from Christ becomes clearer when he says near the end of the quote above: “... the essence of true religion, endeavoring plainly to describe that Godlike temper and disposition of soul, and that holy conversation and behavior, that may justly **claim** the honor of having God for its original and patron.”

The fact is that he had an abhorrence of people who claimed to have a personal relationship with Christ as their Savior. Johnathan Edwards, as shown above, shares this belief. We see it again when he expands upon this subject at a different place. Edwards writes:

He was much visited, while in Boston, by many persons of considerable note and figure, and of the best character, and by some of the first rank, who showed him uncommon respect, and appeared highly pleased and entertained with his conversation. And besides his being honoured with the company and respect of ministers of the town, he was visited by several ministers from various parts of the country⁵⁰. And as he took all opportunities to discourse of the peculiar nature and distinguishing characters of true spiritual and vital religion, and **to bear his testimony against the various false appearances of it, consisting in, or arising from, impressions on the imagination, and sudden and supposed immediate suggestions of truths, not contained in the scripture, and that faith which consists primarily in a person’s “believing that Christ died for him in particular” &c.;** so what he said was for the most part heard with uncommon attention and regard, and his discourses and reasonings appeared manifestly to have great weight and influence with many that he conversed with, both ministers and others.⁵¹

Brainerd on the Atonement and related words the Bible uses.

⁵⁰ Edwards it seems was pleased to promote selfish pride rather than to heed to the word of God: Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Philippians 2:3

⁵¹ The life of David. pages 226 - 228

A word search of the book shows four times that the word *redemption* is referred to. Only one is of any significance. That can be found in the quotation above where he seeks to defend his patently false doctrine of salvation on June 6th, 1746. This as was shown above shows the false view of self-righteous salvation. In it the sinner must do works to merit any benefit from Christ death.

There are a total of 11 references to the *cross*. Five of these are in the preface. In one Bonar quotes from the diary. The entry is from March 10th, 1744. There are only two by Brainerd which includes the one Bonar referred to. The other is in the quotation below on the word *atonement*. The other by Brainerd expresses his total self-introspection without any glory being given to God though Christ's finished redemption on the cross. Here is the March 10th 1744 diary entry in its entirety.

Sat, March 10. In the morning **felt** exceeding dead to the world and all its enjoyments; **I thought I was ready and willing** to give up life and all its comforts, as soon as called to it; and yet then had as much comfort of life as almost ever I had. Life itself now appeared but an empty bubble; the riches, honours, and common enjoyments of life appeared extremely tasteless. **I longed to be perpetually and entirely crucified to all things here below, by the cross of Christ.** My soul was sweetly resigned to God's disposal of me in every regard, and I saw there had nothing happened to me but what was best for me. I confided in God, that he would "never leave me," though I should "walk through the valley of the shadow of death." It was then "my meat and drink to be holy, to live to the Lord, and die to the Lord." And **I thought** that I then enjoyed such a heaven as far exceeded the most sublime conceptions of an unregenerate soul, and even unspeakably beyond what I myself could conceive of at another time. I did not wonder that Peter said, "Lord, it is good to be here," when thus refreshed with divine glories. My soul was full of love and tenderness in **the duty** of intercession; especially felt a sweet affection to some precious godly ministers of my acquaintance. Prayed earnestly for dear Christians, and for those I have reason to fear are my enemies, and could not have spoken a word of bitterness, or entertained a bitter thought, against the vilest man living. Had a sense of my own great unworthiness. My soul seemed to breathe forth love and praise to God afresh, **when I thought he would let his children love and receive me as one of their brethren and fellow-citizens;** and when I thought of their treating me in that manner, I longed to lie at their feet, and could think of no way to express the sincerity and simplicity of my love and esteem of them, as being much better than myself. Towards night was very sorrowful, seemed to myself the worst creature living, and could not pray, nor meditate, nor think of holding up my face before the world. Was a little relieved in prayer, in the evening; but longed to get on my knees and ask forgiveness of everybody that ever had seen anything amiss in my past conduct, especially in my **religious zeal.** Was afterwards much perplexed, so that I could not sleep quietly.⁵²

The final four are from Edwards' comments about Brainerd. Some of his comments will be examined a little later in this chapter.

There is one reference of importance to the word *reconciled* or *reconciliation*. This is from a letter he wrote on June 30th, 1747, only a short while before he died (October 9th, 1747). This is letter number 8 in the letters Edwards provides in his book. It is so pertinent to the present subject that I quote it here fully as Edwards gives it to us.

8. To his brother Israel, at College; written in the time of his extreme illness in Boston, a few months before his death.

Boston, June 30, 1747.

⁵² Ibid. 100, 101

Mt Dear Brother, It is from the side of eternity I now address you. I am heartily sorry that I have so little strength to write when I long so much to communicate to you. But let me tell you, my brother, eternity is another thing than we ordinarily take it to be in a healthful state. O how vast and boundless! O how fixed and unalterable! O of what infinite importance is it, that we be prepared for eternity! I have been just a-dying now for more than a week, and all around me have thought me so; but in this time **I have had clear views of eternity**, have seen the blessedness of the godly, in some measure, and have longed to share their happy state; as well as been comfortably satisfied, that through grace I shall do so: but O what anguish is raised in my mind to think of an eternity for those who are Christless, for those who are mistaken, and who bring their false hopes to the grave with them! The sight was so dreadful, I could by no means bear it; my thoughts recoiled, and I said (but under a more affecting sense than ever before), “Who can dwell with everlasting burnings! O methought that I could now see my friends, that I might warn them to see to it that they lay their foundation for eternity sure! And you, my dear brother*⁵³ I have been particularly concerned for and have wondered I so much neglected conversing with you about your spiritual state at our last meeting. O my brother, **let me then beseech you now to examine, whether you are indeed a new creature whether you have ever acted above self? whether the glory of God has ever been the sweetest, highest concern with you? whether you have ever been reconciled to all the perfections of God? in a word, whether God has been your portion, and a holy conformity to him your chief delight?** If you cannot answer positively, consider seriously the frequent breathings of your soul; but do not, however, put yourself off with a slight answer. **If you have reason to think you are graceless, O give yourself and the throne of grace no rest till God arise and save. But if the case should be otherwise, bless God for his grace, and press after holiness.**

My soul longs that you should be fitted for, and in due time go into, the work of the ministry. I cannot bear to think of your going into any other business in life. Do not be discouraged, because you see your elder brothers in, the ministry die early, one after another; I declare, now I am dying, I would not have spent my life otherwise for the whole world. But I must leave this with God.

If this line should come to your hands soon after the date, I should be almost desirous you should set out on a journey to me; it may be, you may see me alive, which I should much rejoice, in. But if you cannot come, I must commit you to the grace of God where you are. May he be your guide and counselor, your sanctifier and eternal portion!

O my dear brother, flee fleshly lusts, and the enchanting amusement, as well as corrupt doctrines of the present day, and strive to live to God. Take this as the last line from your affectionate, dying brother,

David Brainerd.⁵⁴

The above letter conforms with many other examples of what Brainerd believed regarding the atonement and the essence of the assurance of salvation. His constant reliance was not upon The Lord Jesus Christ and his work of redemption. Nor was it upon the witness of the Holy Spirit within himself. He gives lip service to this, but his faith is grounded upon human efforts alone. As quoted above for his brother’s assurance of faith he tells him: “... let me then beseech you now to examine, whether you are indeed a new creature whether you have ever acted above self? whether the glory of God has ever been the sweetest, highest concern with you? whether you have

⁵³ * Edwards footnote “Mr. Brainerd afterwards had great satisfaction concerning the state his brother’s soul, by much opportunity of conversation with him before his death.”

⁵⁴ The Life of David, pages 259 - 261

ever been reconciled to all the perfections of God? in a word, whether God has been your portion, and a holy conformity to him your chief delight?"

In letter number 10, as Edwards gives them, Brainerd was even closer to death. In this letter he is even more specific as regards the doctrines under review. Again because of its importance I will quote most of the letter.

10. To his brother John, at Bethel, the town of Christian Indians in New Jersey; written likewise at Boston, when he was there on the brink of the grave, in the summer before his death.

Dear Brother, I am now just on the verge of eternity, expecting very speedily to appear in the unseen world. I feel myself no more an inhabitant of earth, and sometimes earnestly long to "depart and be with Christ." **I bless God, he has for some years given me an abiding conviction, that it is impossible for any rational creature to enjoy true happiness without being entirely "devoted to him."** Under the influence of this conviction I have **in some measure** acted. O that I had done more so! I saw both the excellency and necessity of holiness in life; but never in such a manner as now, when I am just brought to the side of the grave. O my brother, pursue after holiness; press towards this blessed mark; and let your thirsty soul continually say, 'I shall never be satisfied till I awake in thy likeness.' Although there has been a great deal of selfishness in my views, of which I am ashamed, and for which my soul is humbled at every view, yet, blessed be God, I find I have really had, for the most part, such a concern for his glory, and the advancement of his kingdom in the world, that it is a satisfaction to me to reflect upon these years.

And now, my dear brother, as **I must press you to pursue after personal holiness, to be as much in fasting and prayer as your health will allow, and to live above the rate of common Christians;** so I must entreat you solemnly to attend to your public work. Labour to distinguish between true and false religion, and to that end watch the motions of God's Spirit upon your own heart; look to him for help, and impartially compare your experiences with his Word, **Read Mr. Edwards on the affections**, where the essence and soul of religion is clearly distinguished from false affections. Value religious joys according to the subject-matter of them. There are many that rejoice in their supposed **justification**; but what do these joys argue, but only that they love themselves. Whereas, in true spiritual joys, the soul rejoices in God for what he is in himself; blesses God for his holiness, sovereignty, power, faithfulness, and all his perfections; adores God that he is what he is, that he is unchangeably possessed of infinite glory and happiness. Now, when men rejoice in the "perfections of God." and in the "infinite excellency of the way of salvation by Christ," and in the holy commands of God, which are a transcript of his holy nature, these joys are divine and spiritual. Our joys will stand by us at the hour of death, if we can be then **satisfied that we have thus acted above self, and in a disinterested manner** (if I may so express it) rejoiced in the glory of the blessed God. I fear you are not sufficiently aware how much false religion there is in the world; many serious Christians and valuable ministers are too easily imposed upon by this false blaze. I like-wise fear you are not sensible of the "dreadful effects and consequences" of this false religion. Let me tell you it is the "devil transformed into an angel of light;" it is a brat of hell that always springs up with every revival of religion, and stabs and murders the cause of God, while it passes current with multitudes of well-meaning people for the height of religion. Set yourself, my brother, to crush all appearances of this nature among the Indians, and never encourage any degrees of heat without light. **Charge my people in the name of their dying minister, yea, in the name of Him who was dead and is alive, to live and walk as becomes the gospel.** Tell them how great the expectations of God and his people are from them, and how awfully they will wound God's cause if they fall into vice, as well as fatally prejudice other poor Indians. Always insist that their experiences are rotten, that their joys are delusive, although they may have been rapt up into the third heavens in their own conceit by them, unless the main tenor

of their lives be spiritual, watchful, and holy. In pressing these things, “thou shalt both save thyself, and those that hear thee.”⁵⁵

His mention of *justification* is one of only two references to this word! The other is used by Johnathan Edwards. His words are meant to vindicate Brainerd. The fact is that they fully expose both Edwad’s and Brainerd’s rejection of God’s way of salvation though the person and work of Christ. Instead of helping Brainerd, they condemn him. Edwards writes in part:

In him was to be seen the right way of being lively in religion; his liveliness in religion did not consist merely or mainly in his being lively with the tongue., but indeed; **not in being forward in profession and outward show, and abundant in declaring his own experiences; but chiefly in being active and abundant in the labours and duties of religion;** “not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, and serving his generation, according to the will of God,”

By these things, many high pretenders to religion, and professors of extraordinary spiritual experience, may be sensible that Mr. Brainerd did greatly condemn their kind of religion; and that not only, in word, but by example, both living and dying; as the whole series of his Christian experience and practice, from his conversion to his death, appears a constant condemnation of it.

It cannot be objected, that the reason why he so much disliked the religion of these pretenders, and why his own so much differed from it, was, that his experiences were not clear. There is no room to say they were otherwise, in any respect in which clearness of experience has been wont to be insisted on; whether it be the clearness of their nature or of their order, and the method his soul was at first brought to rest and comfort in his conversion. **I am far from thinking (and so was he) that clearness of the order of experiences is, in any measure, of equal importance with the clearness of their nature;** I have sufficiently declared, in my discourse on religious affections (Which he expressly approved of and recommended), that I do not suppose a sensible distinctness of the steps of the Spirit’s operation and method of successive convictions and illuminations, is a necessary requisite to persons being received in full charity as true saints; provided the nature of the things they profess be right, and their practice agreeable. **Nevertheless,** it is observable, which cuts off all objection from such as would be most unreasonably disposed to object and cavil in the present case; so it was that Mr. Brainerd’s experiences were not only clear in the latter respect, but remarkably so in the former; so that there is not perhaps one instance in five hundred true converts, that on this account can be paralleled with him.

It cannot be pretended, that the reason why he so much abhorred and condemned the notions and experiences of those whose first faith consists in believing that Christ is theirs, and that Christ died for them, without any previous experience of union of heart to him, for his excellency as he is in himself, and not for his supposed love to them, and who judge of their interest in Christ, their justification, and God’s love to them, not by their sanctification, and the exercises and fruits of grace, but by a supposed immediate witness of the Spirit, by inward suggestion; I say, it cannot be pretend, that the reason why he so much detested and condemned such opinions and experiences was, that he was of a too legal spirit; either that he never was dead to the law, never experienced a thorough work of conviction was never fully brought off from his own righteousness, and weaned from the old covenant, by a thorough legal humiliation; or that afterwards, he had no great degree of evangelical humiliation, not living in a deep sense of his own emptiness, wretchedness, poverty, and absolute dependence on the mere grace of God through Christ. For his convictions of sin, preceding his first consolations in Christ, were exceeding deep

⁵⁵ Ibid, pages 263, 264

and thorough; his trouble and exercise of mind, by a sense of sin and misery, very great, and long continued; and the light let into his mind at his conversion, and **in progressive sanctification**, appears to have had its genuine humbling influence upon him, to have kept him low in his own eyes, not confiding in himself, but in Christ, “living by the faith of the Son of God, and looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus to eternal life.”⁵⁶

The word *elect* is found only twice. Firstly, in a diary entry for February 4th, 1743: “Enjoyed some degree of freedom and spiritual refreshment, was enabled to pray with some fervency, and longing desires of Zion’s prosperity, and my faith and hope seem to take hold of God, for the performance of what I was enabled to plead for. Sanctification **in myself**, and the ingathering of God’s elect, was all my desire; and the hope of its accomplishment, all my joy.” Here we can see again his seeking personal sanctification on earth rather than the complete sanctification which is found only in Christ’s substitutionary death for his elect alone. The second example is found in the quotation given below of the word atonement.

A word search of the book shows that the word *atonement* is only spoken of once. This is from late in his life on October 5th, 1746. In his diary Brainerd states:

Lord’s day, Oct. 5. Was still very weak, and in the morning considerably afraid I should not be able to go through the work of the day, having much to do, both in private and public. Discoursed before the administration of the sacrament, from John 1:29, “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” Where I considered, I. In what respects Christ is called the Lamb of God; and observed that he is so called, (1.) From the purity and innocence of his nature; (2.) From his meekness and patience under sufferings; (3.) From his being **that atonement, which was pointed out in the sacrifice of lambs, and in particular by the paschal lamb**. II. Considered how and in what sense he “takes away the sin of the world;” and observed that the means and manner in and by which he takes away the sins of men, was his “giving himself for them,” doing and suffering in their room and stead, &c. And he is said to take away the sin of the world, not because all the world shall actually be redeemed from sin by him, but because, (1.) **He has done and suffered sufficient to answer for the sins of the world, and so to redeem all mankind**; (2.) He actually does take away the sins of the elect world. And, III. Considered **how we are to behold him, in order to have our sins taken away**: (1.) Not with our bodily eyes. Nor, (2.) By imagining him on the cross, &c. **But by a spiritual view of *his glory and goodness, engaging the soul to rely on him*, &c.** The divine presence attended this discourse, and the assembly was considerably melted with divine truths.⁵⁷

The devil constantly presents half-truths which are false doctrines described in biblical terms. With this in mind there are two considerations I have in view as this chapter ends with remarks on the above quotation. One is that Brainerd’s whole life is a testimony to a works-based faith without Christ at its center. This has been established in the numerous quotations given in this chapter. It’s worthwhile quoting Bonar again where he summarizes this fact: “We can at times suspect the existence of something unhealthy, and even feverish, in his spiritual system. We can observe a less frequent reference to Christ, both personally and officially, than we think scriptural.”⁵⁸ Bonar’s words are an understatement. There is simply nothing in his life that gives all the glory to God through Christ’s work of redemption. In this redemption all three members of the trinity combined to save those God has chosen and those alone. As the bible clearly reveals this redemption was established in eternity. Paul in Ephesians chapters 1 and 2 goes into detail, praising and glorifying God for this redemption in Christ.

⁵⁶ Ibid, pages 276, 277

⁵⁷ Ibid, pages 208, 209

⁵⁸ Ibid. page xxi

The second purpose is to examine Brainerd words in the above quote. This must be divided into two parts. 1. What he says. 2. What he does not say.

What he says: He was speaking to his Indians; this is an important point. Biblically they can only be classified as either gentiles or heathen. As John Calvin correctly comments John the Baptist was speaking to the Jewish nation when he gave all the glory to the Lord Jesus Christ. They alone would have recognized the significance of his statement referring to Christ as the Lamb of God. In this regard Calvin correctly comments:

By the word Lamb he alludes to the ancient sacrifices of the Law. He had to do with Jews who, having been accustomed to sacrifices, could not be instructed about atonement for sins in any other way than by holding out to them a sacrifice. As there were various kinds of them, he makes one, by a figure of speech, to stand for the whole; and it is probable that John alluded to the paschal lamb. It must be observed, in general, that John employed this mode of expression, which was better adapted to instruct the Jews, and possessed greater force; as in our own day, in consequence of baptism being generally practiced, we understand better what is meant by obtaining forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ, when we are told that we are washed and cleansed by it from our pollutions. At the same time, as the Jews commonly held superstitious notions about sacrifices, he corrects this fault in passing, by reminding them of the object to which all the sacrifices were directed. It was a very wicked abuse of the institution of sacrifice, that they had their confidence fixed on the outward signs; and therefore John, holding out Christ, testifies that he is the Lamb of God; by which he means that all the sacrifices, which the Jews were accustomed to offer under the Law, had no power whatever to atone for sins, but that they were only figures, the truth of which was manifested in Christ himself⁵⁹.

1. There are only seven instances of the word “lamb” in the book. Three of them are in this diary entry. No other mention is made of the “paschal lamb” except here. There is therefore no evidence of Brainerd teaching his Indians about these Old Testament Jewish sacrifices. They pointed to Christ and when Christ came as the God-man mediator John the Baptist gave all the glory to him alone. Brainerd, on the other hand, refers directly to these sacrifices. In describing the atonement, he goes so far as to put it only in the Old Testament terms under the Law. He says: “From his being that atonement, which was pointed out in the sacrifice of lambs, and in particular by the paschal lamb.” This would be incomprehensible to the Indians unless they had been thoroughly taught about these Jewish rights. This, of course was not a part of Christ’s great commission. That centered upon Christ himself.

2. Brainerd stresses the Arminian, and totally false doctrinal view of the scope of Christ’s atonement. He says as the first and most important point: “He has done and suffered sufficient to answer for the sins of the world, and so to redeem all mankind.” If true, this could mean only one thing: That by and large Christ’s atonement was a failure. Something else was needed apart from what Christ could do. In his second point he gives a contradictory doctrine saying of Christ: “He actually does take away the sins of the elect world.” W.J. Seaton, a Baptist minister shows the impossibility of both being true saying:

This atonement, as we all acknowledge, was accomplished through Christ’s voluntary submission to the death on the Cross where He suffered under the justice of this just God, and procured the salvation that he as Savior had ordained. On the cross then - and, no doubt, we all accept this - Christ bore punishment, and procured salvation.

The question now arises: whose punishment did He bear, and whose salvation did He procure? There are three avenues along which we can travel with regard to this:

1. Christ died to save all men without distinction.

⁵⁹ Calvin, J., & Pringle, W. (2010). Commentary on the Gospel according to John (Vol. 1, pp. 63–64). Logos Bible Software.

2. Christ died to save no one in particular.
3. Christ died to save a certain number.

The first view is that held by "Universalists," namely Christ died to save all men, and so they logically assume, all men will be saved.... The second view is the 'Arminian' one, that Christ procured a potential salvation for all men. Christ died on the Cross, this view says, but although he paid the debt of our sin, his work on the Cross does not become effectual until man 'decides for' Christ and is thereby saved. The third view of the Atonement is the 'Calvinistic' one, and it says that Christ died positively and effectually to save a certain number of hell-deserving sinners on whom the Father had already set His free electing love. The Son pays the debt for these elect ones, makes satisfaction for them to the Father's justice, and imputes His own righteousness to them so that they are complete in Him.

Christ's death, then, could only have been for one of these three reasons: to save all; to save no one in particular; to save a particular number. The third view is that which is held by the Calvinist and is generally called limited atonement, or particular redemption. Christ died to save a particular number of sinners; that is, those 'chosen in him before the foundation of the world' [Eph 1.4]; those whom the Father had 'given him out of the world'[John 17.9]; those for whom He Himself said He shed His blood: 'This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins'[Matt 26.28].⁶⁰

Such articulate reasoning has been and is now widely rejected by many so called Bible believing Pastors and teachers. Like Brainerd they like to appear righteous believers in what is termed '*Calvinism*' but at heart they despise God and want to elevate man at God's expense. The Word of God, which must be our ultimate guide, is crystal clear on this and all other matters that pertain to our salvation and our every need. The apostle Paul put it so elegantly when he said: "But my God shall supply all your need **according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus**. Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen."⁶¹ Matthew tells us that he came to save his people from their sins: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he **shall save his people from their sins**."⁶² The Bible teaches '*particular redemption*' and that only. Doctrines like those found in Edward's publication of Brainerd's diary are all part of the watered-down gospel so prevalent today. This is no gospel at all but a sheer delusion.

3. In the third and final part of his sermon he considers: "... how we are to behold him, in order to have our sins taken away." He immediately rejects all other means except the **one** he lauds. In his mind a person is saved: "by a spiritual view of his glory and goodness, engaging the soul to rely on him, &c". There are a multitude of religions in the world that would simply interpret the word "him" to be something or someone other than Christ Jesus. This is in fact what their false faith embraces. Of course, Brainerd means the "him" to be the Lord Jesus Christ. His words however strip away all that makes the Lord Jesus to be whom he is. He speaks of a salvation without biblical regeneration, accomplished by what the man or woman themselves can do. To refresh the readers memory, he told his brother how to examine himself to see if he was truly saved:

O my brother, let me then beseech you now to examine, whether you are indeed a new creature whether you have ever acted above self? whether the glory of God has ever been the sweetest, highest concern with you? whether you have ever been reconciled to all the perfections of God? in a word, whether God has been your portion, and a holy conformity to him your chief delight? If you cannot

⁶⁰W.J. Seaton, The Five Points of Calvinism (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1970), 11-12.

⁶¹ Philippians 4:19, 20

⁶² Matthew 1:29

answer positively, consider seriously the frequent breathings of your soul; but do not, however, put yourself off with a slight answer. If you have reason to think you are graceless, O give yourself and the throne of grace no rest till God arise and save. But if the case should be otherwise, bless God for his grace, and press after holiness.⁶³

What he does NOT say: There is a complete lack of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, of salvation through faith in Christ, which faith is totally a gift of God to his elect and not of any human works. One of the many commentaries I reviewed on John 1:29 expresses what that verse means biblically better than I can. To illustrate this fact, I give the following comments on that aspect of the verse from a recent commentary. Please note the footnotes the author gives in his commentary.

The narrative introduction is in the present tense. As soon as John “sees” Jesus approaching, he “says,” “Look [ide],⁴³ the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.” But to whom is he presenting Jesus? Not to the now absent delegation of priests and Levites, and not yet to his disciples (see vv. 35–37). Rather, in principle at least, John is presenting Jesus “to Israel” (v. 31). The “hidden Messiah” is no longer hidden. Yet, for the moment at least, we the readers are John’s only audience and therefore in a sense “Israel’s” representative. But why “the Lamb of God”? “Lamb” is bound to evoke the image of sacrifice,⁴⁴ and yet the expression “who takes away the sin of the world” resists any notion of “the Lamb of God” as a passive victim. Jesus, in speaking of his death on the cross, will later declare, “I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down of my own accord” (10:17–18). Similarly, “the Lamb of God” here is victor, not victim. He who “takes away” sin is not himself “taken away” by anyone or anything. According to 1 John 3:5, “You know that he was revealed so that he might take away sins, and in him there is no sin.” Three verses later the author explains, “For this the Son of God was revealed, that he might destroy the works of the devil” (3:8b).⁴⁵ The form of the expression “the Lamb of God,” in fact, parallels “the Son of God,” as well as other titles such as “the Chosen One of God” (a variant for “Son of God” in v. 34; see above, n. 1), “the Holy One of God” (6:69), “the gift of God” (4:10), “the bread of God” (6:33), and “the word of God” (10:35). The definite article (ho amnos, “the Lamb”) suggests a title as well known as any of those, or as “the Christ” or “the Prophet” (v. 25), but no such title is attested in the Hebrew Bible or early Judaism.⁴⁶ In the book of Revelation we hear of a well-known messianic figure, “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” (5:5), who appears on the scene as “a lamb” (arnion, without the definite article, 5:6), and is then consistently identified throughout the book as “the Lamb” (with the article).⁴⁷ Similarly, the Gospel of John seems to presuppose an indefinite “lamb” used as a metaphor (as in Isa 53:7),⁴⁸ which it transforms into a definite title, “the Lamb of God.”⁴⁹ While the book of Revelation has no exact equivalent to the phrase as a whole, it does support the notion that “the Lamb of God” in John’s Gospel is an active and not a passive figure. “The Lamb of God” on John’s lips is likely a formulation modeled after “the Son of God,” which makes its first appearance in the Gospel (also on John’s lips) five verses later. In effect, “the Son of God” (v. 34) seems to function as an explanation of what “the Lamb of God” means.⁵⁰ If John had said, “Look, the Son of God, who takes away the sin of the world,” the meaning would have been almost the same.^{64, 65}

⁶³ The Life David of, page 63

⁶⁴ Michaels, J. R. (2010). *The Gospel of John* (pp. 108–109). William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

⁶⁵ His footnotes are important, so I am giving them in full:

⁴³ The Gospel of John prefers ἴδε (15 occurrences) to ἰδοῦ (4 occurrences), sometimes giving it a certain performative quality. This is the case in 1:47 where ἴδε defines Nathanael, unexpectedly, as a “true Israelite,” in 19:14 where Pilate uses it—even though ironically—to make Jesus a king, and in 19:27 where it seems to establish a relationship that did not exist before.

Final thoughts

I said earlier early in this chapter that: “I believe that Edwards efforts and not the diary itself led to much of Brainerd’s fame.” My reason for saying this is the fact that Edwards includes a lengthy addition to the actual diary and letters. This is titled “REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRECEDING MEMOIRS”. Parts of this section have already been noted above. In the copy of his book that I have been quoting from this starts on page 266 and continues to page 302. Edwards assertions⁶⁶ are preposterous in the extreme. They are simply his

44 In some commentators this is linked to the notion of the Passover lamb, on the basis that in John’s Gospel Jesus dies on the very day and hour when the paschal lamb was slaughtered (19:14), and that none of his bones were broken (19:33, 36; compare Exod 12:10). But because the Passover lamb was not a sacrifice for sin, the reference is more commonly thought to be to the Jewish sacrificial system generally.

45 Schnackenburg finds “a sure starting-point in 1 Jn 3:5, a verse which echoes this text and provides a sort of commentary on it” (1.298).

1 Some ancient manuscripts and versions (κ, afterward corrected, plus the old Latin b and e and the old Syriac versions) read “the Chosen One of God” (ὁ ἐκλεκτός τοῦ θεοῦ) instead of “the Son of God” (ὁ υἱός τοῦ θεοῦ). Other old Latin witnesses read electus filius, “the Chosen Son,” a reading reflected also in the Sahidic Coptic. The overwhelming manuscript evidence, however, favors “the Son of God.”

46 There is general agreement that the statement in the Testament of Joseph 19.11 that from the seed of Levi and Judah will come “the Lamb of God, who will take away the sin of the world, and will save all the nations, as well as Israel” (OTP, 1.824) is a Christian formulation based on this very verse in the Gospel of John.

47 It is intriguing to notice that the Lamb in Revelation is first introduced “standing” (ἑστηκός) among or “in the midst [ἐν μέσῳ] of the throne of God and the four living creatures and in the midst [ἐν μέσῳ] of the elders,” just as John anticipated his presentation of Jesus as “Lamb of God” with the comment that “among you stands [μέσος ὑμῶν ἕστηκεν] One whom you do not know” (v. 26). Yet it is difficult to make much of the similarity because in the Revelation “standing in the midst” signals disclosure (compare Jn 20:19, 26), while here (perhaps ironically) it accents nondisclosure. When John goes on to reveal Jesus as the Lamb in the Gospel, it is not as a standing figure but as one “coming to him” (v. 29), or “walking” (v. 36). The parallels, therefore, are probably coincidental.

48 The “servant of the LORD” described in Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is compared to a sheep or a lamb (ὡς πρόβατον ... ὡς ἄμνος, 53:7, LXX) in his silence and his willingness to become a sacrifice (this text is quoted and applied to Jesus in Acts 8:32–35; see also 1 Pet 1:19, ὡς ἄμνοῦ ... Χριστοῦ).

49 Compare Dodd, *Interpretation*, 230–38, followed by Beasley-Murray, 24–25. Brown (1.58–63) accepts this interpretation as the view of John the Baptist, but not as the interpretation intended by the Gospel writer.

50 This may be related to Genesis 22, where Abraham told Isaac, “God himself will provide the lamb [πρόβατον, LXX] for the burnt offering” (22:8). In early Christian interpretations the “lamb” that God provides turns out to be his own Son. For example, Melito of Sardis: “On behalf of the just Isaac a lamb appeared for the sacrifice, that Isaac might be loosed from his bonds. Being sacrificed it redeemed Isaac; so also the Lord being sacrificed saved us.... For the Lord was the lamb as the ram which Abraham saw caught in the bush” (Eclogues 5–6, in R. M. Grant, *Second-Century Christianity: A Collection of Fragments* [London: SPCK, 1957], 72). In the New Testament, see Romans 8:32 (“For God did not spare his own Son”) in relation to Genesis 22:12 and 16 (compare Jn 3:16; also 8:56, “Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day, and he saw it and was glad”). For Jewish traditions about the “binding of Isaac” (“Aqedath Isaac”), see L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, 1.279–86; 5.249–51, and for a full discussion, J. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993). Levenson comments that “the dynamics underlying this ritual-mythical pattern come full circle in this New Testament material: the son takes the place of the sheep who took the place of the son” (208).

⁶⁶ What I mean by the word “assertions” is “a confident and forceful statement of fact or belief.” Or again as the Oxford Languages reference also says: “the action of stating something or exercising authority confidently and forcefully.”

personal option, based on his reading of the diary and letters. They are not based on Scripture or clearly defined doctrines as contained in the Scriptures. The closest comparison I can think of is how the Roman Catholics justify their belief in Mary the mother of Jesus or any of the innumerable “*saints*” the worship in place of God.

Here is a sample of what Edwards wants the ‘*Christian*’ world to believe.

It is further observable, that his religion all along operated in such a manner as tended to confirm his mind in the doctrines of God’s absolute sovereignty, man’s universal and entire dependence on God’s power and grace, &c. The more his religion prevailed in his heart, and the fuller he was of divine love, and of clear and delightful views of spiritual things, and the more his heart was engaged in God’s service the more sensible he was of the certainty and the excellency and importance of these truths, and the more he was affected with them, and rejoiced in them. And he declares particularly, that when he lay for a long while on the verge of the eternal world, often expecting to be in that world in a few minutes, yet at the same time enjoying great serenity of mind and clearness of thought, and being most apparently in a peculiar manner at a distance from an enthusiastical frame, he at that time saw clearly the truth of those great doctrines of the gospel, which are justly styled the doctrines of grace, and never felt himself so capable of demonstrating the truth of them.

So that it is very evident Mr. Brainerd’s religion was wholly correspondent to what is called the Calvinistical scheme, and was the effect of those doctrines applied to his heart; and certainly it cannot be denied that the effect was good, unless we turn Atheists or Deists. I would ask, whether there be any such thing, in reality, as Christian devotion? If there be, what is it? what is its nature? and what its just measure? Should it not be in a great degree? We read abundantly in Scripture of “loving God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind, and with all the strength, of delighting in God, of rejoicing in the Lord, rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory, the soul’s magnifying the Lord, thirsting for God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, the soul’s breaking for the longing it hath to God’s judgments, praying to God with groanings that cannot be uttered, mourning for sin with a broken heart and contrite spirit,” &c. How full is the book of Psalms, and other parts of Scripture, of such things as these! Now wherein do these, things, as expressed by and appearing in Mr. Brainerd, either the things themselves or their effects and fruits, differ from the Scripture representations? **These things he was brought to by that strange and wonderful transformation of the man, which he called his conversion.** And does not this well agree with what is so often said in Old Testament and New, concerning the “giving of a new heart, creating a right spirit, a being renewed in the spirit of the mind, a being sanctified throughout, becoming a new creature?” &c. Now where is there to be found an Arminian conversion or repentance consisting in so great and admirable a change? Can the Arminians produce an instance within this age, and so plainly within our reach and view, of such a reformation, such a transformation of a man, to Scriptural devotion, heavenly mindedness, and true Christian morality, in one that before lived without these things, on the foot of their principles, and through the influence of their doctrines?⁶⁷

Obviously, my observations are dramatically opposite to Edwards. Unlike Edwards I have as much as possible used the Holy Scriptures as my ruler to measure Brainerd. My personal options are of no real value in and of themselves as the very facts of Brainerd’s life and work speak against him. Based on what they reveal it’s not possible for Brainerd to have been saved. Edwards boldly sates as quoted above: “So that it is very evident Mr. Brainerd’s religion was wholly correspondent to what is called the Calvinistical scheme, and was the effect of those doctrines applied to his heart; and certainly, it cannot be denied that the effect was good, unless we turn

⁶⁷ Life of David, pages 290, 291

Atheists or Deists.” My life was changed forever by God’s regenerating and saving me though the work of Christ. Over the past 53 years I have been blessed to experience what are called the doctrines of Sovereign Grace. Edwards and I will stand on the judgement day, my trust is in Christ and not in any options of Edwards: May God judge between us. Christ is my all:

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.⁶⁸

Edwards options than were one of the foundations upon which the early Baptists based they mission upon. They obviously sided with Brainerd himself on this matter as well.

⁶⁸ 1 Corinthians 1:27 - 30

Chapter two
Introductory Remarks about John Thomas.



John Thomas by Medley

William Carey was profoundly influenced by and dependent upon Mr. John Thomas in the early years of the Baptist Mission. The mission both at home and abroad was also stamped by Thomas's early efforts from many years after his death. These are simple facts demonstrated in detail from many different sources. These include but are not limited to Carey's own writings, details from Thomas's first and primary biographer, C. B. Lewis⁶⁹, gleaming's from Carey's many biographers, missionary accounts from many sources and from the woefully inadequate short biography of Thomas by Authur Chute.⁷⁰ Referencing many of these sources I will show in detail how this all worked out in practice.

Carey started out as his junior missionary dependent upon Thomas for his financial needs. Another undisputable fact is the most unsuitable character of Thomas himself: sending him out not only as a missionary but as the senior missionary was unscriptural and disastrous. Carey himself had set the standard to which missionaries were to be held to in his enquiry. He stated that: "The missionaries must be men of great piety, prudence, courage, and forbearance; of undoubted orthodoxy in their sentiments, and must enter with all their hearts into the spirit of their mission;"⁷¹. The fact is that many biographers of Carey do not give Thomas the historical relevance needed to understand the mission as a whole. At best Chute's biased views are put forth as facts. An exception is Samuel Pierce Carey and his biography "William Carey". He devotes over 10 pages to Thomas and uses C.B. Lewis as his source. S. P. Carey introduces Thomas in this enhanced way: "Who was this *John Thomas*, who just at this time swam into Carey's and the Society's ken? Thanks to the data in C. B. Lewis's invaluable *Life* of him, we may make his true acquaintance. He had been a great human, a great Christian, a great missionary, a great unfortunate, and a great blunderer."⁷² Unfortunately, S. P. Carey, in this account, gives too much in the way of praise almost as though he wanted to take back the negative truths he had just stated. For example, speaking about his alienating his friends he says: "Before he returned to England, they had mostly forgiven him and were helping him again, unable to deny his passion for India's redemption, his devotion to his Lord."⁷³

Some mention him in a sentence or two if at all. Other biographers of Carey give slightly more information. An example is this type is that given by James Culross:

At the time when the Society was formed at Kettering, John Thomas, a ship-surgeon, who had been in India and had preached to the Hindoos, had just returned to England. He was a man with many blemishes and frailties; he was fickle, capricious, moody, at times ecstatic, bitter of tongue, and never able to guide his affairs with discretion: but he was also very warm-hearted, **full of zeal**, with **singular skill in stating and enforcing the Gospel**,⁷⁴ and earnestly bent on serving his Redeemer. After having some experience of his ways, Carey writes: "**He is a very holy man; but his faithfulness often degenerates into personality**"⁷⁵ "a very good man, but only fit to live at sea, where his daily business is before him, and daily provision made for him" "a man of sterling worth, but perhaps of the most singular make of any man in the world." While in India, without any knowledge of what was passing in Carey's mind, Thomas had opened correspondence with Abraham Booth and Dr. Stennett on the subject of an Indian mission; and soon after his arrival in

⁶⁹ "The Life of John Thomas" by C. B. Lewis. London Macmillan & Co., 1873. This is freely available in the public domain, at: <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/e6fwpxbk>

⁷⁰ John Thomas, first Baptist missionary to Bengal, 1757-1801 by Authur Chute, Halifax, N.S. Baptist Book and Tract Society, 1893. This is in the public domain at: <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/aeu.ark:/13960/t6c257v9w>

⁷¹ G.S. Smith, The Life of William Carey, D.D. 1887. Page 39

⁷² Lewis, page 97

⁷³ Ibid. 102.

⁷⁴ As I detail below this is a false statement of the facts.

⁷⁵ This is not only a contradiction but also not the truth.

England, hearing, of the Northamptonshire movement, **he wrote to Carey, and gave him some account of what had been already done in Bengal, and particularly of the prospects at Malda.** The letter was read in committee, and Fuller was directed to make all necessary inquiries, as to “character, principles, abilities, and success,” in order to decide whether a combination of effort were desirable. The result of the inquiries was overall satisfactory.⁷⁶

Another biographer at least realized just how important this union of Thomas and Carey was to the future of the mission. Smith says:

The answer, **big with consequence for the future of the East, was in their hands, in the form of a letter from Carey, who stated that “Mr. Thomas, the Bengal missionary” was trying to raise a fund for that province, and asked “whether it would not be worthy of the Society to try to make that and ours unite with one fund for the purpose of sending the gospel to the heathen indefinitely; ... if this Mr. Thomas were worthy, his experience made it desirable to begin with Bengal.** Thomas answered for himself at the next meeting, **when Carey fell upon his neck and wept,** having previously preached from the words: “Behold I come quickly, and My reward is with Me.” “We saw,” said Fuller afterwards, “there was a gold mine in India, but it was as deep as the centre of the earth.”⁷⁷

It's simply impossible to gain any semblance of Thomas and his importance without reference to firsthand sources. Most of the information we have on Thomas comes from sources like I quoted above. Carey, himself, is a most unsuitable guide. He went from something like objective truth of Thomas's faults to highly inappropriate praise, even to the extent of wishing to take back what was objective in the first place. Even his objective criticism is full of gross inconsistencies. As quoted above he called Thomas a “a very holy man” when in fact he was just the opposite, if by “holy” he meant Godlike. Fuller, likewise, failed completely in his judgement of Thomas.

Now is an appropriate time to briefly introduce the two existing 19th century biographies of John Thomas mentioned above.

“The Life of John Thomas” by C. B. Lewis, though biased, is by far the most important and detailed work. Indeed, it is almost the only source of information on Thomas's earlier life that I could find. Lewis quotes many firsthand sources in his 417-page compendium. As already noted this work is freely available with no copyright at: <https://wellcomecollection.org/works/e6fwpxbk> I'm limiting the information to those events that relate to his ministry. I have given some additional details about the timeline of his life in this document. Overall, Lewis gives few actual dates and does not always tell Thomas's story in a strictly chronological order. With the information provided I have given the order to the best of my ability.

Lewis's biography of Thomas is a mixture made up of important facts, objective appraisal, and a rather constant effort to put Thomas in the best position possible given the facts. Two summaries which Lewis gives earlier in the biography illustrate this.

Positive Spin: As is evident in various parts of this biography, Lewis believed that Thomas was a converted Christian and that he was greatly used and blessed by God. He says:

Whatever were the infirmities or faults of the subject of it, “out of weakness” he was “made strong” to labour for Christ in circumstances of most peculiar difficulty. **He was the first to preach the**

⁷⁶ William Carey, by James Culross, D.D. pages 49, 50

⁷⁷ G.S. Smith, The Life of William Carey, D.D. 1887 page 50

gospel to the idolaters of Bengal, and, through him other labourers were brought into a vast field for Christian effort, **which had before been close shut against the messengers of the cross.**⁷⁸

Lewis, in his zeal to promote Thomas as much as possible, contradicts parts of what he had documented for this very purpose. For example, regarding Bengal in particular Lewis said: “It is remarkable that nothing seems to have been said by him⁷⁹ of Mr. Kiernander or of his mission. That mission had reported seventeen heathens of different castes as baptized in 1783.” Indeed, a great deal of missionary effort had taken place in India for many years before Thomas and Carey added their efforts. As a general rule these and other earlier missionary efforts are either ignored or missed to give more praise to the early Baptists than they deserve.

Objective truth: Lewis was honest enough to recognize Thomas’s unbalanced condition, though he tried to put a positive spin on this as well. It’s evident, as the unfolding story below will show, that Thomas suffered from delusions of grandeur from an early age. His unstable condition grew worse and worse. Lewis summarizes this import aspect:

Who that reads this account of Mr. Thomas’s vision, of his secret terrors, his floods of happy tears, his ecstasies of rapturous confidence and his fits of despondent gloom, his eager entire consecration and his so speedy obliviousness of the restraints of dutiful obedience, with the other contrasts and extravagancies here exhibited, can fail to perceive that his mental constitution was not evenly balanced, but was peculiarly liable to disturbance? His brain was easily excited to a morbid activity, he was impulsive and imprudent, his imagination was vivid, his affections fervid, his purposes precipitate, and then there came the reaction. **For such a man, the even path of tranquil steady trust and obedience was very hard, nay, was impossible, to tread.** If indeed his restless, easily perturbed spirit had been regulated by wise early discipline and soothed by all that propitious circumstances could yield of quiet happy influence, his character might have developed itself far differently; but cast, as he was, into fierce temptations in his youth, and subsequently becoming the victim of so many failures, disappointments, hardships, reproaches, conflicts, throughout his whole life, mostly passed amidst the aggravations of an Indian climate, **what marvel was it that he was always erratic, and that on some occasions the poor overwrought brain yielded to assaults of positive mania?**⁸⁰

The fact is that Thomas, like Brainerd, never showed any signs of true regeneration. Quite the opposite: he showed an attitude of self-interest and pride. An almost total dependence on his self-interpretation of scripture, dreams, and visions.

With its faults Lewis’s work is a genuine effort to use the available material to give the reader as clear and true a picture of John Thomas as possible. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about Authur C. Chute’s imaginative 86-page booklet. By 1893 when Chute’s “John Thomas, First Baptist Missionary to Bengal”, was published Carey’s supreme mythological status was even more firmly established as was the Baptist mission. Clearly Chute, (the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Halifax, N.S) had this in mind in his desire to glorify Thomas the way he did. In chapter one he says:

Thomas had peculiar trials to encounter. He had much in his constitution to contend with; and outside there were grievous difficulties against which he had to fight stoutly to the end. But, notwithstanding all that was adverse., he wrought for the divine Master in a manner that cannot fail to command in many ways our admiration, and the gratitude of the Christian world. He helped,

⁷⁸ Lewis, page 12

⁷⁹ i.e., Thomas

⁸⁰ Lewis page 11

more than is generally recognized in paving the way for the success which attended the devoted and varied labors of the famous trio at Serampore—Carey, Marshman and Ward.⁸¹

Casting away most of the facts about Thomas Chute reinterprets his history almost like a fairytale. Much of his romantic account is based on his imagination only. It simply does not square with the facts. Seeking to turn a base metal like lead into gold he set forth his viewpoint in chapter one. In the context of introducing Lewis's biography, he lays his soul open on this subject for all to see.

The book is somewhat monotonous and unentertaining, it is true, but the reader will come upon much therein that is of worth concerning early attempts to win India for Christ; and as he reads on through copious extracts from the journal of Dr. Thomas, he will find his heart going out with tenderness toward the much afflicted and often downcast, **while always nobly heroic**, missionary whose story it seeks to unfold. Sometimes the tear will start from the eye at beholding the complicated troubles through which **the good man** ever strove to make his onward way.

If it be said that a missionary making so defective a history had as well not be written about, our answer is that the failings which attach to men are often as instructive as their virtues. In fact, it is through the agency of imperfect men and women, and no others, for others there are none, that God is winning the world unto Himself.⁸²

To Cute, Thomas was not only saved but was a “nobly heroic figure” to be pitied and exalted. In the parts of this essay that deal with Thomas I have inserted quotes from Chute which clearly demonstrate the truth of the matter.

What follows is an effort to put documented facts before the Christian public. Some of my specific aims are to:

1. Allow the public to have sufficient documented material to judge Thomas and his actions and the effect he had upon the Baptist mission.
2. In a similar manner to bring out the truth of the founding of the so called, “Modern Missionary Movement.” This includes re-examining many of the so-called facts as they are presented today.
3. To trace as much of the true facts of the missionary story up to Thomas's death and beyond..
4. To seek, as much as possible, to tabulate the correct dates for each important event.

⁸¹ Chute, Chapter 1, page 4

⁸² Chute, page 5

Chapter three

Up to Thomas's return to England from his first trip to Calcutta.

1762 – 1777: His “extraordinary” desire to become a preacher in his early life.

Lewis, as noted, is the main source of information, especially on the early parts of Thomas's history. He writes:

Like so many other lads similarly brought up, John cherished a very early ambition to become a preacher. ‘From a child,’ he wrote, many years afterwards, ‘I **always had extraordinary stirrings of mind to the work of the ministry.**’ ‘I preached before I was five years old, and from that time till I was fourteen or fifteen, I never dropped the bent; but, whenever I was alone, in lanes, and hedges, and high roads, I used to preach aloud; and oftentimes from I Corinthians 15:58, which I never had heard preached from.’ But although he deeply felt the reality and priceless value of that godliness which he saw within the circle in which his father moved, and, even as a child, ‘coveted the best gifts’ there exercised, he did not soon yield himself to the restraints and direction of divine influence. He says of himself:

I had many serious convictions from my childhood, which were stifled by various cares, pleasures, scenes of dissipation and wickedness, too horrible to remember without deep abasement of soul and detestation of myself. I was quite sensible all the while of the truth and reality of the word of God, the certainty of future judgment, and the danger of my utterly perishing, which I was sure of in case of death; still I went on in paths of sin and forgetfulness of God. Sometimes, after a sharp sermon, I would set up stated prayer, and continue it for a little while, with reading the Scriptures and other good books, determining never to leave it off; but the first temptation proved that the change was founded only on brittle resolutions, and not the work of the blessed Spirit, who only can renew the heart.⁸³

1780 or 81: The frigate nearly sank.

As Lewis relates Thomas qualified as a doctor at Westminster Hospital. Shortly after this he was given the post of “... Assistant Surgeon on board H. M/s ship Nymph, and then was removed to the Southampton frigate”⁸⁴. While out on patrol with various ships of war, in search of the pirate Paul Jones, his ship (the Southampton) sprung a large leak. The situation looked hopeless. In an account to a friend later Thomas relates the following:

I shall never forget what happened to me. All was given over for lost. I heard the boatswain say we were like men under sentence of death. My terror was exceedingly great within, though outwardly I calmly begged the captain's clerk to lend me his cabin. There I went; and, kneeling down, vowed to the Lord to live a new life, if He would spare me this once; and, if the ship was to be lost, to save my soul. I cried out and feared exceedingly; being well enough acquainted with the truth we know assuredly that, if I died, I should die in my sins, and so perish for ever and ever.

⁸³ Lewis pages 2, 3

⁸⁴ Ibid. page 4

I knew I should die unconverted and accursed. I believe it was the same day, the wind changed, the storm abated, and we set sail for England. We got safe into port, and there **I was too base at heart to think much of the tender mercy of God to my poor perishing soul. Psalm 107: 31. I hardened in harbour into my old sins and forgot the God of my mercies.** I soon felt the truth of the observation: ‘If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.’⁸⁵

April - July 1781: His first “vision”

Next Lewis relates a vision that Thomas had while delirious shortly after they returned to harbor. At this time, he was in the Haslar Naval Hospital. This vision was without question demonic in nature. Quoting Thomas’s own words Lewis writes:

I very plainly recollect my becoming unconscious of surrounding objects, either by sight or touch; that the pain of my head was almost insupportable; and that I settled within my thoughts that it must immediately occasion my death; and, though I was certainly delirious, the arrangement of these circumstances of thought was very plain, together with all those very extraordinary feelings that did accompany the more wonderful parts of the following vision.

I thought the violent pains of my head continued till I expired; and I thought I did expire and felt an utter freedom and separation. of the soul from my body, and this moment of departure was sensibly distinguished by a total exemption in one moment from all pain of the body. As soon as I felt myself clearly satisfied that my death was fully over, I heard a sound of words, as though a voice has uttered them, to this very purport: ‘There; now you see the immortality of the soul!’ My feelings were at this time exercised in such a manner, that though I could never recollect it clearly, yet it was unutterable. **I thought myself unspeakably filled with joy and freedom. I thought myself in the midst of immensity, and capable of sweeping through immeasurable distances in a moment, with extasy and vast power. I saw myself surrounded with appearances of substance, which, whether they were angels or souls, I do not remember to have determined;** but with my happy situation and their appearance, (which was not beheld in so much splendour as with heartfelt enjoyment,) I was filled with inexpressible awe and admiration. This most delightful of all sensible enjoyments endured but for a short time, **when I began to think whether that was heaven, and what I was in heaven for; when, on a sudden, the Almighty spoke, and in a moment I beheld the world beneath me consuming in flames of fire, and I myself insensibly forced thither; and, feeling the scorch of that fire, I became lost in dreadful astonishment and fear.**

And so ended the vision, **which I have never yet had occasion to think had any remarkable utility or design in its accomplishment.** But thus, it happened to me exactly; immediately after my fever, I was clearly convinced in my judgment of the reality of my immortal soul, and that it was, without the body, capable of both enjoyment and suffering. **The importance and the strangeness of it had some temporary influence on my affections, but these, after a little while, together with the remembrance of the vision, declined and fell away very fastly.** My prayers, which had been offered up by the force of these occasional feelings, soon became short and lifeless, and at last were totally neglected.

⁸⁵ Ibid. pg. 5

As little regard as ever was now paid to the things of religion; and the time that elapsed between this period and my marriage was of no consequence **to my present design**, for it was spent in sinful courses of life, neglect of worship, worldliness, hardness of heart, and forgetfulness of God.⁸⁶

This incident sheds light on Thomas's mindset and importance he later attached to other 'supernatural' events of a similar nature.

April - July 1781: He "bestowed" upon the Baptist's his choice of that denomination.

Lewis tells us: "He married in March 1781. In reference to his wife, he relates something interesting":

Her religious principles were different from mine, she being a strong advocate for the Church of England, and **I still harbouring sense enough of religion to make choice and preference, which I bestowed on the Baptist persuasion**; but by what I have already said, you will perceive that nothing of this kind was then matter of trouble to me.⁸⁷

Peter in his first epistle gives sound advice against such a prideful attitude where he writes: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."⁸⁸

We must take notice both of what Thomas himself stated here and what is obvious from many different sources: That is the fact that this was prior to any supposed 'conversion of Thomas'. His choice of the Baptist denomination was a result of his carnal reasoning. His words are: "... you will perceive that nothing of this kind was then matter of trouble to me"

April - July 1781: Felt touched by Satan while praying.

This and his 'conversion' are of such a critical importance to the whole history of the Baptist mission that I must include here a lengthy portion of Lewis's chapter starting just after the quote above. Thomas then writes:

After marriage, I now and then attended places of worship on a Sabbath day, and once I accidentally dropped in where Mr. Robert Robinson of Cambridge was preaching on the instability of the natural man, and his words very much affected me, being very applicable to my case. After this sermon, I felt my inclination lean more naturally to some place of worship; and resolutions, prayers, and reformations were again set up and carried forward for a short time with self-approbation, till either the pleasures or cares of the world had recovered their usual dominion; and then all was laid aside, except public worship, or rather the attendance at public worship, once or twice on a Sabbath day. **The next remarkable impression was under the ministry of Dr. Stennett**, whose manner of delivery and language had ever some weight with me. He was now preaching from those words, in John 17:20, 'Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.' I have nearly lost the memory of the discourse, but recollect that that part of it which was delivered from the last clause had a peculiar effect upon my heart. It was about this time that I had many troubled thoughts of the eternal danger I was in and felt much of the burden of guilt; so that I was afraid to be alone. Very often, I was almost distracted, starting up in my bed, and crying

⁸⁶ Ibid. pages 5,6

⁸⁷ Ibid. page 7

⁸⁸ 1 Peter 5:5

out with fear. **One afternoon, I had retired for prayer, and I was so apprehensive, that I thought I felt Satan come and touch my heel, which gave me great fear and mental distress.** Notwithstanding these great emotions of mind, I was so allured with a sporting pleasure that was seasonable about this time of the year, that, after many endeavors to stifle the thoughts of it, I one day deliberately determined that, though it should be to save me from hell itself, and give me a possession in heaven, I would not deny myself the pleasure of the approaching sporting day. That determination convinced me that all was wrong and inclined me to believe that all I had felt was nothing more than a working up of my imagination, whereas I was sensible that the work of conversion, for which I seemed to have great desires, was the operation of God on the heart and principles, and not barely on the mere affections.

By his own admission then, at this time, he had care only for sin and its fake pleasures: “Notwithstanding these great emotions of mind, I was so allured with a sporting pleasure that was seasonable about this time of the year, that, after many endeavors to stifle the thoughts of it, I one day deliberately determined that, though it should be to save me from hell itself, and give me a possession in heaven, I would not deny myself the pleasure of the approaching sporting day.”

August 1781: His “conversion” and certainty that he was destined for great things.

Lewis gives us a detailed account of Thomas supposed conversion stating:

It was before the month of August, 1781, had expired, when I heard Dr. Stennett preach from these words, ‘Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.’ John 6:27. **Now if ever I was effectually called by the grace of God out of natural darkness into spiritual light, it was on this occasion.** My heart was strongly moved by what was said on the promise, particularly the enforcement of the word ‘shall.’ On the same day, I heard with uncommon pleasure a sermon preached by a stranger in Eagle Street, from these words, ‘All things are yours,’ (1 Corinthians 3:21,) wherein there shone such inestimable privileges of the people of God, and so much of the bounty and goodness of God through Christ to all those who are his true worshippers, that I was very much amazed and affected. The scriptures now became more particularly the object of my thoughts, both night and day, sleeping or awake. On the following Tuesday, Dr. Gill’s Exposition of the Gospel of Matthew had for some time engaged my meditations; but I remember no particular word or passage by which I was encouraged; but towards evening I had such an apprehension of the method of salvation by Jesus Christ, of his sufferings, and suretyship, that **I could hardly behave myself moderately before those whom I considered as destitute of any right knowledge of such things. Many days and nights were spent in the enjoyment of believing that Christ had suffered for me in particular. ME, ME, so insignificant, so worthless! that such an one as I should be a partaker of his benefits! This thought attended me for many days; and wherever I was, I had many tears of joy and gladness. Once, the effect it had on my affections was so powerful that I became apprehensive of losing my senses suddenly; on which occasion I earnestly besought the Lord for more moderation.**⁸⁹ Not many days after this, I detected myself in sinning with my tongue so deliberately that it gave me trouble, and I was humbled on the occasion; and I described what I had said before some Christian friends, thinking nothing at all of their thoughts of me, in comparison of that apprehension of myself before God. The word of God became very precious to me and was read with a new ability of understanding and clearness. **My zeal was often very strong, and I inwardly thought that the Lord was going to make an eminent Christian of me.** Dr. Stennett, in or about September, had

⁸⁹ As is shown later Thomas discounts this event as he believes he was not saved until 1784.

preached from these words, ‘Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.’ 1 Kings 20:11. This was mentioned to me by a Christian friend, and he made remarks on what the Doctor had said, that were so suitable to my case that I bitterly lamented I had not been there. Now I began to think that, after all, I might, according to the Doctor, only have been warmly moved in my passions, and that the amount of all was an ignorant zeal or a fit of enthusiasm. But this thought did not give me much concern, because I thought my inclinations and desires were so different from what they formerly were, that I must have undergone the great change of regeneration. My assurance of pardon and everlasting happiness ran high and strong, without any intermission for a long time.⁹⁰

Chute in his very brief account states positively that Thomas “accepted Christ as his Saviour” at this time. Referring to his outward reformation and marriage he then says: “A little later, hearing Dr. Stennett and turning eagerly to the Scriptures, he accepted Christ as his Saviour;” “And then,” he says, ‘my assurance of pardon and everlasting happiness ran high and strong, without any intermission, for a long time.’”⁹¹

Late 1781: Very soon returns to his old way of life.

Even Chute admits that all was not well with Thomas. Speaking of this “long time”, quoted above, he says: “But the ‘long time’ of which he speaks was only about four months. He was quite a man for the hilltop, but not for abiding there long together. Having too sanguine expectations of financial prosperity he entered into debt, and so into trouble and perplexity.”⁹²

Lewis goes into much more detail showing just how bad things really were.

If I were now to describe what passed in my soul after the end of four months, I must write with such words as would deeply affect me. I must relate sad instances of declension; awfully sad indeed. It is true, I constantly attended the preaching of the word; but, oh, how grievously did my life and conversation differ from that of a disciple and follower of Christ! No words are strong enough, no language is severe enough, to express my thoughts of my conduct which yet fall infinitely short of the baseness and disingenuousness with which I now walked before God. What lamentable occasions did I furnish to the enemies of the Lord for blasphemy. Their words to my face were piercing; and what must their thoughts have been? They saw me intemperate, resentful, impatient, and furious, with such other irregularities as raise my wonder why I was suffered to live, why eternal vengeance did not utterly consume me; only His compassions fail not. Dear me! who can utter anything adequate concerning the patience of God? My affairs in worldly respects were very distressing, and my sufferings were not small, and though I heard the word with now and then some comfort, yet I do not remember much else left that was Christian-like. I grew so poor that, after being teased by many people, very often in a pressing manner, for debts I could not pay, after being arrested and for two days imprisoned, I left off business, and had much difficulty and distress in raising a shilling to defray the expenses of a day. Almost every valuable I had was in pledge for money, and the money all gone; so that I did not know where to look. Well! an unexpected messenger came to my mournful house one day. A friend, unsought, offered to procure for me the surgency of a ship bound to the East Indies; and this offer led me to discover by enquiry two such ships. The one my friend meant was under imperial colors; but that I chose was the Earl of Oxford, one of the Hon’ble East India Company’s ships, to which I was very readily appointed, by a number

⁹⁰ Lewis pages 8,9

⁹¹ Chute, page 13

⁹² Ibid, page 14

of helps from entire strangers, who introduced me to the captain, who received me with partial favor.

My poor wife was sadly distressed at this prospect, and for several days it was an affliction of great weight to her. But I am amazed as I look back on the multitude of providential circumstances that brought me through every difficulty that stood in my way, and so quickly and so effectually placed me in this new office; for I had on lesser occasions humbly solicited a host of friends, by whom I was sadly mortified. Oh, how greatly does the insincerity and selfishness of friends embitter what are called the misfortunes of this life!⁹³

The apostle Paul in Romans chapter 13 tells the Christians in Rome (and indeed all Christians):

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. **Owe no man anything, but to love one another:** for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.⁹⁴

With this command in mind, it's important to note that Thomas never repaid his debts. His life was spent trying to make money from other people's money or from the sympathy of his fellow man.

Late 1782: Was refused Baptism by Rev. Booth partly because he had such a strong desire to be a preacher.

Here the guidance of Mr. Thomas's autobiographical sketch is suddenly lost. Although thoroughly a Baptist in his religious sentiments, he for the present made no public profession of his consecration to God. Like his temporal affairs, his religious connections seem to have been unsettled. He was frequently a hearer of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stennett, at Little Wild Street; but he also sought to recommend himself, with a view to being baptized by him, to the Rev. Abraham Booth, who knew some of his relatives. **Mr. Booth, however, regarded him as too wild and enthusiastic to deserve much encouragement, especially as he was very desirous of becoming a preacher.** He received from Mr. Booth therefore only some good advice, and a copy of Chauncy's Doctrine according to Godliness, from the study of which he derived much benefit. Meanwhile his appointment to the Earl of Oxford, 758 tons burden, John White, commander, was confirmed. **He appears to have gone on board early in January 1783, and, on the 11th of March, sailed with the Indian fleet, leaving his poor "tender and delicate wife," who was very shortly to become a mother, in painfully straitened circumstances, and to a large extent dependent upon the generosity of her friends.**⁹⁵

It is at this point in his narrative that Lewis told of his "assaults of positive mania" quoted in the introduction above.

⁹³ Lewis pages 9, 10

⁹⁴ Romans 13:5-8

⁹⁵ Lewis pages 10,11

Sometime in 1782 – 83: He had a very strange dream which he believed was of divine origin. This dream affected him for the rest of his life.

Without giving much of a clue as to its date, Lewis tells us that: "... he had a dream, to which likewise he makes frequent reference in his afterlife. This, too, may be quoted here."

In this dream. I thought I had something in my ear, very large, but not painful to me; and I picked it out, and it fell down; and, lo, it was a crab-fish! I was afraid of its claws; for it was alive; and I took it up carefully, holding its back, whilst the claws played about, reaching after anything they could lay hold of. While it did this, I looked, and behold, its legs and claws became lilies, such as I had never seen! very beautiful Fowers! —very fragrant! —and I smelt them with delight, and wondered at their sweetness! And, behold, in one moment, in the twinkling of an eye, these flowers were transformed, and became ears of ripe corn, very large, very full, very long in the ear, with the sun shining upon them in his strength:— and I awoke, and, behold, it was a dream!

These **curious extracts** are not without importance to the narrative. The reader will, very probably, deem them insignificant trifles; but the impressions and the dream here described were esteemed by Mr. Thomas as having a divine origin. Nor was their influence upon him fugitive. On the contrary, it will be seen that, actively, it wrought upon his mind throughout all his subsequent history.⁹⁶

1783: His shame and remorse during part of this time.

Lewis picks up the story again in chapter 3 (page 37)⁹⁷. The important parts for this study start on page 40 of that chapter. Summarizing the dangers Thomas had gone through Lewis says:

Of all such dangers he spoke in after-life with suitable acknowledgments of the goodness of God, which delivered him from these imminent perils; but usually his thoughts of this period of his life were burdened with other recollections, which filled him with shame and remorse. At Kedgerie he was thrown into close intimacy with many irreligious men, in the several vessels of the fleet. His hands were filled by his professional duties. His mind was occupied with many worldly cares. In the midst of these adverse circumstances, his watchfulness over his own heart was relaxed, and he fell into sad neglect of his religious duties and into conduct which he felt to be unworthy of a Christian life. That his wickedness was not an open disgrace to his profession, was occasion for much thankfulness. He has left no particulars on record as to these backslidings; but the terms in which he condemned himself were unsparing and most severe.⁹⁸

October 1783, He so called visitation from God, the "awful vision" at Calcutta. He intimates that he saw Christ in this vision.

Lewis tells us: "There were many occasions on which he awoke to some sense of his guilty wretchedness; but to little effect, until at length his remorseful terrors culminated in **a vision of an unspeakably awful character**. The

⁹⁶ Ibid. page 51

⁹⁷ Prior to this towards the end of chapter 2 Lewis gives a brief and negative account of various prior missionaries to Bengal and Calcutta. By and large he negates the value of all such efforts. This is very possibly to highlight the importance of Thomas at the expense of these prior efforts.

⁹⁸ Lewis, page 40

fullest reference of this circumstance is contained in an entry in his journal of July 11th, in the following year⁹⁹. It is as follows.”

On perusing the story of Colonel Gardiner’s conversion, **I find a remarkably striking similarity between the vision which effectually wrought on him, and that which had little influence, so very short and little, upon my hardened cruel heart, concerning our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.** I remember that before the time of my vision, it may be about two months, I had read Colonel Gardiner’s Life throughout; but this part of it had been entirely lost from my memory, in that awful vision at Calcutta, in October, 1783, and ever since; for I never had heard (to my recollection) of anything, till this day, that was like my own experience in any measure, and therefore should have been extremely fearful of my credit when I offered to relate it. **But, alas, the disparity of effects is so great!** His very soul turned! My heart returned, dog-like! O Lord, I beseech thee, show me my folly.¹⁰⁰

In the same context, he refers to this dream in the following terms:

I had my senses brought into the invisible world. **I beheld more than one risen from the dead; one whom I knew! free from all the appearance or likelihood of a mistake.** If I had heard him speak ever so long, what could he have said more? If he had been more explicit in all I had done, or more particular in describing all my ingratitude, or more plain in setting forth the terrors of the Lord, how could I have been more affected? how could I have borne more? This instance is enough to teach me that, though a man be enlightened, and not only acknowledges, but has tasted of the heavenly gift, that, though a spirit, though an angel, come and talk with him, all will not do. He will not believe to the overcoming of the world, which is of God only¹⁰¹.

Mr. Lewis then seeks to justify this vision as a real vision from God. Among others he again sites Colonel Gardiner’s vision. As these two visions are so closely linked together it is worthwhile to mention Gardiner’s vision as related in P. Doddridge’s account. There can be no question that both Thomas and Gardiner believed that they saw the Lord Jesus Christ in their visions. Doddridge’s account can be found at: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/11253/11253-h/11253-h.htm#V>. Chapter 5 His Conversion by P. Doddridge, D.D. “The Life of Col. James Gardiner”

April – May 1784: Deeply affected by reading Isaiah 43 and its significance but even more by his previous vision.

Lewis tells us that “Mr. Thomas left Bengal, in a very different spirit from that he had brought with him there.” The full quotation is:

“The Earl of Oxford sailed for England on the 16th of March, 1784, with a cargo valued at R s. 12,32,350. **Mr. Thomas left Bengal, in a very different spirit from that he had brought with him there.** He says, ‘**In Isaiah 43¹⁰² I read my character, the patience and forbearance of God, and, what exceeded all, his blotting out my**

⁹⁹ 1784

¹⁰⁰ Lewis page 41

¹⁰¹ Ibid. pages 40, 41

¹⁰² In verses 18, 19 of Isaiah 43 the Lord tells us: “Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.”

transgressions freely. The rest of the voyage, I ate, and drank, and lived upon the word of God. My breath was chiefly filled with prayer and praise.”¹⁰³

It’s difficult to tell exactly what effect this had upon Thomas as we are given little details. Lewis, as expected puts a very positive spin upon its effects: “A journal which he began to keep at the end of April, very remarkably illustrates this statement. It bears testimony to many transgressions and to the consciousness of much depravity, but no candid reader could fail to discover in it the character of one whose delight was in the word and service of God.”¹⁰⁴ Thomas, however, when he relates what happened to his father¹⁰⁵ refers back to his October vision when he was still in Calcutta rather than to chapter 43. This gives a clearer understanding of the effect of Isaiah 43 had on him. Clearly his recent ‘awful vision’ was more important than what he learned from Isaiah.

.... and were I not abundantly convinced that the ways of God are unspeakably far above our ways, I should be at a loss to understand how it comes to pass that I, who have been so preposterously undeserving, should yet be a partaker of so many of His benefits; for I have no sooner tasted than abused them, or received than forgotten them. I have taken small heed to an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but have gone astray **like, though not with,** them that go down to the pit. And not only my body, but my soul, with all her fading, dying interests, He has raised her up from the chambers of death again! cleansed and robbed her again brought me from feeding on husks with swine again, and feasted me with the fatness of His house, and covered me with the richest apparel. **This is a mercy that transcends all the rest** in its unspeakable value and richness. **There was one remarkable providence, so uncommon, that happened to me before I was brought up out of the miry pit, that I shall be unwilling, through former experience, to relate it fully as long as I live; for with eyewitness I have proved the truth of that testimony in Luke 16:31**¹⁰⁶. I have been distracted with the terrors of the Lord; yet His grace only was sufficient for me. This has been sufficient, I trust. It is now sufficient; and, after all the crimsons and scarlets, I am left with a comfortable hope that it will be abundantly so, far above all I am able to think of it.¹⁰⁷

Just what does Thomas mean by “before I was brought up out of the miry pit”? Whatever the answer to that, it leaves little doubt that his spiritual state was in a terrible condition while he was visiting Calcutta for the first time. It was then during this time that he placed an advertisement in the India Gazette of November 1st, 1783. Dropping any Baptist pretensions he wrote:

A plan is now forming for the more effectually spreading the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and his glorious gospel, in and about Bengal. **Any serious persons, of any denomination**, rich or poor, high or low, who would heartily approve of, join in, or gladly forward such an undertaking, are hereby invited to give a small testimony of their inclination, that they may enjoy the satisfaction of forming a communion the most useful, the most comfortable, and the most exalted in the world. Direct for A. B. C., to be left with the Editor.^{108, 109}

¹⁰³ Lewis page 44

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. page 45

¹⁰⁵ From a letter dated 23rd September 1784

¹⁰⁶ “And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

¹⁰⁷ Lewis pages 46, 47

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. pages 42, 43

¹⁰⁹ Lewis relates some information as to the outcome of this advertisement. What is important here is some remarks of Thomas’s from a year later in 1784. “The following year, being at a house in London, where the Rev. John Newton had just called, I heard that a gospel minister was going out to Bengal, and that Mr. Newton had reason to think there were religious stirrings in that country, as he had read a certain advertisement in a newspaper of such an import; which advertisement was, indeed, what you have now read”. (Lewis pages 43,44)

Thomas's words above raise the question of just how serious his "conversion experience" as related above was. There he said:

I had such an apprehension of the method of salvation by Jesus Christ, of his sufferings, and suretyship, that I could hardly behave myself moderately before those whom I considered as destitute of any right knowledge of such things. Many days and nights were spent in the enjoyment of believing that Christ had suffered for me in particular. ME, ME, so insignificant, so worthless!¹¹⁰

As seen above and on many other occasions later, mystic visions or revelations that he takes personally to himself carry far more weight with him than scriptural preaching of true reformed doctrine.

Returning then to his letter to his father from September 1784, Lewis's first remarks after the long quotation given above refers to the importance of his 'awful vision.'

The reference to his vision here will not be overlooked by the reader. The terms of self-condemnation in connection with which it occurs, accord with the general strain of his journal. He charges himself with a number of besetting sins: amongst which may be enumerated hastiness of temper, fickleness in his best purposes, sensitiveness as to his own honor, fondness for amusements, and other forms of self-indulgence.¹¹¹

This marks a definite change in Thomas. Boldened, it seems by his "eyewitness" proof of the truth of Luke 16:31 he takes a definite step in independence and self-importance. Scripture becomes more self-interpreting and self-important. His attitude toward sound Christians starts to harden into prideful arrogance.

Summary of Chapter 3

The four mystically important episodes related above are: 1. His 'conversion' and relapse into sin, 2. His "strange dream". Which he felt was from God. 3. His "awful vision", again attributed to be from God. 4. His self-interpreted understanding of Isaiah 43 and confirmation of these events by applying Luke 16:31 as some kind of confirmation. Lewis's detailed firsthand references make it all too obvious that those latter three events carried much more significance to Thomas than his supposed conversion experience did. The fact that Chute completely ignores the latter three events should not be overlooked. They established a foundation that Thomas built upon for the rest of his life. As I will show they lead up to and contribute to his understanding and application of Isaiah 49. Rather than exalting the Lord Jesus he took this chapter to exalt himself.

There is one more event that Lewis documents. I have left it out of the account above as it does not appear to me to have had any permanent significance. Unlike his mystical experiences this one was based on a factual event. It temporarily made him turn to religion but that was all. After qualifying as a Physician, he set sail as a surgeon in The Earl of Oxford in March 1783. While off the coast of Ceylon one of the ships of the squadron, The Duke of Kingston, caught on fire and was destroyed. Chute sites only the Southampton frigate incident.

¹¹⁰ Lewis page 9: see footnote 90

¹¹¹ Ibid. page 47

Chapter four

His first return to England

Early 1783 to September 1784

Thomas returned to England from his first visit to India on in September 1784. For this trip he was in the Earl of Oxford as assistant surgeon.

December 25th, 1784: His baptism

As shown above he had previously hoped that the Rev. Abraham Booth would baptize him, which he wisely refused. It was highly likely that he would have sought help from both Booth and Dr. Samuel Stennett again at this time. Lewis gives us only one paragraph about this important event. Lewis writes:

The voyage over, he, with great joy, found himself restored to the privileges of Christian society in his native land, and he now desired at once to profess his allegiance to Christ in baptism. But the discredit of his former difficulties was not yet forgotten, and his proposals met with what he felt to be “undue discouragement.” At length, he was baptized by the Rev. Mr. Burnham of the Soho Chapel, **without, however, any purpose of joining the church under that minister’s care.** It was on Christmas-day, 1784, that he thus solemnly “put on Christ.” His journal records some disappointment on the occasion. He had supposed it would be a season of very lively enjoyment of the divine presence and favor; but his mind was depressed, and his emotions restrained. He was, however, prayerfully desirous that all his future life might bear witness to his true consecration, and that his divine Master’s strength might be made perfect in his own weakness.¹¹²

Clearly, he as not content with the “the privileges of Christian society in his native land” but rather all for achieving his own personal goals. Rather than getting out of debts he got into deeper trouble than before. It’s no wonder that he had been refused baptism by some wiser than himself. Lewis tells us that at the time of his baptism:

In regard to the future, his plans were very unsettled. He was reluctant to go again to India, and made another attempt to establish himself in surgical practice, in Great Portland Street, Oxford Road; **not, however, with much promise of success.** Although his difficulties were very greatly relieved, **he was still in debt, and was occasionally sorely harassed by his creditors**¹¹³.

January to August 1785: His long desire to preach could wait no longer.

After his baptism, rather than dealing with his serious debt he set out on a self-appointed preaching mission. Since early childhood his great desire was to be a preacher and now, he could wait no longer. Some people encouraged him. Others however were much more biblical and realistic. Lewis tells us:

¹¹² Lewis pages 47, 48

¹¹³ Ibid. page 48

... Others of his relatives and friends did all they could to deter him from preaching. **Their opposition did not prevail against his determined inclination, although there were amongst them persons of prolonged experience,** “Christians,” as he **caustically** remarked, “of thirty years ‘standing’, not ‘running.’” Their objections, however, had some effect upon his mind. For years afterwards, **“the liberty of prophesying”**¹¹⁴ was a subject frequently discussed in his letters.”

He was offered a post as a preacher in a small church, but the wealthiest member was against his call. **He was therefore never an official minister.** Lewis tells us that: “Mr. Thomas, somewhat reluctantly, took the advice of Mr. Booth, who recommended him, on account of his youth and inexperience, to decline the invitation, and to make another voyage to Bengal in the Earl of Oxford, when she sailed in 1786.”

August 1785: He took his study of Isaiah 49 literally and applied it with great pride to his future exploits.

His extreme reliance on “supernatural” guidance and personal interpretation plus his overwhelming desire to preach comes to the fore again with his study of Isaiah 49. This is so important and revealing that I must give it in some detail. Lewis relates:

In August, 1785, whilst undecided whether to settle at Hoddesdon or not, he was very powerfully impressed by the perusal of Isaiah 49, and **he seems to have regarded the thoughts which then crowded upon his mind as a revelation of the Lord’s will in regard to his whole future life.**

In his journal, more than four years afterwards, he says of this occurrence:

After earnest prayer, my mind was unusually impressed, like broad daylight, with many passages in that chapter. Particularly, I understood that, although I had not ‘gathered Israel,’ yet the Lord had not ‘forgotten me’; **but had intimated His design towards me when I was a little child**¹¹⁵. I understood also that the Lord had hitherto hid me; but it should not always be so: **that it was a very small matter, in comparison of what He had for me to do, that I should edify a little congregation of Israel; for He would send me forth into the world, afar off among unconverted Gentiles. This God had in view concerning me, who was, He knew, despised in my own country, and abhorred by many religious professors in my own nation.** I understood that I had come with an acceptable petition to the Lord, and, in His own proper time and manner, He had chosen, and would bless and prosper me in preaching the gospel. I understood that by ‘desolate heritages’ it was intimated that, by my preaching, those who were utterly destitute of the gospel should receive it, and God would Himself lead them, and would bless and cause them to flourish. And as, humanly speaking, difficulties like mountains would lie in the way, He would remove them. And now the scene began to open as broad as daylight from heaven on my mind, with an inexpressible sweetness and composure of soul. **So great and extensive were the things shown me, that I drew back, thinking it too much;** for how could all these things be? I understood that the Lord had observed my downcast looks and unbelief, as though He had forsaken me; but my particulars were continually minutely before Him. **I understood that the Lord would surprise me with numbers, surpassing my crediting powers: that I should stand astonished at it**¹¹⁶; **and that great personages should be among those who would nurse and take care of me and mine,** and the temporal affairs of the Lord’s sheep. An uncommon readiness to receive the gospel and a running to it were the last thing in the chapter which the Lord shewed me; and I understood also

¹¹⁴ In other words preaching.

¹¹⁵ That he would become a preacher.

¹¹⁶ He was not thinking of some distant future happening but things in his own lifetime.

that these words were written concerning Isaiah and concerning Christ, not excluding our instruction;*¹¹⁷ and the word of God is not bound, his testimonies are everlasting, and no scripture is of private interpretation. Amen, Lord Jesus. Even so; come now, Lord Jesus!”

With reference to this, he further wrote:

I just add that the way I understood it all was this: that I might fix at Hoddesdon and go and preach to all the country round about Cambridge and Hertfordshire. **But this did not satisfy me; because the field was not big enough to hold one of the scenes, which appeared to me to be many and great;** therefore, thought I, it may be that the Lord will take me another voyage, and, among the unconverted desolate heathens, he may send me to preach the gospel. Here all things suited; only the impossibility of leaving the ship, my family, &c. So, the state of the case was. **I abode in surprise and joy, believing that what the Lord had said would verily come to pass; though I did not know exactly how and when, or other particulars.** Soon after, going by Tottenham Court Chapel, I dropped in, as Mr. Matthew Wilks was in the middle of his sermon, on this text: ‘Thy testimonies are wonderful.’—Psalm 119:129. Just as I went in, he spoke to this effect, ‘Sometimes the Lord shows His people in a wonderful manner, by His testimonies, His own secrets; and yet, though they are so surprised and satisfied, they do not know and understand for some years afterwards; but when the things come to pass, then they know clearly.’¹¹⁸

In his delusions of grandeur even England itself was not big enough to accommodate the vast magnitude of the work God was going to use him for. His youth, indebtedness, total lack of holding down a secular job to profit etc. meant nothing to him at all. Worse than that, the teaching of Scripture in its entirety meant nothing either. Jesus’ sermon on the mount could not have taken place at all for the lack of effect it produced on him. His “personal” visits from the Lord overshadow all else.

There are at least seven additional references to Isaiah 49 in Lewis’s biography. As will become more evident Thomas’s supposed revelations from the Lord in this chapter are of major importance to understanding Thomas.

Interestingly it is at this point in his story that Lewis inserts the “crab-fish” dream related above in its proper time sequence. He wants to emphasize and underscore the importance of these “supernatural” experiences to Thomas.

Chute ignores the prior mystic experiences that Thomas had. Instead, he concentrates on the Isaiah 49 passage which also had such a deep effect on Thomas. Here is how he refers to this:

Within the year 1785 the subject of our sketch was powerfully impressed by the perusal of Isaiah forty-ninth, and he thought the Lord then called him to go afar and preach to the Gentiles. There was awakened in him’ the hope, which he cherished even in the gloomiest times which succeeded, that God would through him do much for the heathen. “I understood that the Lord would surprise me with numbers surpassing my crediting powers: that I should stand astonished at it; and that great personages should be among those who would nurse and take care of me and mine, and the temporal affairs of the Lord’s sheep.” **But his large expectations he never saw fulfilled.** Nevertheless, he toiled on bravely to the end with such confidence in God as we do not often see surpassed.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ • This is not very intelligible. Mr. Thomas’s meaning will belter appear from what he wrote to his brother in January, 1787. “From Isaiah xlix. I was made to see the truth of that saying of Witsius: ‘Whatever is written of Christ, becomes true in its order and degree, to all that are Christ’s.’”

¹¹⁸ Lewis pages 49- 51

¹¹⁹ Chute pages 14, 15

Chute not only ignores the previous experiences he also ignores the scriptures. He seeks to turn the truth on its head like a clever lawyer seeking to free a person he knows is guilty, Here is what the scriptures say:

Jeremiah 14:14

Then the LORD said to me, “The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I have not sent them or appointed them or spoken to them. **They are prophesying to you false visions, divinations, idolatries and the delusions of their own minds.**

Jeremiah 23:16

This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. **They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD.**

Deuteronomy 18:15-22 is even more explicit.

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

The fact is that Thomas’s application of scripture to himself was based solely on self-delusion and impulses from Satan.

March 4th, 1786: His advice on not fearing death in a letter to his sister just before he embarks for India.

In the course of his book Lewis gives us some examples that shed light upon Thomas’s practical application of the scriptures. In this example his sister wanted to know his thoughts on “the antidotes against the fear of death”. Thomas spends some time explaining that the “one remedy” is Christ. He even quotes Hebrews 2:15 and Psalm 130:7. On the surface much of this sounds correct but his real focus is not upon Christ and his finished work. It’s not based on faith alone. To Thomas it’s the works that we must perform to gain Christ. How reminiscent this is to Brainerd’s experience The following quotation brings these two different aspects into focus:

*Therefore, I think that an apprehension of Him by an eye of faith is the best antidote; and you know this. The Holy Ghost expresses **diligence** as the best cure in the world of a saint’s doubt and scruples of his salvation. Let us follow the wise men, who set out and sought Christ diligently; and, till they had found Him, returned not back. Seek, and you shall find; for everyone that seeketh findeth. Whom did Christ suffer for? It could not be for Himself: He was the Holy One. It must have been for us; and let us take the benefit thereof, rejoicing in Him, and having no confidence in the flesh¹²⁰.*

Thomas does not give us a verse for his idea that the Holy Ghost’s answer is diligence, but it may well have been 2 Peter 1:1-11

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be

¹²⁰ Lewis page 52

multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. **And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.** For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Wherever place in Scripture he got his idea from it is not founded upon what Scripture teaches. Salvation, including the free gift of faith in Christ is from God alone. He gives us a new heart and fills us with the Holy Spirit who leads us deeper into Christlikeness. All was accomplished by Christ alone. If we are truly saved, we will manifest the fruits of the Spirit as numerated above. As we have already seen and will see in greater detail Thomas lacked these very fruits. As will become more evident his preached a false gospel with the goal of self-promotion and works religion.

Chapter five

Events after his arrival in Bengal

July 14, 1786 – He arrives in Bengal.

Lewis tells us: “On arriving in Bengal, his great desire was that he might be able to maintain a holy deportment before all men, and to exert a Christian influence upon his acquaintance in Calcutta, whether he discovered any fellow-believers there or not.” This illustrates what I said above about self-righteousness and works.

July 1786 Deeper and deeper into debt and delusion for the rest of his life.

After his arrival in Bengal, he availed himself of an opportunity to make some money by trading with some of the local merchants. Part of Lewis’s account of this reads as follows:

Captain White most kindly became his security with the merchants who entrusted their goods to him; and on the present occasion he was so successful that he reckoned his profits to be upwards of 500 £. This was much more than enough to release him from all his pecuniary difficulties; but it was also a strong inducement to him to venture yet more freely in the purchase of goods for the return voyage, and thus, as will be seen, his present success brought about a calamity which embittered and most disastrously affected all his subsequent life¹²¹.

Rather than doing the right thing by using this money to pay off his debts he sought to increase his capital as Lewis intimated above. He bought up a large amount of goods to be sent back to England. His plan was to make at least 2000 £ by the sale of his merchandise. He did not learn of the failure of his endeavor until the end of January 1789. He made only 924 £ leaving him in extreme debt.

In the meantime, counting on future income he fed his deep desire to preach and become a missionary. The result was that he went even deeper in debt.

Lewis lays down the foundation of this in the following way:

Flattered by the admiration of his Calcutta friends¹²² and, without doubt, really useful amongst them, Mr. Thomas was under strong temptation to neglect his duties to his ship, which was lying at Diamond Harbour. His “mate,” the assistant surgeon, soon felt that he was badly used, in being detained on board through the prolonged absence of his superior, and he wrote to Mr. Thomas with bitterness, and complained of him to the captain. Some other disagreeable occurrences, connected with the ship, combined with these things greatly to annoy him, and the result of them all was **a most momentous change in his plans**. The invitation given him to remain in Bengal had not been forgotten. It had never been explicitly renewed; but remarks had been dropped every now and then by Mr. Grant and the rest, **which Mr. Thomas interpreted as indications of their unaltered desire that he would give it more favorable consideration**. These things had somewhat unsettled his mind, leading him often to contrast the pleasantness and advantages of such a life of service to

¹²¹ Lewis page 54

¹²² See below for details of these friends.

Christ amongst the heathen, with the uncongenial character of his situation as surgeon on board an East Indiaman. But now that actual unpleasantness had arisen between himself and his fellow officers there, he thought it might be that the Lord was showing him that he should quit the ship and give himself up to the work of the mission. The suggestion kindled in his heart a flame of desire for missionary service, and **his mind was soon filled with a rapturous persuasion that he had a divine call to undertake it in Bengal. The impressions he had received in August 1785, when Isaiah 49 appeared to set forth before him God's purposes as to his career, were now vividly revived, as he contemplated a field of usefulness broader and more fruitful than he had ever before imagined.** In the deep emotion thus excited, he spent the night of Thursday, the 12th of January 1787, "in prayer and meditation, with fear and trembling; and concluded that he was heard of God; and rested satisfied."¹²³

Ever ready to interpret any change in events to God's working to advance him he believed that the captain and his "mate" changing their minds and agreeing to free him from his duty-bound obligations as a sign from God. The fact that this led to his need to resort to bribery and falling deeper into debt did not concern him as he had good prospects for his investment.

Indeed, Mr. Thomas computed all his "expenses and losses in staying in the East Indies" "to amount to 600 £, at the least." This was much more than he had to lose; but he had arranged that the ship should carry home a quantity of Indian muslins and other goods, which he believed would sell for at least 2000 £, and he confidently expected that his profits would clear every liability and leave a considerable surplus for the support of his family until they could join him in Bengal¹²⁴.

Chute, when briefly covering these events, puts them in the most favorable light possible. This gives his readers a very biased picture of what really happened. Continuing to ignore scripture Chute says:

Strongly desirous of seeing India won for Christ, Charles Grant expressed the wish that Thomas, who was fervently devoted to Christian work, might remain in Bengali and preach the gospel to the heathen.

This proposal, as will be seen, was entirely in accord with the aspirations begotten in the Christian surgeon by that chapter in Isaiah¹²⁵. But there were obstacles in the way of acceding to Grant's desire. Behind him in England the doctor had left his family, and before him in India was the task of acquiring a difficult language. Furthermore, he was already employed as a ship's officer, and how could he allow the ship to return without him? But these things were surmountable. As for his family, they could come later, and by dint of diligence the new tongue could be mastered. But what about his position on shipboard? Between him and fellow officers some unpleasantness had arisen because he had been so taken up with religious matters on shore; and on account of this variance Thomas was the more anxious to get free from the engagement which bound him. The night of Jan. 12, 1787., was spent by him in meditation and prayer, and the conclusion was reached that God would have him stay and begin work with a view to saving the benighted pagans. Accordingly, after quite a financial surrender his connection with the ship was severed¹²⁶.

July 1786 to April 1787 His new Paedobaptist friends while he was aboard ship and then on land.

¹²³ Lewis pages 59, 60

¹²⁴ Ibid. page 64

¹²⁵ Isaiah chapter 49

¹²⁶ Chute pages 16, 17

For the purposes needed here it is sufficient to note that Thomas became associated with several Paedobaptist Christian or at least God-fearing men. These men were either wealthy, very influential or both. The most important of these were Mr. Charles Grant, Mr. Robert Udny, Mr. Chambers, the Reverend David Brown and later Mr. George Udny. His initial friendship and usefulness regarding these men contributed to his change of plans to become a missionary as related above.

For some time, things went more or less smoothly with only some undercurrents of the troubles to come. A letter Thomas wrote to his brother dated January 11th, 1787, gives some idea of what was happening from his point of view.

I have a piece of news for you. You must understand there is a Mr. Grant here, a man of fortune and consequence, who has projected a mission of gospel ministers to this country from England. The papers are drawn up and are now in my hands, submitted to any alteration I may think necessary. Mr. and Mrs. Grant, with about eight or nine others, dependents, serve God, and he himself is a humble, teachable, strict and zealous man. **He is too partial to me, a great deal, and has made an offer for my support with my family**, if I would stay here and reside at Malda. He has made several alterations in the proposals of my stating and has now given the papers wholly into my hands. Mr. Brown, a preacher of the gospel here, who has the care of an Orphan House, at first regulated the plan, and named eight young men who are in the Colleges at home, as fit persons to be invited to this work. Here I have objected that young men in Colleges are tender and nice, unlikely to endure hardship; that, besides, from the scarcity of gospel ministers of this denomination in England, it was to be supposed that, if either of these men were likely and promising, he would be taken particular care of for destitute churches there at the disposal of friends of the gospel. **Besides I argue that the character of missionaries ought to be settled and known, having been proved.** So we have spared the young collegians from the undertaking. Brown is jealous of me, and severe; but I stand as firm as a rock in mind and conscience, **and am too high in the favor and opinion of Mr. Grant**, to whom the Lord has made me useful.¹²⁷

Here is yet another instance of Thomas's pride and arrogance. He himself was not settled, really known, and not proved in any real way. Instead, he jealously guarded his own position.

Lewis gives some more details about what was taking place at this time.

The arrangements into which Mr. Thomas and his friends wished to enter involved many very difficult and delicate questions and relations, which ought to have been considered beforehand with much deliberation and care. Mr. Grant was a man remarkable for his great prudence: Mr. Thomas certainly could make no pretensions even to an ordinary share of it; and his precipitancy in this matter is not so much to be wondered at, as that of his friends¹²⁸.

And again a little later Lewis continues:

A closer knowledge of new circumstances and associates often falsifies our anticipations regarding them; and, most commonly, we find ourselves **self-deceived**. We thought to leave evil influences and sinful tendencies behind us in the scenes of our former failures and defeats, and expected to have, in our new positions and surroundings, only incentives to all that is good; but we discover

¹²⁷ Lewis page 58

¹²⁸ Ibid. page 63

that we have brought with us into our new world our old dispositions, and have greater need than ever to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation.

It was so with Mr. Thomas now. Not that he had looked forward to a life of quiet enjoyment in the service of Christ henceforth. He had endeavored duly to estimate all the difficulties of the course he was adopting. He was prepared to encounter many trials, to engage in painful and laborious efforts in preaching the gospel, to brave the contempt and hostility of his ungodly countrymen and the hatred and persecution of idolators, and at last, perhaps, to suffer a martyr's death. "None of these things moved him;" but these were not the evils with which he was actually to contend. **Dangers more subtle and insidious, and trials more bitter, which he had not anticipated, were, however, close at hand**¹²⁹.

Even at this time some of the "dangers" started to appear. Mr. Grant paid for the mission run by Mr. Kiernander to continue. Lewis tells us:

It was supposed that the Calcutta mission would be revived by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, under whose patronage Mr. Kiernander had laboured, and that they would send out clergymen to conduct public services in the church; but in the meanwhile a temporary arrangement had to be made in Calcutta.

This occurrence gave a new direction to Mr. Thomas's thoughts. He was secretly wishful that Mr. Grant would make him the minister of the mission church, and a word of invitation to it, would, no doubt, have assured him that this was the purpose of God. All the night of March. 28th, he lay "very wakeful, with continual thought and prayer concerning the expediency of abiding in Calcutta; and was all night long much impressed about Kiernander's church" thinking, as he wrote in his journal, "I might be called to speak for Christ there, till I had gained the Bengalese, and then there might be persons arrive better fitted to fill the station. I leave this before the Lord, hoping that, if it is of Him, I shall hear my friends speak of it, and find His direction in their mouths." He appears to have sounded Mr. Grant's inclinations in this matter; but met with no encouragement to think that his wishes would be realized, and he therefore soon abandoned them¹³⁰.

Lewis helpfully summarizes Mr. Grant's plans for his mission and Thomas's reaction to them:

Mr. Grant's plan for Mr. Thomas, from the time of his engagement, had been, that he should go to Malda, where Mr. George Udny would, for the present, entertain him in the English Factory. **There he was to study Bengali, and to preach in English to the Europeans under Mr. Udny's direction.** When he had gained an adequate knowledge of the Bengali language, he was to live at Goamalty, where Mr. Grant possessed a large tract of land within the limits of the ancient city of Gour, and had established an indigo factory, under the management of Mr. Henry Creighton. ... Not without some secret reluctance, Mr. Thomas adhered to these plans. He would have liked rather to continue in Calcutta till he could preach in Bengali. His friends had highly appreciated his efforts and had warmly acknowledged the benefit they had derived from his instructions. He delighted in his labours amongst them, and was very unwilling to leave them; and though the beginning of April was fixed upon as the time of his departure, he remained fully a month longer, before all his arrangements could be completed.

¹²⁹ Ibid. page 65

¹³⁰ Ibid. page 69, 70

Before he left, however, he saw reason to believe that his friends were ceasing to defer to his judgment in religious matters as they had done at the beginning. Both Mr. Chambers and Mr. O'Beck had, he believed, brought with them from the Coromandel coast strong Arminian tendencies, upon which he looked with great alarm and aversion. Mr. Chambers had been one of his warmest admirers at the outset of their intimacy, and he was still "kind and loving;" but he would not be argued out of these errors. Mr. Thomas was a firm Calvinist and felt it to be his duty to warn Mr. Grant of the pernicious tendencies of his brother-in-law's sentiments. Mr. Grant, however, loved peace; and while he assented to his friend's doctrinal theses, he strongly dissuaded him from controversy. Mr. Thomas was intensely uneasy in the restraints thus imposed upon his ministry, and they served to reconcile him to departure to Malda; where he hoped to be able to declare all the counsel of God, as he had himself received it¹³¹.

This was the first among other divisions over doctrinal matters.

It should be noted that Thomas has only just begun to learn Bengali. This was on the 8th of March 1787. Mr. William Chambers introduced Ram Ram Basu to him. Basu became his teacher. As will become obvious Basu had a vast influence over the mission for years to come, even though he was never a regenerated Christian. As Basu had little knowledge of English at this time progress must have been very slow initially.

18th June 1787- 1788 More and more controversy and dissension – First missionary efforts.

Speaking about his time in 1787 at Mr. George Udny's (called by Thomas "the Chief or Governor") he says: "In his house I live; under whom are about seven Europeans, and sometimes more, who, together with visitors, officers, and people of rank that drop in, compose our family." It was to this small group that he ministered to by various means including preaching. After giving the weekday and Sunday routine in some detail he writes "... and truly there is One among us whom we see not. I find my poor talent enlarged, and by night and by day, the word of God is as a fire shut up, or breaking out. **The Lord says great and many things to me in Isaiah 49**"¹³².

The lasting effects of Isaiah 49 can again be seen in his closing remarks from this part of his journal.

We are all young men; and **they look to me on all occasions, in matters of duty**. I feel how unfit I am in some instances, and perceive much more, with the quelling of Christ within. Considering the kindness of God my Saviour, I am baser than ever. However, **the Lord smiles upon me, and makes every man about me join Him. They make too much of me, and sometimes become snares to my soul**. But the Lord is my strong tower. I run into it and am safe from everything¹³³.

Lewis remarks on this fact saying:

Frequent references to Isaiah 49 show that he never lost sight of the predictions in it which had with such peculiar power been impressed upon his heart. He evidently was greatly predisposed to apocalyptic studies, and was fully persuaded that the grand events foreshadowed in divine revelation were swiftly approaching fulfilment, and would in a very few years be developed with

¹³¹ Ibid. page 70, 71

¹³² Ibid. page 78

¹³³ Ibid. page 79

an awful rapidity, which would demonstrate the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power.¹³⁴,
135

Despite Thomas words quoted above; “the Lord smiles upon me, and makes every man about me join Him.” Lewis tells a different story much closer to the truth:

Pleasant as, in most respects, his situation at Malda was, it had, nevertheless, its own disadvantages, in addition to his painful separation from his wife and little one. He resided in the same house with those to whom he ministered, and in the intimacy of daily companionship, he found it difficult to avoid the social temptations which were regarded by him as his most powerful and insidious foes. The amusements of his associates, their quoit playing and shooting, sometimes enticed him from the studies to which he had pledged all his strength; his cheerfulness now and then degenerated into jocularly; or the discussions which arose out of ordinary conversation were pursued with such positiveness of assertion and combative ardor as he afterwards feared were very unwise and injurious. As on board the Earl of Oxford, so here also, his sensitive vivacious mind too often forgot in familiar intercourse with his daily associates the severe restraints which he had anxiously adjusted to himself in his closet, and **this failure to realize and preserve his own ideal of the Christian deportment** and spirit was the occasion of frequent and bitter lamentation and repentance¹³⁶.

Striving so hard in his own strength, his ‘flock’ affected him in a bad way more than he affected them in any good way. Whatever the facts are Thomas ended the year 1787 on a very positive note. He says in part: “He hath brought me out of great and sore troubles, and cast my lot in pleasant places. He has raised me up new and valuable friends. He hath watered my soul from on high, and after the storms of sorrow and the floods of care I have been used to all my life, he has made peace in my borders, and filled me with the finest of the wheat. Yea, he hath turned my mourning into dancing.”¹³⁷

Never content for long because of the great things he saw for himself in Isaiah 49 and in dreams etc. he stirred up a hornet’s nest of trouble with his friends in Calcutta. This started with Thomas’s concerns over what he saw as Arminian tendencies in Mr. William Chambers as noted earlier in this document. Of these past interactions Lewis gives some more details.

He had indeed already said enough to Mr. Chambers to provoke some displeasure; and, in his journal, before leaving Calcutta, he speaks of him as a **“Galatian,” who had, at his first coming, “received him as an angel of God, even as Jesus Christ** but to whom he was now almost “become an enemy, because he told him the truth.” **But, at the end of April, he prepared a letter to Mr. Chambers, inveighing against the tenets he held in terms so authoritative and severe that it must have been grievously offensive**¹³⁸.

Again and again, we see his extreme pride and arrogance. He sees himself as “as an angel of God, even as Jesus Christ” as he ministered to others. Nor is this all as can be seen in part of a new attack upon Chambers in a letter. In the conclusion of this letter Thomas writes:

¹³⁴ He wrote a letter to Dr. Stennett at this time in which he detailed some of the many disasters that were happening to India.

¹³⁵ Lewis page 81

¹³⁶ Ibid. pages 83, 84

¹³⁷ Ibid, page 84

¹³⁸ Ibid. page 86

I earnestly entreat you to be careful what use you make of this friendly letter; **for if the Lord is not in it, He hath not spoken by me.** I humbled myself before you in red ink,*¹³⁹ on purpose that you might freely discharge me from setting up myself as some great one. **I abase myself; but the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, and Christ's people shall, by and by, acknowledge me, that I am among the seed which the Lord hath blessed,** Isaiah 61:9.^{140, 141}

False humility loves to debase itself in order to magnify itself at the same time as we can see here in Thomas's words. He is in fact saying clearly that he is someone great and special.

Chambers appealed to Mr. Grant but by and large Thomas refused to back down:

Mr. Grant seriously remonstrated with him upon the arrogance and indiscreetness of his letter, and advised him to withdraw it. In reply, Mr. Thomas was ready to admit his imprudence, in not having sought out more acceptable words, but still affirmed the substance of his epistle to be according to the will of God¹⁴².

January 17th, 1788, saw a bitter end to their friendship. I believe Mr. Chambers was correct when he placed the blame on Thomas's "inconsistent behavior he has observed in me ever since I have been in this country!" Thomas of course rejected any such idea.

At the same time the Anglican Rev. Brown was advancing in place and power. Thomas responded in extreme arrogance as detailed by Lewis in the following quotes:

Mr. Grant must have suffered immense vexation in the differences we have now adverted to. To him Mr. Thomas wrote most frequently and voluminously, and although for several months his friendship was preserved, it was very sorely tried. His brother-in-law and Mr. Brown complained of the character of Mr. Thomas's letters to them. Mr. Thomas on the other hand appealed to him against them both, complaining of the unchristian manner in which they had received his "brotherly reproof," and also sent to Mr. Grant himself admonitory epistles, which he must have found it hard to take in good part. Mr. Thomas saw with grief that, under Mr. Brown's influence, Mr. Grant was becoming a more thorough churchman than before. He also thought him less zealous for the spread of the gospel, and feared that he had become more "conformed to this world." Having been his intimate friend and adviser in spiritual things, he very naturally wished to be so still, and wrote him pungent exhortations adapted, as he supposed, to the state of his soul. Two very lengthy letters upon "Laodicean Christians," in which the evils of lukewarmness were forcibly described, were amongst these, and the busy Member of the Board of Trade must have sighed over the bulky documents which, almost every week, came to him from Malda. Mr. Thomas also ventured upon topics which prudence would most certainly have counselled him to avoid. Thus when Mr. O'Beck, of whom Mr. Grant thought so highly, was invited by the trustees to occupy the school house, next door to the mission church, and to assist Mr. Brown in looking after the poorer and more ignorant members of the congregation, Mr. Thomas expressed his strong disapproval, **in terms which must have been very offensive to the good man's friends.** Mr. Brown himself fared but little better at his hands.

¹³⁹ * He refers here to a note he had written to Mr. Chambers, in which he disclosed the most discreditable facts of his own history, a piece of gratuitous candor which did him considerable harm in the estimation of his Calcutta friends. (Lewis's foot note)

¹⁴⁰ Isaiah 61:9 reads as follows: "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed." This is speaking of converted Jews of the future.

¹⁴¹ Lewis page 87

¹⁴² Ibid. page 88

Mr. Thomas said he could hope for no success as the results of his labours and told Mr. Grant, “I fear that the mission plan is ruined; for whoever prospered who was like him? But I am not afraid: the Lord Jesus Christ will Himself send out labourers in a way not sought for or expected.”

However, such asperity may have been provoked by the bitterness which had been manifested towards him by some of his former friends, it is to be deplored that anything should have induced Mr. Thomas to write of God-fearing men so severely. The consequences to himself were most painful and disastrous¹⁴³.

On the same page Lewis gives his motivation in his own words. **Thomas believed that “necessity was laid upon him” in these things: that God had made other men’s sins a burden to his heart, that he should reprove them in the spirit of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Ezra,** “whether men would hear or whether they would forbear.” He actually believed that he was an Old Testament prophet in his time.

Not content with all the harm he has caused already Thomas embarked upon the subject of Baptism. I will skip ahead briefly to summarize how Lewis relates this subject before going back to Thomas’s missionary efforts at this time. I will not relate Lewis’s attempts to exonerate Thomas.

Convinced that he ought to speak out plainly upon the subject of baptism to his friends, Mr. Thomas proceeded to do so with the utmost confidence, not only in the scriptural authority of the opinions he himself held, but in his ability to bring others to accept them. **It was not in his nature to do things by halves.** Monday. This evening, I had a very long conversation with Mr. Udney about baptism, in which we greatly disagreed. I avowed my sentiments clearly and was grieved. After prayer &c. we were quiet, and I finished the evening with a few reflections upon the opposition I had met with in Calcutta, and, from the length it has gone, concluded that some providence will overtake us, and show itself strong on behalf of them that fear God, and a swift witness against others, &c. ... Friday, All this week I have been labouring night and day about the controversy on Baptism, and I have prepared, **as I suppose, an unanswerable refutation of infant sprinkling and a defense of immersion. Special help from God has surely been bestowed. Truth is on my side, and I fear not; though I am like a sparrow alone.**

My confidence is strong, and I am persuaded that I shall convince every one of my hearers. ... These extracts exhibit the feverish impatience and excitableness of Mr. Thomas’s character, and its sensitive petulant weakness. **He had begun a controversy, full of unpleasantness to his friends, and had, no doubt, used the strongest and hardest arguments he could find to make good his position. When they, however, defended their long-cherished opinions, he was immediately sore and offended!** ... Poor simple man! his tractate on baptism must convince, first them, and then all the misguided Christian world besides; and the profits of its publication should fill the empty pockets of poor Baptist ministers! He could have known little of the world, when he thought the work of persuasion so easy.^{144, 145}

Before turning to Lewis’s summary of this time it is important to notice what he says about Thomas’s first real missionary experiments. Lewis relates some very significant facts that are mostly ignored by writers of the Baptist mission and Carey:

¹⁴³ Ibid. pages 92, 93

¹⁴⁴ Not only little of the world but also little of God and his ways.

¹⁴⁵ Lewis pages 99- 103

A very considerable part of the young missionary's time at Malda was daily devoted to the acquisition of the language in which he was to preach to the heathen. This was a pursuit not at all congenial to his natural disposition and his dislike of the close application it rendered necessary afforded him abundant occasion for bitter self-reproach in his journal. In after years, however, he recognized the kind help of the Lord in the perseverance and success with which, notwithstanding all drawbacks, his studies were now carried forward. Never before did he succeed in learning a foreign language. The mastering of the Bengali tongue, when he learned it, was not an easy task. Standard books in it were then unknown; and its colloquial dialects differed widely in different places.*¹⁴⁶ Hindustani was mixed largely with them all. **The Moravians had pronounced Bengali to be inadequate to the statement of Christian doctrines, an opinion which Mr. Thomas strongly combatted.** He had a clever teacher in his munshi, Rain Ram Basu, but found very little help from books¹⁴⁷.

Lewis here and in the footnote gives a much more unbiassed account of the obstacles faced even by 1799, in dealing with the Bengali language. Dependent upon one person, Ram Ram Basu alone he started a translation of Matthew into Bengalese.¹⁴⁸ This was on March 4th, 1788. The effort failed though he felt himself proficient enough to start preaching in that language. He was so self-assured and certain for success, even at this very early stage, that he said in his journal:¹⁴⁹

Many were pricked in their heart, and unitedly sent forth a sort of involuntary groan, appearing to be ready to say, 'Sirs, what shall we do?' The strips of paper with the text in red ink¹⁵⁰ were caught at, like so many bank-notes, and eager were they for more when the last was given. I observed also that, when I had done, they did not all get up immediately, as before; but sat astonished, till I had spoken to them repeatedly to go¹⁵¹.

At the end of Chapter 4, from which the quotations above have been given, Lewis gives a noteworthy summary of Thomas at this time. It is somewhat lengthy but well worth understanding. One must remember however that Lewis's goal was to present facts in the most favorable manner toward Thomas as possible. This can clearly be seen in the text below. For example, instead of realizing that Thomas's faith was based solely on works Lewis says below: "It is matter for more pleasant observation that none of these things moved him from his firm confidence in the fidelity of Him who has promised." Here again he relied solely on his self-deception.

¹⁴⁶ * Mr. Forster, in the introduction to his English and Bengali Vocabulary, **published in 1799**, says,—“There never having been a native Bengali grammarian, nor indeed any author of note (I speak of the vulgar Bengali), who might be considered a standard, the orthography has, consequently, never been fixed; and being current over an extensive country, and amongst an illiterate people, almost every word has been, and continues, in one district or other, to be variously spelt, and not unfrequently is so disguised as to render it difficult to recognize it when met in its genuine form in the Songskrit.”

¹⁴⁷ Lewis pages 94, 95

¹⁴⁸ In a later chapter Lewis gives some information on the lack of quality and failure of this translation: Yet another condition was added. Mr. Thomas had finished the translation of Matthew into Bengali, and was eager to print it. Mr. Grant, who probably thought that this translation had been undertaken in unfriendly rivalry with Mr. W. Chambers, and who concluded that it was a very imperfect version of the word of God, insisted that it should on no account be published.

Baptist translators of the New Testament within the present century' have offended Christians of other denominations by their pertinacity in translating all the divine record; since it has been contended that it is desirable to leave some terms in the obscurity of the original Greek. It may be remarked of Mr. Thomas's version of Matthew, that it was charged with the opposite offence of retaining some words, not indeed from the Greek, but from his own vernacular! **Despairing of any suitable Bengali renderings, he had introduced such terms as gospel, Lord, and Holy Ghost, by mere transliteration of the English words in Bengali characters, an arrangement which was justly regarded as very unsatisfactory.** (Lewis page 129)

¹⁴⁹ This was about a sermon he preached at Goamalty on Sunday April 27th to about 150 natives.

¹⁵⁰ These contained a scripture verse in Bengali

¹⁵¹ Lewis page 98

Mr. Thomas's religious experience during this first year at Malda exhibits the same unevenly ardent aspirations after holiness, and the same bitterness of disappointment in the consciousness of a strong tendency to sink down to the level of a mere pleasant associate of the cheerful young men around him, as he had experienced in his former situation: the same lofty standard of self-denying consecration, and the same failures in the attempts he was continually making to attain and preserve it. **No mention is made here of any new vision, but he appeared to live as if always in anticipation of disclosures from the unseen world.** He was persuaded that God still spake with men in dreams and visions of the night; and **often recorded his nightly fancies, as though they were intended to be vehicles of instruction to his mind.** They may, perhaps, inform us as to the inmost desires and most secret thoughts of the dreamer, and it is interesting to notice that they were almost always "employed on the word of God," or in imaginary translating or preaching in Bengali.

The enthusiasm of his nature appears also very particularly in relation to prayer. He took such promises as Mark 11:24, in their strictest literalness of interpretation. In the confidence that their prayer of faith would save the sick, he gathered his companions around the death-bed of Mr. Forsyth, and earnestly besought his recovery; which, as we have seen, was not granted. In another case, he was most keenly distressed and disappointed. A poor child afflicted with disease of the spleen was brought to him for treatment, and the medicines given, acting upon a very feeble constitution, resulted in most dangerous symptoms. Mr. Thomas fasted, wept and prayed, and endeavored to obtain the child's recovery by most importunate supplications, which he tried hard to assure himself must prevail; but the issue disappointed his desires, and covered him with sorrowful humiliation. These incidents are related as not unimportant contributions to the understanding of his character and history. **How many of the mistakes and disasters of his life were traceable to his premature confidence that God would bring to pass the desires he laid before Him in prayer. By his sanguine excitable mind an assurance of this kind was regarded as almost a special revelation, in reliance upon which he ventured upon things which in the end disappointed his hopes and seriously augmented his difficulties.**

It is a matter for more pleasant observation that none of these things moved him from his firm confidence in the fidelity of Him who has promised. He was ever ready to attribute all error and failure to himself; and with abasement to acknowledge that, if his requests were not granted, it was only because he had not fulfilled the express conditions of his Lord: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." Never did his trust in the truth and divinity of God's word seem to waver. He had been skeptical in his younger days, as has been seen; and now he was continually encountering skeptical arguments and sneers from visitors at Mr. Udny's house. But no such argument had weight with him, and no sneer made him ashamed of his hope. He had too truly "tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come" to be ever disposed to question the foundation of his faith¹⁵².

Had his faith been real at any time he would have shown the fruits of the spirit in his life and actions. In fact, he showed the opposite.

¹⁵² Ibid. pages 105, 106

Chapter six

More details of his time in Bengal

1788 – 1792. Continued alienation and delusion.

Rather than keeping to Lewis's chronology I will combine to some extent the contents of three chapters of Lewis's biography of Thomas that deal with specific issues. Lewis titles his fifth chapter Controversy and Disaster. – 1788-89. As Lewis states early in this chapter Thomas, as I have already stated, felt that he had the same status as an Old Testament prophet. Lewis says: "He was deeply conscious of a very special call to the ministry he was exercising, a call something like that which laid 'the burden of the Lord' upon the ancient prophets." The following chapter 'Harla Gachi, 1789-90' details the further decline and failures of Thomas. Chapter 7, which deals with the years 1790 to 1792 continues for a while with the topics of the previous two chapters before turning to a different and important subject. A great deal of what happened during this time has direct and lasting effects upon the combined missionary effort that followed, especially William Carey's part. Lewis, in a footnote on page 157 appeals to Carey as a staunch supporter of Thomas.

It may be well to introduce here Mr. Carey's opinion on this matter, written after three years' companionship with Mr. Thomas, with sufficient knowledge of his constitutional peculiarities and defects, and after close intimacy with Mr. Udny and other Indian friends of Mr. Grant. He wrote, June 17th, 1796, "Mr. Grant's opposition to the work, I think abominable. The fact is, as can be proved by a long correspondence between him and Mr. Thomas, now in preservation, that Mr. Thomas left a much more lucrative employment, and the society of his family, at Mr. Grant's desire, to preach the gospel among the natives; who afterwards, because he would not conform to his peremptory dictates, in matters which he could not conscientiously do, cut off all his supplies, and left him to shift for himself in a foreign land."

Carey's support for Thomas should come as no surprise to any knowledgeable Christian. As should be obvious by now, my purpose is to set the facts before the reader so that a more objective and scriptural assessment of Thomas can be made. The fact is that if, as I feel, Thomas was totally outside the Lords will, the same must be said of Carey himself. Carey's whole future is so intimately connected with Thomas's as to be mutually dependent. Carey had to take Thomas's side as that was *iso facto* his own justification for himself. Also, it should be noted that Carey's support flies in the face of the extreme suffering Thomas caused for Carey and his family.

Lewis, in the opening paragraph of chapter 5 gives an example of the extreme lengths Thomas went to in his zeal to 'minister' to his 'friends':

... he felt it to be his duty to write to them with a frequency and copiousness which were, to say the least, imprudent and ill-judged. Think of a letter to Mr. Robert Udny, upon "the divine story of Jacob's wrestling's," **extending to eighty-eight pages!** Mr. Grant was more usually the object of this *cacoethes scribendi*, and he received the elaborate treatises which came to him from Maida, with dismay and with ineffectual remonstrance. These letters dealt with whatever their author considered a failing with almost epigrammatical severity; and could not but provoke antagonism in those who felt themselves treated with most uncompromising plainness of speech by a man whose advice they had now no disposition to seek¹⁵³.

¹⁵³ Lewis page 107

Much of these three chapters deal with the battle Thomas waged with his so-called friends. Lewis gives examples from both sides, if the reader is interested in going into more detail, I suggest reading the chapters in full at their leisure. For my purpose here I'm giving short extracts. These two are from a letter Thomas wrote to Mr. Grant.

He that is really right in anything commanded does not appear to me to be the cause of a division, however the church may be rent by his holding fast his integrity. He that differs from him is the real cause of the division, and not he that abides in the doctrine he has learned. 'Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.' Romans 16:17-18. Here we have a case of controversy, with division and separation; but all the censure falls on him that was in the wrong, and he that was on the side of truth is acquitted of blame. And in all controversies it is the same; though it is impossible now for those that are on the side of truth in any controversy so to prove it as to convince all the enemies of truth, or of any part of truth. Happy is the man who enters into no controversy but such as he knows to have the truth of the Most High for its foundation. He is a happy man, although he be now never so much contemned¹⁵⁴.

As to 'a heated imagination,' have you well considered my natural temper, my religious education, the time I have made a profession of religion, with the suddenness and changeableness of heated imaginations? Have you well and maturely considered the vast difference that the Almighty makes in men's gifts, and that this is His wisdom; that every man hath his proper gift of God, some after this manner, and some after that? that He alone knows why this man is more slow and solid, and that man 'heated in his imagination,' or, suppose we say, in his affections? Have you considered that the Lord can make His word a fire in our bones? Have you well considered the sin and folly of men, and watched and guarded against them, in despising the gifts of others, because they differ from their own? **This is the very course of a proud spirit, that values itself on judgment, to contemn and despise others, just like the sage Pharisees did.** If you have well considered all these things, I will say no more on the subject, but yield this point also, desiring to know how I may be cooled¹⁵⁵.

Rather than humbling himself and seeing his own sins and failures he blames Mr. Grant for everything while at the same time he exalts himself. **In fact, he was so self-deluded that Lewis tells his readers:**

Perhaps no more striking proof of Mr. Thomas's lack of common prudence could be given, than that which appears in **the fact** that he employed himself as he went back to Malda in writing to urge his brother to come and join him in his mission! He had said how much he should like such an arrangement when he was himself first engaged by Mr. Grant, and he then believed that his influence would suffice to ensure his brother's support as his fellow worker. But now, everything was disastrously changed, he well knew that his own engagement was no longer regarded with any satisfaction by his principal patron. **How could he, in such circumstances, without a word of encouragement even from Mr. Udny, have endeavored to bring his brother, with a wife and young family, out to Bengal?** It can only be said in reply that he believed the mission to be so directly the Lord's work, that he might safely rely upon Him to meet all the wants he incurred in the methods employed to accomplish it¹⁵⁶.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. pages 117, 118

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. page 122

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. pages 116, 117

This is one obvious illustration of how Thomas's will, and false zeal was imposed upon the later Baptist mission to disastrous consequences. Thomas did the same thing in effect to Carey, his first wife Dorothy, who was driven insane and their children.

Thomas in his mad certainty of God's being 100% on his side no matter what even resorted to gambling in God's name. If this does not show the true state of his heart and 'faith' I'm not sure what will.

This act happened two times, once in thought only and once in actual practice. In May 1790 he wrote in his journal:

With the few Rupees left I intend to put into the Madras Lottery, **accounting that very lawful in exigency** which would be otherwise questionable and sinful. 'The lot is cast into the lap, and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.' Proverbs 16:33. I intend also to exercise my profession, encouraged by the example of Barnabas and Paul, and by the thought that natives, seeing me manage both temporal and spiritual things, may have an example before them, shewing that true religion leads no man into a jungle, or out of society¹⁵⁷.

Lewis comments: "**The very dangerous doctrine, enunciated above, that the morality of an action depends upon the exigency of the circumstances in which it is performed, is not to be defended.** The temptation to invest in the Lottery was not, however, at this time yielded to. As we shall see, it reverted at a later period, and was then acted upon."

It seems that the actual act happened on October 4th, 1791. Lewis's account ends with a very contradictory sentence showing his desire to put even this is as good a way as possible.

On the 13th of September, he left Maida and his house at Bethelpur, hoping to be able to carry out his design, and go to England at the beginning of 1792. But how was he to manage this, overwhelmed as he was with debt and surrounded with difficulties? After leaving India, Mr. Grant "showed some favor probably it took the form of a contribution which Mr. Udny might apply towards the expenses of the homeward voyage. Mr. Grant evidently felt that as he had been instrumental in inducing Mr. Thomas to remain in Bengal, he ought to assist him to leave it. **Mr. Thomas's debts, the same entry shows, were now estimated at 1000 £!** His hope of discharging them appeared to be smaller than ever! In his thoughts of going home, it was by no means his wish to forsake his mission work; he wanted indeed to take Ram Basu home with him, so that the translation might not be interrupted; but, if nothing better could be done to arrange his circumstances, he intended "to appease his creditors, **to regain his family, to come out again, and to go into practice.**"¹⁵⁸ Then he would "take twelve native medical scholars, and twelve European children to educate, and so work himself free of debt!"

The temptation to try what a lottery ticket would do for him reverted under these perplexities; and this time he yielded to it. The counter-check for No. 6457, Madras Exchange, Fourth Lottery, is pasted into his journal, opposite the date, October 4th. Calcutta was all astir with Lotteries and Tontines at this period, and when, towards the end of April in this year, Mr. Charles Weston, a wealthy and very benevolent East Indian member of Mr. Brown's congregation, drew the chief prize in Mr. Tiretta's Lottery, consisting of the Bazar in Calcutta which still bears his name, valued at Rs. 1,96,000, Mr. Thomas was **probably irresistibly inclined** to believe that this method of relief from

¹⁵⁷ Ibid. page 163

¹⁵⁸ This is as events show exactly what he did. Putting himself first he left the mission, Carey and his family as well as his supporters back in England in dire straits.

his difficulties would be effectual. **Experience taught him, however, that this was not according to God's will**¹⁵⁹.

There is another subject of some importance in these chapters. This is Thomas's deliberate blame-shifting his financial difficulties upon his one-time friends. Rather than take the responsibility that was his he blamed them for his own failure to pay his debts. He treated them like he was the master and all important one while they were to be at his beck and call. As shown above Carey came down firmly in Thomas' favor. Lewis tells us:

Notwithstanding the kindness he continued to receive at Maida, his relations there were now greatly disturbed. Mr. Udny was naturally influenced by Mr. Grant's view of his proceedings, and as Mr. Grant would not accede to the proposal to pay his debts, Mr. Udny also finally withdrew his generous offer. It would have been far better for the unhappy debtor had that generous offer never been made. In that case, he must have grappled with his difficulty as he himself could; and he must have done it at once. But, comforted as he was by Mr. Udny's promise of aid, and by his prompt assurance, "We can both very well do it," he wrote off to his creditors, engaging that they should speedily be paid, an engagement not to be fulfilled. He was also encouraged to think that his Indian friends *ought to* extricate him from his debt, as he believed they could most easily do; and the expectation that sooner or later they would do it took possession of his mind. **Unreasonable as this expectation may have been, he justified it by the considerations that his calamity befell him after he had left his more lucrative profession to become a missionary, that the payments and sacrifices he had made in order to obtain his release from the ship formed a considerable part of his deficit, and that, if he had gone home to manage his own affairs, much of the loss he suffered would have been escaped.**¹⁶⁰

Another quote is from his Journal in mid-September 1789: "I feel sure that my debt happened to me, in part, to try those who were quite able to deliver me, but they delivered me not; and also to chastise me, and to humble and prove me; and, if so, in due time, the Lord will remove it;"¹⁶¹

On February 9th, 1790, he lays out his thoughts to his father in a letter. In part he says:

I am more indebted than ever, and less able to pay. Yet I have not less hope than I had; for God is able to deliver me, let my case be every way bad. One prophet had his creditor to pay after he was dead, and the Lord paid it. 2 Kings 6:1-7. I am also in the hands of those who are very well able to pay me clear. 20,000 £ a year is supposed to be the income of two who profess highly to be related to the Lord Jesus Christ, and who have also professed to love me. **If I am their brother, then, you will say, 'Are they therefore obliged to pay your debts?' Why, I must confess, I fully believe they are;** for 'we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,' how much more our superfluous money! And the holy apostle makes this a determining point, you know, and condemns him who 'seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels.' Methinks, sometimes, whatever chastisement this affliction is to me, still it is the trial of the Lord to them, as much perhaps as 'Go, and sell all,' was to the ruler: only the ruler's was 'all'; this only a little; for 500 £ or 800 £ is much to me, but mites to them, and not so much. A renewed heart, money-clenched!! I can never believe it; especially when the anathemas of scripture come to mind, which are written to the point, and are like so many aimed thunderbolts, **directed personally to the unpitying, sordid, rich, lucre-craving, covetous and money-loving mind**¹⁶². It is hard to speak, out of an unlearned mouth like

¹⁵⁹ Lewis pages 180, 181

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. page 134

¹⁶¹ Which in fact the Lord never did.

¹⁶² This is what he thinks of his 'Christian friends'. Clearly there was no Christian love in his heart for them.

mine, without uttering unmollified, ill-shaped, and hard-carved things. It looks like a bitter spirit, and like forgetfulness of home faults, to be much taken up with other people's; yet **I do not know what a man is to do, who is a defender of truth and grace, and an opposer of error and wickedness, by profession, if he does not often dwell upon other people's faults; and he may possibly do this from a principle directly opposite to that of the censorious: from a principle of love, and not of hatred; and with a design to do good, and not evil.** I am glad I am a poor, afflicted, despised man; not that these things are at all pleasant; but, for such a wretched man as I, this is the safest posture my heavenly Father could put me in, and the fittest and wisest of measures concerning me. He knows what sort of a man I am. My heart is all window to Him, and His eye covers it. Therefore, let it not altogether vex and fret you that you have a son in such circumstances; but rather hope that when grace grows, and makes him able to bear a little prosperity, then his heavenly Father will beat no loss to find means for his deliverance¹⁶³.

The facts of Thomas's choice have been given above. He allowed his deceptions free reign no matter what common sense or reason would tell him. Perhaps the most important factor was his dependence upon his false understanding of what he believed God has told him in Isaiah 49. Two further quotes from this time show the effect it continued to have on him.

With regard to his proposed removal to Calcutta there, he thought, "he might, if called on, exercise his profession, and do anything he could invent for his creditors and family; not doubting that the one would be paid and the other provided for." **If such a change of plans bore the appearance of "lightness" or fickleness, he fortified himself against that charge in the belief that he "was born to wander from place to place," according to Isaiah 49:21, in which chapter he still read his missionary commission.**¹⁶⁴ Page 163

Mr. Thomas, ever sanguine, expected very great things as the result of Sir W. Jones's recommendations. He thought he might possibly obtain even royal patronage to his undertaking, "and so nursing fathers and mothers to Israel might be kings and queens."—Isaiah 49:28. Such lofty expectations were soon laid low¹⁶⁵.

Already at this point in time (April 11th, 1790, he was looking ahead to support from what he calls the "Strict Baptists" In another letter he says: "I hope the Strict Baptists, as they are called, have the good cause and the right side: if so, I shall never repent in the end¹⁶⁶."

Before closing this section it's instructive to glance at the highly biased way Chute deals with these subjects in Chapter four of his booklet. He seeks to exonerate Thomas and to blame Grant and the others. He even attempts to put Reverent Brown in a good light while twisting the facts of how arrogant and prideful Thomas was. Chute also skips over a lot of the material I have referenced above.

Brown and Thomas were men of totally different make-ups, and they could not well get along together. As a preacher Brown was scholarly and unattractive though **quite evangelical** while Thomas was vivacious and popular, and evangel to a high degree. Thomas hoped Grant would make him minister at Kiernander's mission church until he had acquired the Bengal tongue; but in this he was disappointed, for Brown was chosen to the office¹⁶⁷.

¹⁶³ Lewis page 159

¹⁶⁴ Ibid. page 163

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. page 171

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. page 160

¹⁶⁷ Chute page 18

I refer the reader to the introduction, chapter 2 for details on the following quotation. You will find there a much more balanced representation of the facts: Speaking of Thomas Chute tells us that:

He wished that at the beginning of the gospel stream in Bengal there might be purity: but his method of seeking to secure it did not work to advantage. At great length he wrote to correct what he thought serious error, wrote in quite a dogmatic and dictatorial way. Of the displeasure produced thereby Grant was a partaker. In the first letter written by Carey to the Society that afterward sent him and Thomas forth as their first missionaries, Carey has this to say of his colleague: “The more I know the more I love him. He is a very holy man, but his faithfulness often degenerates into personality, which may account for the difference between Mr. Grant and him.”*, ¹⁶⁸

When Thomas saw that by his plain correspondence, at the time of which we are speaking, serious offence had been given, he wrote with exceeding tenderness to Chambers, for he was not a man whose eyes never became opened to his mistakes, nor was it little that he grieved over them when he saw them. One sentence from this epistle we may here give as suitable to be remembered in connection with his own pioneer missionary labor as a whole: “You are sensible,” he says, “that I meant to do you good, and not evil, in what is past, and also that young beginners do mischief before they do good in most trades and callings, and sometimes it is the same in the gospel.”¹⁶⁹

While dealing with the baptism controversy in the following pages Chute gives a quotation from Thomas that totally contradicts the picture that Chute sought to paint. Incredibly just after this quote, as shown below, Chute calls Thomas a “humble Baptist missionary”. Regarding baptism Chute says:

When the report of the event came south, Robert Udney wrote Thomas questioning the authority of a lay man to baptize. “I wonder,” says Thomas., “what he thinks *a minister* to be! I have been *ministering* to him these twelve months, and yet he is unwilling; to allow me the same authority as a poor uncalled, unsent, unconverted, but ordained gownsman!” At this point the humble Baptist missionary was in collision with a great ecclesiastical system; but he had the right of it, nevertheless.¹⁷⁰

Thomas was oblivious to the fact that in his statement above: “he is unwilling; to allow me the same authority as a poor uncalled, unsent, unconverted, but ordained gownsman!” he is describing himself!

¹⁶⁸ Chute’s note marked above with an * sheds some important information on the quality of the early work Carey and Thomas were doing. Here is that footnote:

*See Serampore Letters, edited by Leighton and Mor nay Williams. G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York and Lon don, 1892. An exceedingly interesting’ book.—In reading the letter from which the above is taken, all the letters of the volume appearing just as they were written—one is reminded of what Fuller once wrote Carey. The missionary had asked the secretary to adhere, when publishing what he wrote, to his mode of spelling Indian words, whereupon Fuller made the following rejoinder: “But you do not always spell alike? Sometimes you write moonshee’, and sometimes munshi’. ‘If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who can prepare for the battle?’ You must again allow me to remind you of your punctuation. I never knew a person of so much knowledge as; you possess of other languages, write English so bad! You huddle half-a-dozen periods into one. Where your sentence ends, you very commonly make only a semicolon, instead of a period, If your Bengal New Testament should be thus pointed, I should tremble for its fate.”

¹⁶⁹ Chute pages 20-22

¹⁷⁰ Ibid. page 23

Shortly after the Lord saved me, he opened the scriptures to me on the subject of baptism. Shortly thereafter I was baptized in a stream in Hanau Germany by young un-ordained missionary. He was in charge of a small group of missionaries. He showed great humility, just the opposite of Thomas. Thomas was uncalled, unsent by God, unconverted and never an elder (minister) in the Baptist denomination's meaning. True to form he reacted in a prideful and very arrogant manner.

Chapter seven

Details of the first false fruits of his Ministry

1788 – 1792. His so called “converts.”

At this time Thomas interacted with three natives in particular: **Ram Ram Basu, Mohan Chandra Adhikari (called by Thomas “the Brahman”) and Pdrbati Charan Mukeqea, a Kulin Brahman of the highest class.**

First: **Ram Ram Basu:** Basu became a highly important and disastrous influence on the future mission as a whole. Thomas’s interactions with this man were directly responsible for his integration into the missions’ affairs. I have noted above that Mr. William Chambers had first introduced Ram Ram Basu to Thomas. Thomas now turned to this unconverted heathen in his hour of need.

He was cheered amidst these discouragements by the hope that the Spirit of God was powerfully working in the heart of his munshi, Ram Basu. This man told him in June 1788, that he had found Jesus to be the answerer of his prayer. He had cried to Him in sickness, and a speedy cure had been granted. Towards the end of the same month, he brought Mr. Thomas, “a gospel hymn of his own composing, the first ever seen or heard of in the Bengalese language,”— a lyric which still holds its place in our collections of Bengali hymns. Ram Basu’s daily conversation betokened also a deep conviction of the truth of the gospel, and there was reason to hope he might soon be an acknowledged follower of Christ. **Brainerd’s interpreter in the Indian language was one of the first converts made by that celebrated missionary, and Mr. Thomas rejoiced in this parallel with his own experience**¹⁷¹.

Another remark by Lewis shows how important Basu was already. Speaking of Thomas’s wife Lewis writes:

... a letter was received which spoke of her coming as sure, and intimated that his beloved brother James was coming with her! **A former dream of the munshi’s was thought to corroborate this delightful news,** and sorrow was turned into joy. But, at the end of July, news arrived that Mrs. Udney had reached Calcutta, and that Mrs. Thomas was not with her¹⁷².

Basu, no doubt, took advantage of Thomas intense reliance on dreams and visions. This is why Thomas became so dependent upon Basu. It is yet another example of God’s anger at all that Thomas was doing. Lewis relates the outcome in this way:

The tidings filled him with anguish; but he had been preparing to go to Calcutta to meet her, and he resolved still to go. She might yet come, perhaps, by some later ship. He therefore left Maida on the 29th of July, and, after a journey made difficult and sometimes even dangerous by contrary boisterous winds, reached Calcutta on the 8th of August. Before arriving there, letters reached him from his wife which destroyed all hope of seeing her soon in Bengal and filled him with unspeakable sorrow¹⁷³.

¹⁷¹ Lewis pages 111, 112

¹⁷² Ibid. page 113

¹⁷³ Ibid. page 113

Second: **Mohan Chandra Adhikari**

As noted above Basu was not the only native of special interest. Lewis introduces a second person in the context of some preaching that Thomas was doing:

All this appearance of extraordinary interest in the gospel soon abated; but amongst his most regular hearers was a man of whom some special notice must be taken. This was **Mohan Chandra Adhikari**, a Brahman, who had a great number of disciples, and was supported by their offerings. When he first attracted the preacher's attention it was in no very promising manner. How often first impressions are justified by after-events! "He constantly came, and heard me from the first," wrote Mr. Thomas, in his earliest reference to him, "but I always thought him a sour, ill-looking fellow, with the most unfavorable, forbidding countenance of them all; so that I felt myself quite discouraged whenever he appeared in sight." But at the end of October, this man came forward with several questions which seemed to indicate a strong desire to know the truth, and he was soon regarded as a very hopeful although in some respects an unsatisfactory enquirer. **It may be feared that he was never anything but an unscrupulous and crafty impostor; but he long succeeded in hiding from Mr. Thomas his true character.** After a few weeks, he wrote him some letters, which have been preserved, **in two of which he professed to relate legends of the gospel history current amongst the Hindus. The deceitfulness of the attempt is most palpable, and the very forms of the names and the expressions he used show that he had simply recast in a Hindu form the facts the missionary had told him, and was now claiming for his version of them the character of Bengali folk-lore.** That his motives in attaching himself to Mr. Thomas were selfish and impure, was speedily made evident by his solicitations to be helped in various secular matters. From this time, he is frequently spoken of in the journals as "the Brahman," and his character will be developed in the progress of this narrative. Other apparently very hopeful hearers were found in neighboring villages, and Mr. Thomas felt the strongest confidence in the success of his mission.

His munshi returned at the beginning of October, "full of the sweetness of the gospel," and Mr. Thomas was very anxious that his apparently sincere faith should be confessed, according to the commandment of the Lord Jesus. Carefully and patiently did the missionary expound to this **supposed convert** the nature and design of Christian baptism, hoping that an example of native consecration to Christ would speedily be exhibited in Bengal. But this was an issue to which Ram Basu was not at all willing to be brought. The call to decision led him to discover many insuperable difficulties in the way of his being at once baptized; and Mr. Thomas soon found that all his fair speeches were of very uncertain value, "**he was such a halving soul.**"¹⁷⁴

Not surprisingly, from what we know of Carey and well as Thomas, we learn that later in 1789 when going to Calcutta that: "He took with him **his munshi and the Brahman Mohan Chand, of whose conversion he now felt confident**, and he hoped that Mr. Grant and others in Calcutta might be excited to renewed interest in the mission by the evidence these persons afforded that the word of God was taking effect upon the natives of Bengal¹⁷⁵." And again, still later: "in the meanwhile, he lived in his boat, moving up and down the river, and preaching constantly to the people he met upon the banks. The munshi and Brahman assisted him in this work with much apparent earnestness, and **his confidence in the reality of their conversion grew stronger daily**"¹⁷⁶.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. pages 124, 125

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. page 137

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. page 141

While on the subject of these so called “converts” who were never converted, Lewis relates some further information. This continues to show just how delusional Thomas was as well as his deep dependence on these two natives. He was in fact as open to demonic forces as the very natives he was supposed to help. I will start with Thomas’s words in his journal and then move onto Lewis’s comments of this event.

September 15th¹⁷⁷. Mr. Grant sent a messenger after me to Nuddea, with a letter, telling me that he had heard of my being about to print my translation of Matthew’s Gospel, advising me against it, and intimating that he is not obliged to afford any countenance or aid to it. In plain English, he threatens to punish me for it by discontinuing his support.

This is one of the most extraordinary things I ever heard of. A missionary threatened by his supporter with severest punishment, for translating a Gospel! I was half-distracted; but **went to prayer with my people** at night. Still I found myself so utterly dejected that I got up, and departed, alone and in the dark, to a solitary place, and there prayed, or rather groaned, to Christ. I besought Him, if I was His servant, and if God had not forsaken me, that, at this extraordinary moment, He would grant me **extraordinary** help, and would answer and direct me, before I returned to my people. I felt assured that He was able to send to me, to use a voice, or by some other method, even before I got back to my boat. But there seemed to be no reply: my dejection continued: I was come within a stone’s-cast of my boat, still praying and expecting that the Lord would help me, **or else I must despair and die**, when, lo! I heard a voice, from out of a boat full of people, say distinctly in Bengalese, Jc mindar jor kare; and, presently after, Kaljaibe!^{*178}

On hearing these first words, my mind was immediately impressed with a sense of God’s wonderful power, in having stopped, by a sudden death, the persecution and threatenings of the late zemindar at Bhulahath; and the thought followed, that He was undoubtedly able to help and deliver me again, in any way He saw good. From the other words, I understood that I was not to send Mr. Grant’s messenger away now, with the short note I had given him; but on the morrow, with a bold and deliberate reply.

I returned comforted, and with my mind fully made up! It was remarkable, though the man was talking very fast, that these were the only words I could at all distinguish or understand. **I know that illusions happen; but this was no illusion, but a gracious interposition of providence.**

The reader may well be startled at such a wild conclusion. Two little unconnected Bengali sentences, reaching his ear amidst the din of a crowd of vociferous natives, suggest to his mind thoughts as to God’s purposes and his own duty, in a most serious crisis in his history, which he thereupon accepts as divinely communicated, and he ventures his very means of support upon the belief that they were really so!

The journal proceeds:

Wednesday, September 16th. —This morning, **I called my beloved munshi and the Brahman, and told them all; asking them what I had best do? They advised me to carry on the translation, and not to fear Mr. Grant, but to fear God. We then all prayed.** Munshi said in his prayer, ‘Who these are, O Lord, or what they are, that hinder this work, whether good or bad, we do not know. Thou alone art Judge; but, Oh, send us Thy help!’ &c.

¹⁷⁷ 1789

¹⁷⁸ “The Zemindar uses violence.” And “He will go tomorrow.”

I prayed in Bengalese also, and had very great liberty and Strength poured into my soul. Afterwards, I rose up, **and in ten hours finished a reply to Mr. Grant**, telling him the work would go on and be printed, even if a press and types had to be made on purpose for it. I said we feared no threats; but would fear God, and ‘at destruction and famine we would laugh.’ I concluded with quotations from Luther on the Galatians, concerning **false brethren**, who opposed, after a time, those whom at first they received with great love.

But now, if the Lord look not down, and with His own omnipotent arm work our deliverance, we are undone. If He prevent not, Mr. Grant will now forsake me, and that will not satisfy him, but he will write to Mr. Udny, and influence him to do the same. Enemies enough there are, and afflictive providences too; so that **in a little while I may become a very *fakir***.^{179, 180}

The fact that Thomas saw himself in such a heathen shows his true character. Lewis, as is his habit, tried to put all this and more in the best possible light. He tells his readers:

The tendencies of Mr. Thomas’s mind to crave supernatural interpositions, and his confidence that his own conclusions were authenticated by special divine direction, have again and again appeared in this narrative. A few months previously, he wrote about Goamalty, in a letter to Mr. Grant, “The Lord’s dealings with me of old, have taught me to look to, and understand, His directions in all such matters, and never swerve. The issue has ever hitherto proved, and always will prove, ‘how blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.’” He acted now in the same confidence, and proceeded with a conscientious, however ill-founded and headstrong, reliance upon his best judgment of the Lord’s will¹⁸¹.

Third “convert”: **Parbati Charan Mukerjea**

A third “convert” rose to prominence a little later. This was **Parbati Charan Mukerjea**, a Kulin Brahman of the highest class. While relating some events in May and June 1790 Lewis introduces Parbati in the following way: “...before the latter month expired, another case, which appeared to be full of remarkable interest, called forth Mr. Thomas’s surprise and thanksgiving. “This was **the supposed conversion of Parbati Charan Mukerjea**, a Kulin Brahman of the highest class. He was a most strict observer of Hindu ceremonies, ...¹⁸²” Parbati was related by marriage to Mohan Chand. Initially he was strongly opposed to Thomas and his work and sought to bring Chand back to Hinduism. Though a **dream** he was **intensely affected but not converted** in any way whatsoever. It must be kept in mind that all three of these natives were not only never saved but were in fact servants of Satan and his kingdom. Thomas, however, was convinced of their sincerity as the following quotations show. As these events show the Satanic influence that Thomas himself was under, they must be recounted here in some length. Lewis takes up this part of the narrative saying:

Parbati was indignant that his words were thus rebutted, and, by a significant act, intimated that he regarded Mohan Chand as a man who had forfeited his caste: when the hooka which Mohan had been smoking was handed to him, he emptied out the water, in the presence of several other persons. Mohan Chand, deeply aggrieved, went out and laid his complaint before God; and afterwards, as it was evening, he did not return, to his company; but retired with his family to rest. At two o’clock the next morning, there was a great cry outside Mohan Chand’s house, and, the door being opened,

¹⁷⁹ According to Definitions from Oxford Languages, a fakir is: “a Muslim (or, loosely, a Hindu) religious ascetic who lives solely on alms.”

¹⁸⁰ Lewis pages 146, 147

¹⁸¹ Ibid. page 148

¹⁸² Ibid. page 165

Parbati was found lying there, apparently in the greatest perturbation and agony of mind. He implored Mohan Chand to tell him the way of salvation by Christ, and to pray for him. Mohan replied as well as he could, and took him over to Ram Basu's house, where they passed the time till daylight in reading, praying, and singing. Parbati forthwith abandoned his flower and river worship, and, about noon, returned to the munshi's house. When asked to explain his great emotion, he told them that **he had had a wonderful and terrific dream**. In it he had seen the Lord of all, seated upon a throne of dazzling brightness, and He had demanded of him how he dared to persecute His servant? and had ordered him to enquire from Mohan Chand what he must do to be saved. Mr. Thomas, in the account from which these particulars are taken, says, "The effects were visible upon his body and mind for several days. I found it very difficult to administer any consolation to him and was afraid the consequences might be fatal; but he continued to hear the gospel daily, and began to join the rest in singing and prayer. He confessed all his former folly, and professed to believe that the Bible was the only word of God, and Jesus Christ the only Saviour." He was a sensible man, appeared to abhor idolatry, became a great and rapid acquirer of Scripture knowledge, seemed likely to be made very useful, and he greatly animated the missionary and his disciples by his company and conversation.*,¹⁸³

As indicated above Lewis gives Thomas's account of this event in a footnote. Because it shows so clearly Thomas's own delusional state it is important to look at this. Here is Lewis's quote of what Thomas wrote:

*Mr. Thomas was deeply convinced of Parbati's sincerity, and has given the following example of the profound feeling he manifested. He says, 'You must know that we were on the river, going to Calcutta, and we had a prayer meeting on setting out. Ram Ram Basu having made his intercessions, I called upon Parbati, whom I had never before heard; and though the munshi's prayer was more judicious and orderly, yet that of Parbati, both in manner and matter, was **at that time inexpressibly sweet and awful to my spirit.**'

The following are my recollections of this unparalleled prayer, as I wrote them down, several days afterwards, August 19, 1790.'

"I performed the rites of the Ganges; I called this good. I worshipped wood and stone; I called this good. I heard the shastras of men, that are all false and vain: I called this good. Lord, I am a most wretched creature to this day: I know nothing, nothing. I have spent all my days in wickedness and have not obtained the least knowledge of God. O put far from me these evil things! O make them depart far from me. I have hearkened now to thy word. I will hear them no more. I will not the least regard those idols of wood and stone anymore! Vanity: lies. Lord, I will hear no more at all these shastras of the Hindus; they are all false and vain. Wretched sinner! Save me! O save, save, save me. Give, Give, O give, Give, O Lord! Give me to know, Hell! what? Heaven! what? Without the blood of Christ I shall never be saved. Without the flesh of Christ I shall never live. Lord, what is the meaning of this? I know not what it is. How can I get the blood of Christ? O teach me. I will do anything thou sayest. Caste! what? Home! what? Friends! what? Life! what? What is anything? All is nothing, without thee. I want no money, I want nothing but thee. O what a wretched sinner am I! O tell me thy way! O tell me by munshi; tell me by the Sahib. We are going to Calcutta. Many, many wicked things are there. O keep us all while we stay there.

"O that I had but love! O that I had but faith! O that I had forgiveness! O that I had but those things which thy people have. Like them, O make me like them, like them. O Lord, how many evil things are in my mind every day! I am a wicked blasphemous wretch! I have shame in me. Wicked shame

¹⁸³ Ibid. pages 166, 167

before the people, and wicked fear of men! Far, O far away from me, put faraway my sins. Forgive me; and teach me what I shall do. I will do anything. O that I did but know what to do: O give—give—give—Lord, what shall, what can I do?”

“Here he burst into a flood of tears, with now and then such fervent cries, as I never before heard. He continued in prayer about half an hour. I read and explained the faithful promises of God to supply the poor and needy, and to satisfy the thirsty soul with living waters. I spoke of the mind, and the inner man, delighting in God manifested in the flesh, and crucified for sin; that this was eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ. After concluding, he retired to his boat, and, as the munshi tells me, wept there over his own sinfulness, a long time.’ Thus far my diary¹⁸⁴.”

Lewis again seeking to put even this in the best way possible even though it was a totally false and demonic event. This man was under and continued to be under the wrath and anger of God. He was mocking God and serving his false idols the whole time. As will be related subsequent events prove this to be the case. Lewis’s footnote continues by quoting Thomas:

“Considering that this took place several weeks after his dream and observing the deep concern of mind, which is but imperfectly expressed in this written account, you will agree with me, that it is a very extraordinary affair; and the loss and shame among men with which it has been ever since followed, **put it beyond all doubt, with me, that it has pleased God to awaken this man.** he continues, [this was written in 1793,] a living witness to thousands, of the vanity of paganism, and the reality of the Christian religion. The Brahmans and relations of these people, who find their interests shaken, have raised reports, stirred up enemies, and brought accusations against them, evidently false; but they behave, on these trying occasions, like Christians, who have their trust and hope in God.¹⁸⁵”

Even immediately after the events just related Thomas’s own hardships were greatly increased by these supposed converts. Lewis writes:

Bhulahath and Gopalpur were full of talk about Parbati’s marvelous vision and conversion, and it is no wonder that Mr. Thomas was greatly cheered by what he witnessed. **Yet there was an aspect of his success which might well fill him with anxiety, and which indeed should have led him to question its reality and worth. Poor as he was, all his converts looked to him for help and support. The munshi was, indeed, his salaried servant, and often needed additional assistance to clear off debts which he was somehow continually contracting. Mohan Chand, ceasing to be the guru of a circle of disciples, required to be supported by an equivalent from the missionary. Parbati also had to be helped with money; and no sooner did Mr. Thomas visit Nanda Lal, than he too “talked with considerable anxiety about food and raiment for his large family.” “A recommendation to trust in Jesus Christ, and to read often Matthew 6:25-34,” was it may feared, not felt by the old Bengali to be of much practical worth. Thus, the poor missionary’s anxieties were sorely aggravated by his apparent success¹⁸⁶.** “Destitute of any salary” for many months, he wanted “to put up a place of worship for his hearers, and to purchase types and a printing press, which they might work for themselves, and print the translation” as it advanced; whilst the burden of finding daily support for his converts pressed heavily upon him; for it was with difficulty sometimes that he could supply his own wants.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid. pages 167, 168

¹⁸⁵ Ibid. page 168

¹⁸⁶ This is another example of a practice of Thomas’s that that Baptist mission later adopted.

In regard to Mohan Chand, the burden became still more intolerable. In June, a claim for Rs. 300, for money borrowed on the occasion of a marriage, was put forth against him by another Brahman; and, this sum not being forthcoming, his creditor sat down before his door, “heavily complaining, in a manner which was supposed to be the prelude to imprecations of the worst evils upon the unhappy family.” Mohan ran off in terror; his wife gave way to frantic distress; and Govinda, their son, shortly afterwards began to complain of symptoms of fever. The effect upon Mr. Thomas was quite as painful, **and, it may well be suspected, more real. He dreaded lest the superstitious fears of his converts should be followed by actual disease, to the injury of the gospel;** so he sent for the creditor, paid him one fourth of the money at once, and gave him a promissory note for the remainder, payable after twelve months! “The family were restored to great joy but the misery of the poor impoverished missionary was enhanced proportionately. He had already been compelled to borrow from his friends at Maida and was keenly feeling the humiliation of the debt. Rs. 650 was owing to one of them, who came, on the 5th of July, as Mr. Thomas feared, to demand the amount. Having no money left, he offered his creditor anything he had, even his boat, if he would take it, in part payment of the sum¹⁸⁷.

The Udney’s came to his rescue to some extent, but Lewis tells us the sad truths that become evident by April 1791 and lasted for the rest of Thomas’s life.

But the hopeful appearances over which he rejoiced in March were sadly dissipated in April. Facts came to light which compelled him to believe that Ram Basu, **his too well-trusted munshi, had been “guilty of lying, defrauding, and adultery!”** Nor was this all. One of his younger English hearers, whom he had regarded as a fruit of his own ministry, was convicted of almost the same sins, and Mr. Thomas’s heart was sorely cast down¹⁸⁸.

And in a letter to his brother some months later:

My work among the heathen has gone on slowly since December last, for I have been constantly preaching in English at Maida. I have seen with my own eyes, the true thorny ground, stony ground, and infested hearers, great falls, total apostasies, great recoveries, and all in a little society. As to myself, I have been kept, thus far, from forsaking my ministry. I am kept alive from the dead; but my field of corn, which was so green and promising in appearance, and vigorous in blade, is so infested with rats and mice, and other devouring vermin, and so dry for want of rain, and so pale and sickly and feeble, that were it not for, now and then, a little reviving shower to fill up the holes of the rats and mice in dry places, and make it bud a little, I should ere now have given it all over for lost. Many tares, also, have lately appeared, which, while young, I took to be blades of corn¹⁸⁹.

On the same page Lewis summaries:

The discouragement, arising out of the unhappy facts above adverted to, was never fully removed. Other unpleasantness also arose, and Mr. Thomas felt that his prospects of usefulness amongst his countrymen at Maida were become very poor. He saw reason too to mistrust those appearances of the progress of the gospel amongst the natives, which were so fair in the middle of 1790. His faith was evidently to be put yet more severely to the test.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. pages 168, 169

¹⁸⁸ Ibid. page 177

¹⁸⁹ Ibid. page 177

We must remember that Lewis was writing in 1873. Having the advantage of hindsight and a wealth of source material. He says:

Ram Basu's guilt did not lead to his dismissal, even now. Mr. Thomas could not bear to think that all his hopes of him were futile and was only too ready to accept his professions of penitence and a new heart. The discouraged missionary, however, began to feel that **all his pretended converts**, by their avoidance of baptism and by the pertinacious preservation of their caste, had given him much reason to discredit their sincerity, and he was at length weary of all excuses and postponements.

What was the real character of these men, of whom Mr. Thomas had so confidently believed that they were new creatures in Christ Jesus, whilst their inconsistencies and unwillingness to profess themselves Christians in baptism, so often, and so sorely, disappointed his hopes? It is most difficult even now to form any satisfactory opinion of them. Some of them had evidently felt very deeply the truths announced to them, and their emotions went far to satisfy Mr. Thomas of their genuine conversion. They also did much as avowed believers in Christianity, which must have compromised them in the eyes of the people who formed their world; and they did this at a time when the missionary was so deserted by his friends, as to be apparently able to do very little for those dependent upon him. It is therefore difficult wholly to deny their sincerity. **Probably the judgment of truth would regard them as men halting between two opinions, in whose minds the lower, baser, motives of action gained strength by the indecision and delay in which they persisted. "The latter end was worse with them than the beginning."** Perhaps, too, it should be acknowledged that they were not very wisely treated by their instructor. That he was indulgent to their failings; and, to the extent of his ability, yea, far beyond it, lavish in his generosity towards them, has been intimated above. How constantly and carefully he taught them in Christian truth, appears from his journal. But his too sanguine temperament no doubt misled him in judging of their spiritual state; whilst his impatience betrayed him into occasional fits of displeasure, which must have greatly disturbed and damaged his influence over them¹⁹⁰.

To be charitable to Lewis, perhaps he forgot about Matthew 12:27 – 33 and many other passages:

And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. **He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.** Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

There is no such thing as a middle ground they were for Satan and against Christ. Lewis also says:

But when the time came, they drew back, and after repeated efforts to bring them to a sense of their often acknowledged duty, not one of them would confess Christ in the manner of His appointment.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid. pages 178, 179

Mr. Thomas regarded Mohan Chand as much more in fault than the rest; but **it is difficult to see wherein the munshi and Parbati showed themselves any more worthy of his confidence.**¹⁹¹.

Thomas, however, was ever ready to follow his own flights of fancy no matter what the facts were. He therefore not only permitted but encouraged both Ram Ram Basu and Parbati to compose a letter to Dr. Samuel Stennett and the English Baptists. Apparently, they were free, in this letter, to put on a false front as if they earnestly sought only salvation. In light of what has already been shown and what will come to light later on I think it is important to give this letter as it was translated at the time (January 18th, 1792).

GREAT SIR,

7th Mdgh 1198.

We sinful heathens for a long time have used worship and ceremonies according to our paganish shastras and customs, and we have been accustomed to think, that different kinds of people, having different kinds of shastras, would be saved by the words thereof. The deeds of the shastras of this our country, you will become acquainted with on conversing with Mr. Thomas.

O great sir, though we thought that many nations had many kinds of shastras, yet in the country of the English we thought there was no shastra at all; for, concerning sin and holiness, those who are here have no judgment at all. We have even thought that they were not men, but a kind of other creatures like devourers. Within these six years, it is our mercy and praise that Mr. John Thomas came into this country. Such an excellent kind of person we had neither seen, heard, or known of, at any time. On his coming here, he employed me as his munshi; and after I had taught him a little Bengalese, he asked me, 'Munshi, if you were to die now, whither would you go?' 'How can I tell, Sir?', said I; 'I shall go where God takes me.' 'True,' said he; 'but men in general, when they die, where do their souls go?' I answered, 'All men go to a place according to their works: the holy go to heaven, and the sinner goes to hell.' He asked me what heaven and hell, what sin and holiness were? to which I replied particularly. He, smiling, said, 'How can a man be freed from his sins by such superficial works as these?' But none of us could answer him, only that it was written so in our shastras, and that our forefathers, from generation to generation, were thought to have thus obtained salvation: this was all we knew. Mr. Thomas knows the drift of our shastras, and will describe them to you.

When he began to tell us how men could be saved, then we greatly wondered, and we thought within ourselves, These English are the unclean; they have never had any shastras, and how should this man know the way of salvation? But we said, 'Speak, Sir, and we will hear.' He began to read to us the glad tidings of salvation out of the Bible; and as we heard him speak, we were amazed and rejoiced. Now we know certainly that this **is the shastra of God**, and the way of salvation. This will stand, and all others are utterly vain. O great Sir, we are now very thoughtful, and bethink ourselves what have we been doing all this time? We deserve the depth of hell as the fruit of our doings; at the thoughts of which we were greatly troubled. But the gospel is begun to be published. The books of Matthew, Mark, and James, are almost ready, and the gospel is coming into our country. Our Sahib has preached in many places; and wherever the people have heard, there they have been amazed and glad. Several of us who were before workers of iniquity, have now understood the evil of it; all which our Sahib will make known to you.

Now it is our wish that this great word was translated into Bengalese. As we hear, we make it known: but we are only a poor people, and cannot do as we wish. But we hope, great Sir, you will have compassion upon us, and send preachers into this country, and those that will help forward the

¹⁹¹ Ibid. pages 179, 180

translation; and that we sinful people may walk according to this word, for whosoever has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, will be cleansed from his sins by his blood, and we do hope that He will help us in all these particulars.

Our hope rests in Him.

Great Sir, we have never before seen the excellent people; the first we ever saw was Mr. Thomas; and by him we know that the greater people will shew compassion. Of other things we will write hereafter. This is all.

SHREE PARBATI, BRAHMAN.

SHREE RAM RAM BASU, KAISHTHA¹⁹².

This letter, as it is given above, is little more than an advertisement for Mr. Thomas to further his personal efforts. This is especially true of his worthless translations of the three books of the Bible. Carey, like Thomas was also far more interested in translations rather than Preaching Christ and Gospel.

Chapter eight

Details of the methods he used to reach the lost.

1788 – 1792. Part 3 The printed Word rather than Preaching plus Friendship with the devil.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 2 Corinthians 6:14-17

Abraham saith 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. Luke 16:29

The scriptures quoted above apply equally to the previous section as well as to this section. Thomas started something that become almost a hallmark of the Baptist mission. In fact, this aspect of the mission has been praised and glorified in most pro-mission books from Cary's time onward to today. All this is in blatant disregard to the clear teaching of scripture. This is NOT TO SAY that Bible translation work is not important. Of course, it is. However, we must always place our own priorities where the scriptures place them.

To put it plainly Thomas, Carey, and the most prominent of those who followed become obsessed with two related actions. First with translations. This started with the Bible but soon led to demonic works of many kinds. Forgetting it seems several facts: first, that man is totally depraved by nature; and secondly that the Jews of Jesus's

¹⁹² Ibid. pages 194, 195

time had deeply studied the Old Testament scriptures. Despite which they crucified the Lord of Glory. Ignoring these, they seemed to feel that the bible and not preaching was the most important part of their mission. Somehow the plain words of the Bible would transform India. Vast amounts of effort went into this at a time when it was not possible to accurately translate the scriptures into the India dialects. Second, they had an insatiable desire to propagate the demonology of India and its culture. They magnified it as something magnificent and valuable and promoted it with all their hearts, often to the lessening of the Bible translation itself. The prime example being: “Account of the Writings, Religion, and Manners, of the Hindoos Including Translations from Their Principal Works. In Four Volumes” by William Ward which was published in 1811.

For right now I will concentrate on what Thomas did at this time, leaving the rest for later parts of this study, if the Lord allows. His did some preaching but his Bible translation work was maximized. What is evident here is his concentration on **their** so-called scriptures before all else. It is as if he was placing the Bible as a simple substitute for their devil worship. He says in the context of the quotations below that on one occasion he only wanted to enquire and was not planning to preach at this time!¹⁹³ The quotations that follow are lengthy but necessary to lay the groundwork for understanding Thomas and the mission that followed in later years.

In chapter 7 of his book, Lewis gives some very interesting and detailed information about Thomas and these subjects. He tells us of Thomas’s continued interest in Sanskrit: “He had begun to learn Sanskrit, in the hope of thereby increasing his missionary efficiency; and he resolved to improve some of the months yet remaining to him in Bengal by carrying forward this study at Nuddea, the most celebrated seat of Hindu learning in Bengal.¹⁹⁴”

In a letter to his father at the end of October 1791 he says:

This Nuddea, you must know, is our Hindu Oxford, where all the learned pandits dwell, and where disciples come from very remote parts of India to be taught their shastras or laws.*¹⁹⁵ I am quite a prodigy amongst them, and they are very apt to bestow upon me such blasphemous titles and names, as I cannot endure to hear. Whereupon I too often convince them that I am but a frail mortal; for they hold that a man of real holiness can never be angry. Sometimes I remonstrate with them so sharply for their behavior and speeches, that their blessings are turned into a volume of bitter curses; but, in general, I am in very great favor. Yesterday evening, three of their **divines**, whom I had never seen before, came to my cottage, and sent notice that **they were come to judge shastras with me**. I immediately ordered a mat to be spread on the ground; on which they sat down after their custom, and I in the chair. I spoke first, and said, ‘In *this* world, we judge shastras; but in *that* world shastras will judge us? I asked one, who seemed chief, what books he had read; and I happened to know them all; for they were a Sanskrit Grammar and a Dictionary! He confessed that he had read only one holy book, and that not throughout. **I told him he must read two, before he could possibly be a judge!** The rest had read no book on religious subjects. Then we entered into a conversation,

¹⁹³ **“though I had planned to assert nothing, but only enquire**, I could now restrain myself no longer, but began to unfold to them the word of God”

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. page 181

¹⁹⁵ * A part of the footnote about Nuddea is from the Calcutta Monthly register for January 1791. Therefore, it is very pertinent to Thomas’s affairs. “The grandeur of the foundation of the Nuddea University is generally acknowledged. It consists of three colleges, Nuddea, Santiporc and Gopalpara.

Each is endowed with funds for maintaining masters in every science. Whenever the revenue of these lands proves too scanty for the support of the pandits and their scholars, the raja’s treasury supplies the deficiency: for the respective masters have not only stated salaries from the raja, for their own support; but also an additional allowance for every pupil they entertain. And these resources are so ample and so well administered, that in the college of Nuddea alone, there are at present about eleven hundred students, and one hundred and fifty masters. These numbers, it is true, fall very short of those entertained in former days. In raja Rudra’s time, there were at Nuddea, no less than four thousand students, with masters in proportion.” The article goes on to explain how this center was run in some detail.

which ended in their repeated request to see a Bible. I brought it, and read it, till it was grown quite dark; and they departed, filled with wonder. Many and many such interviews I have with them; yet does it all pass away; and they are so highly prejudiced in favor of their own books, that I think sometimes it is all in vain **to persuade**¹⁹⁶ them. **They hold the Bengalese language in great contempt, as soon as they become acquainted with the Shanskrit, in which all their religious stuff is written. Wherefore I am now at this place on purpose to acquire a knowledge of the Sanskrit language**¹⁹⁷.

Lewis relates some of Thomas thoughts on the Bible which he feels stemmed from the experience and failure to convert anyone at Nuddea. This shows both a denial of the total depravity of mankind and an adherence to duty faith. As he was aware of what the English 'particular' Baptist's believed from Johanthan Edwards and Andrew Fuller etc. this is not surprising. In his journal for January 8th, 1792, he writes:

Amongst the proofs commonly given of the divine origin of the Scriptures, I do not find this grand one, **which is adapted to the understanding of the most uncultivated mind**, viz.— *We are sure that the Scriptures are from God, because God is now dealing with every man according to the Scriptures.*

For instance, Some, 'when they know God, they glorified Him not as God, ... wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness and a reprobate mind!' Romans 1:21-28. Some who had been labouring under guilt of conscience and the sense of their past wicked lives, and had been heavily laden at heart, have come unto the Lord, and He hath given them rest, and peace which passeth all understanding. Matthew 11:28. Some are blind and see not, nor own anything of spiritual truth, however evident, according to 1 Corinthians 2:14. Some are turning at God's reproof, and He is pouring out His Spirit upon them, 'as the dew,' 'as the gentle rain,' 'as the showers,' or 'as floods;' and God is making known to them His word in a manner they had no conception of before: according to Proverbs 1:23¹⁹⁸. Some are wise, great, and good in their own eyes, but God hides His communications from them in His displeasure. Matthew 11:25.

Now **if this be true**, that God is dealing with every one according to the Scriptures, **then any man upon the face of the earth, who has access to the sacred oracles, may have within himself, if he pleases, the most lively proofs, not only that there is a God, and that the Bible is His word, but that God is dealing with him himself, at this very instant, and every day of his life, exactly according to that word.** The predictions of God, there written, were not only fulfilled a thousand years ago or more, but now: not only in the wide theatre of the world, but in the little narrow compass of every man's heart. There are different degrees of evidence of this affecting fact. **The dealings of God are more observed and searched out by some than others; and therefore, more manifest to some than to others.** Everything that can be met with in experience is really described in Scripture, but some understand not. We see and know that the effects of idolatry, as we witness it amongst the Hindus, and of false doctrines, such as we find amongst the Mahommedans and others, are in the world exactly what is said in the word.

There are many things which, if rightly considered, fully account for the general carelessness of mankind as to the interesting subject above written of, and particularly in this country. Take this in particular. It is the happiness of a good man that God is what He is, and that His word is a living truth, with all power within it. But this is also the ungodly man's greatest misery. To blasphemers,

¹⁹⁶ By human effort obviously

¹⁹⁷ Lewis pages 182, 183

¹⁹⁸ This verse is taken out of context.

free, and foolish-thinkers, deists, theists, and all sorts of infidels and libertines, there is no woe greater than that conveyed by those two utterances, 'I am that I am,' and 'Thy word is truth.' As the guilty prisoner cannot but wish the jury may bring in a false verdict, so, in like manner, these cannot but wish to refute the 'holy apostles and prophets.' We see characters amongst men which we never should have thought of, perhaps, if they were not in various ways marked out to us in the Scriptures. **Who, for instance, would have expected to find amongst mankind 'haters of God?' All men pretend to love Him, or honour Him, even those who hate or dishonour Him most of all**¹⁹⁹. But who can think of what God is, holy, just, and an avenger of all sorts of wickedness, and then see how men drink down iniquity like water, 'make a mock at sin' and everything that relates to God and eternity, who can hear their malignant speeches against religion, and its acts and professors, who can see their aversion to God's word, attributes, worship and servants, without beholding, as in high noon-day, their hatred to God and all His ways?

As it is impossible to prove to an ignorant rustic in half an hour that the sun is larger than his head, or a fixed star bigger than the moon, so it is impossible to prove to these gainsayers, that God is worthy of their thoughts and infinitely more lovely than anything they have either knowledge or experience of; or that the Bible is of divine authority, and infinitely more worthy of their attention and perusal than all other business cares or books in the world. You cannot make these sinners against their own souls believe this. Their consciences are so hardened that common strokes leave no impressions. Nay, worse, the gospel and all good counsel not only fails to do them good but leaves them the worse for it. 'Death unto death.' As the swine trample upon the pearls, and fiercely turn upon those who offer them, so do these rise up with fury, if any godly advice, precious counsel, or reproof tending to their reformation, is offered to them. This is another living proof of the truth of the Bible in all countries and companies, but especially in this²⁰⁰.

Lewis then gives a lengthy example of Thomas "preaching". The truth of what I stated above can be clearly seen in what he quotes. There is much of idolatry here and very little of anything like Gospel preaching. Lewis gives a high-sounding introduction followed by Thomas own account:

Little has hitherto been said of Mr. Thomas's methods of preaching to the heathen. His journals contain many such particulars of great interest; but few of these have been inserted lest the book should be unduly expanded. One illustration may, however, be introduced, to show **the tact and ability** with which his labours were conducted. It is in its proper place here, having occurred on the 10th of January, 1792. The name of the place has not been preserved; but it seems likely that Panihati a village between Serampore and Calcutta, was the scene of the narrative.

Mr. Thomas says,

I was returning from a journey on the Ganges, and expected in one more tide to reach Calcutta; but was obliged to come to, about seven or eight miles short of that place. Dinner not being ready, I went to take a walk on the bank. On landing, I saw no town or village near; but, conversing with a poor native, I understood that I was within half a mile of a Hindu college, where two famous pandits and several students, the Brahmans, resided. I determined to go and pay them a visit, and the poor man directed me, pointing to a large grove of trees, among which they all dwelt. **I proposed to myself to go among them as an enquirer, and to say little or nothing to them directly like a teacher.** On my arrival at one of the outer buildings, I met with an elderly Brahman, who asked me what I did there? and, while I was satisfying him, another Brahman came up, of a more open

¹⁹⁹ This is so obviously false that Thomas, himself turns right around and says the opposite (the truth).

²⁰⁰ Ibid. pages 184, 186

countenance and intelligent manner, with whom I began to converse. I told him, I had in my heart a very great anxiety; that I was a sinner, that I had but a little time to stay in this world, and when I should die, my soul would depart to heaven or hell, and dwell there for ever and ever. 'You are a Brahman' said I, 'can you not tell me what I shall do to escape the wrath to come, and to obtain forgiveness of sins and admittance into heaven?' He replied, 'You must give to the poor.' I thanked him; but asked how much I ought to give, so that I might be sure, and not fail of escaping that wrath and obtaining this felicity? He then said I must give one-fourth of all that I possessed. 'But,' said I, 'Brahman, if all I possess should amount to four rupees only, then by giving one rupee to the poor, shall I certainly escape hell? Can heaven be obtained for one rupee?' Here the poor Brahman felt himself involved in an unexpected dilemma: for it is by no means a notion among them that many will get to heaven. I desired him to speak again, and he then directed me to do holy deeds; but when we came to discuss the quantity and quality of these deeds, he abruptly broke off, at the dread of another dilemma, and said he would take me to the college close by, where the pandits and more able Brahmans would answer me better than he could. The buildings were mud walls, covered with straw, and surrounded with cocoanut and other trees, which made a pleasant grove, and afforded an agreeable shade. Their several houses are all round about it, at different distances. As you stand opposite the front of it, you see a large open shed, considerably raised, where the pandits give lessons to their students every morning. On each side, is a row of toles, or cottages, joined to each other, all exactly alike, and these are habitations for the students, who come from distant countries, and partake of the bounty allowed by the rajas or other persons who contribute to their support. On our arrival there, they seemed to have heard of my coming, for the students poured out from their toles on each side, and assembled themselves under the large shady trees each side, Thither they brought mats, and spread them underneath the shade, for the Brahmans to sit on; a chair also was brought for me; and they all sat down. After a little time, one of the venerable pandits appeared, and all rose up to receive him; some paid him homage by prostrating themselves at his feet, and others, who perhaps had already seen him on that day, offered him less tokens of veneration and respect. **All now waited for my taking my seat; but I professed to honour my elders, and requested the pandit to be seated first.** At this they were the more astonished, because it is not the custom of Europeans to suffer natives to be seated in their presence. After much persuasion, the pandit seated himself in the front of the Brahmans. I then took my chair, and all the Brahmans seated themselves on the mats, in the posture which tailors commonly use at their work. I now began to rehearse the questions and conversation that had passed between me and the Brahman I brought with me, to which they listened with all avidity. I then asked them what I could do obtain the great ends in question. Some said I ought to apply myself to the name of God. By this they meant, that I should perform the *Jap*, which, in its greatest latitude, consists in pronouncing the name of God millions of times, without speaking any other word; and some whom I knew have continued this vain repetition for whole days and nights together, till their mental faculties were quite deranged. I replied after this manner, 'How can the infinitely great and holy One be pleased to hear His name pronounced so often by these polluted lips?' I enquired if the Supreme Being was wise and good; to which they yielded ready affirmatives. I then fixed my eyes on one of the nearest Brahmans, and asked him if he had a son? He said he had. 'Whenever you return home,' said I, 'suppose your son were to come running to meet you, and falling down at your feet, should call out, Pita,*²⁰¹ Pita, Pita, Pita, incessantly, without ever saying another word, what would you think of him? 'I should think,' said he, 'that he was become demented.' 'So, I fear,' said I, 'would the wise and good One, if I were, in the same manner, to call over His holy and reverend name.' I continued my enquiries, and they directed me to wash in the river Ganges, and the water of that sacred river would cleanse away my sin. I asked them such questions as these: 'Does not sin, **according to the shastras**, defile and darken the mind? If sin were taken away, would there not be a great change of mind, as from

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light to darkness, and misery to happiness? and then would not the renewed enjoy sweet communion with the Supreme, who is all light? Does washing the body cleanse away pollution of the mind? Do you yourselves, who wash in the Ganges daily, find this great change? Do you go down into the water with a mind darkened by sin, and come up with a mind enlightened by the Ganges?' It is difficult for me to express their utter confusion and astonishment; for, it is probable, they had never before heard any of these things questioned. But their candor compelled them to speak freely from their own experience, which immediately reflected the condemnation of their doctrines.

Others directed me to worship the gods. I then enquired if **it was not written in their shastras**, that without faith no worship or ceremony could be acceptable to God? They said, 'Yes.' 'Then,' said I, 'my worship and ceremonies never can be accepted; for **I have none of that which you call faith. No caste, no faith.** How shall I worship? how shall I be accepted?' The question then was whether or not I could obtain faith, and how? 'Faith, they said, 'was obtained by reading the Vedas.' 'But,' said I, 'the words of the Vedas are reputed so holy, that if any man should read them who is not a Brahman, he would commit sin. I am not a Brahman; neither can I become a Brahman if I would give ten thousand worlds. Besides,' said I, 'do you believe the words of Yudhistir?' 'O! yes, certainly, certainly,' said they, from every quarter. Now Yudhishtira is a very great personage in their grand poem, the Mahabharat; and **some think the account there given of him is a mutilated tradition of Jesus Christ.** Be that as it may, they say of him, in this poem, that he was not born by ordinary generation, but of Dharma, the Holy One: that when he was born, all the hills of the earth were enlightened: that, whilst a child, a great king sought his death: that, as he grew up, he went about doing good, and diffusing blessings wherever he came. Yudhistir had several younger brothers, who had not the knowledge of the Holy, like himself; and on a certain day, his mother sent one of her younger sons to fetch water from a tank, or pool. On his coming to the tank, he saw Dharma, the Holy One, sitting on the water's edge, in the shape of a bird. Dharma asked him four questions, of which the third and chief was, 'What is the way to heaven?' The lad said he could not tell. Dharma then forbid him to take water till these questions were answered. The lad, however, heedlessly went to take the water, and, in doing so, fell down dead. The mother, finding her son did not return, sent another; and the same thing happened to him. She sent them all, one after another, except Yudhistir, and they all died in the same manner. Last of all, she sent Yudhistir. When he came, he readily answered all the questions; and to the question, What is the way to heaven? he answered thus: 'Veda bibhinna; the Vedas are discordant: contradictory, one points this way to heaven, another that. Shmrilayo bibhinna; the shastras are also discordant. Nashou muniijashya matang na bhinnang; none of the rules of the ancients, but what are discordant. Dharmmashya tat twang nihitang guhayang. The way to heaven is different from all these. Mahajano zena gatah sha pantha. 'The path which the great person walks in, that is the way.' Yudhistir having satisfactorily replied, Dharmma was well pleased: in token of which, his brothers were all restored to life, and, taking water, all went home with him. 'Now, Brahman,' said I, 'I ask you the way to heaven? You direct me to the Vedas. Yudhistir says, The Vedas are discordant. But nothing that is discordant could ever come from God, you know. I ask you the way to heaven? and you direct me to the sayings of the shastras; but Yudhistir says, The way to heaven is different from all these. Which am I to believe? You or Yudhistir? You cannot be both right.' Here they expressed their wonder, how I came to be acquainted with what was written in their shastras; and they knew not what to say; but continued to declare, they never saw or heard of the like. Another question arose concerning who this Maha Jan could be? Some said, God; but I objected, that he was never called Jan, or a person, in their shastras. Others said it must mean any holy man. I asked if ever they heard of a holy man who walked differently from the Vedas and all the shastras? They said 'No.' Besides, I said, it was the superlative term here used, and not to be applied to any but One.

At last, they asked me who this Maha Jan, this great One, was? and though I had planned to assert nothing, **but only enquire**, I could not restrain myself no longer, but began to unfold to them the word of God, which, at sundry times and places, and in divers manners, was sent to men in past ages by the prophets. I particularly spoke of the prophecies of the Great One who was to come, of the time, the tribe, the place, and the manner of His coming, of His conception, his birth, mysterious person, miracles, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, and of His shedding down the Holy Ghost in the first times; and of His giving that rest, and peace, which passeth all understanding, to poor sinners, even to this day, of whom I myself was one; and that He would do so in all parts of the earth, wherever His saving health and holy name were known. I told them that the Maha Jan had come thus, **'according to the Scriptures.'** That while on earth he wrought, and, while he wrought, the glory of Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence sparkled through all His doings, **'according to the Scriptures.'** He died and rose again. He ascended and shed down blessings **'according to the Scriptures.'** I said that I, a miserable, lost, wretched, and undone soul, labouring in mind, day and night, finding no rest or peace, heavy laden with guilt and wretchedness, distracted by the terrors of the Lord, I myself had fled to this Jesus and found rest, and received blessings from Him, **'according to the Scriptures;'** that millions of great sinners of my country had also fled to Him and found great mercy. He saved them all, **'according to the Scriptures,'** and never cast out any. That He would come again, to judge the world in truth and righteousness, and for that purpose would raise up all the dead from their graves, **'according to the Scriptures.'** That, till then, all the weary and heavy laden sinners of any country that flee to Him shall certainly find rest and peace, pardon and blessings of grace, **'according to the Scriptures'.**

It would not be easy to describe the **affecting emotions of mind** which my hearers expressed in different ways. Some ran and climbed up the cocoa-nut trees, gathered the nuts and broke the shells, that I might drink the sweet water out of them. God Almighty grant that I may break the shell to many of them, that they may drink of living waters, out of the inexhaustible fountain in Christ! Others brought sweetmeats, fruits, milk, and the like, and laid them at my feet, saying it would be a sin to suffer me to go away and not eat; for the day was now declining. We had been six hours and upwards in conversation, and I began to take leave; but they continued to follow me even down to my boat. There I showed them a BIBLE, the first they ever saw; **and reminded them of a saying in their shastras, that all nations of the earth should one day become of one caste, and one religion.** To this they assented. Also, I told them that it was said that there should come a little book, and eat up all their great books. Yes, they all knew this saying to be current. Then, holding up a BIBLE, of Pasham's edition, which, as you know, is very small, I said, 'This is the little book! This is the book of God!' I also very much pleased them by showing them some parts of it translated into their own language, and by telling them of the awful and delightful effects this book is to have upon all nations, when it shall be 'come abroad into all the earth.' The evening came on, and we parted. **Never, methinks, did a people show more reluctance to part with a man who was a perfect stranger.** They stood upon the bank, watching and looking, as long as I could see them from the boat. Three weeks later, I sailed for England²⁰².

It's no wonder that they were apparently so willing to listen to him. He debased the very word of God and God himself to their level of depravity, immorality and idolatry. He became, like many of those Baptists who followed, contaminated by their idols while those they sought to help were untouched and hardened in their unbelief. Not only that but he accepted their adoration and praise. This is the exact opposite of the Apostle John as we read in Revelation 22:8, 9 "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for

²⁰² Ibid. pages 186 - 192

I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. The Lord Jesus himself taught in Matthew 5:5: “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth”

Lewis seems to agree with Thomas’s opinion of himself. In part of his summing up Lewis, ignoring all other missionary efforts says that:

A review of all the facts this history has recorded must surely convince every reader that Mr. Thomas’s missionary life, thus far, had been full of painful anxieties and distresses. Nor will it be overlooked, that, in his work amongst the Bengalis, **he had enjoyed no true sympathy even from the kindest Christian friends who had in any way helped him. They valued his preaching to themselves, but took no steady interest in what he did for the natives. They suspected, he thought, most unfairly, the motives of his converts, and gave him little assistance in sustaining the burden he bore in caring for them.²⁰³ He was really alone in his attempts to bring the Bengalis to the knowledge of Christ: the one man in all Bengal who practically cared for the people perishing there “for lack of knowledge.²⁰⁴”**

²⁰³ They were of course perfectly correct. None of the ‘natives’ were converted by him.

²⁰⁴ Lewis page 192

Chapter nine

July 1792 to January 1793. Part 1: Timeline for Thomas, the Society, and Carey

Thomas arrived back in England on July 8th, 1792. He was then united to his wife whom he has deserted since 1786! Seeking to establish a mission based on his own work in India Thomas wrote a very detailed account to Dr. Rippon in a letter dated Aug. 25th, 1792. For my purposes here this date is important because it shows Thomas efforts in England started by at least this date. Knowing his extreme need and great opinion of himself it's all but impossible that he was not in contact with Rev. Booth as well as his other friends in London (Dr. Stennett and Ryland senior). In fact, at least one source gives us this information but without a date:

Mr. John Thomas, who had formerly been a surgeon in London, and who was totally unknown to the Society, had been several years in Bengal, preaching the gospel occasionally to the natives. **On his return to London, he endeavored to establish a fund for a mission to that country, and called on the Rev. Abraham Booth for his advice, who *immediately* communicated the information to the *newly formed Society*, and recommended Mr. Thomas to their attention. The Society invited Mr. Thomas to their meeting, on Jan. 10, 1793, after having received a satisfactory answer to their inquiries; ...**²⁰⁵

A hint is given in the above quote were “the newly formed society” in mentioned. The actual date when Thomas first became aware of the Society or when the Society first became aware of Thomas is, it seems, impossible to pin down, at least with the resources I have. However, the following date markers are important. **June 16th, 1791**, Sutcliff, and Fuller printed the sermons they preached earlier at Clipstone in April.

May 12th, 1792, Carey publishes his famous “Enquiry.”

May 29, 30, and 31, 1792 Association meeting at Northampton. Ryland Jr. publishes his long letter on Godly Zeal. See Rippon (page 420ff)

May 31st, 1792, Carey preaches his famous sermon on Isiah 54:2. This sermon is not extant, and we know virtually nothing about it. According to Rippon²⁰⁶ that there was, “a resolution made. That a plan be prepared against the next Ministers’ meeting at Kettering, for forming a Baptist society for propagating the gospel among the Heathen. The first periodical accounts have the same information.

June – September 1792. John Ryland Jr. in his biography of Fuller gives a lot of information about the founding of the Society. In his account he relates that sometime between June and September, probably decided upon in the May 31st meeting that: “A resolution *was printed*, in this year's Letter, “That a plan be prepared, against the next Ministers Meeting at Kettering, for forming a Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen”²⁰⁷

July 8th, 1792. Thomas arrives back in England.

Aug. 25th, 1792. Thomas writes a letter to Dr. Rippon with a full account of himself and his efforts.

October 2nd, 1792. Ryland continues his account telling us the Society was actually formed on Oct. 2, 1792, **at Kettering** and that 70 £ was brought in from a second meeting at Birmingham on Oct. 31st. In this immediate context Ryland tells us about Pearce’s idea of the Pellew Islands for a start for the mission. Continuing *but giving*

²⁰⁵ J. W. Morris “Memoirs of The Live and Writings of the Rev. Andrew Fuller Boston 1830; page 87

²⁰⁶ Page 375

²⁰⁷ Ryland, Fullers biog. Page 150: <https://ebin.pub/the-complete-works-of-andrew-fuller-volume-17-the-life-of-andrew-fuller-a-critical-edition-of-john-rylands-biography-9783110634778-9783110633245-w-3844886.html>

no exact date he writes: “But, **just at this time**, Mr. John Thomas returned from Bengal. He had repeatedly written, from thence, to Dr. Stennett, to my father, and to Mr. Booth, and given some account of his conferences with the natives: we found he was now endeavoring to raise a fund for a Mission to that country, and to engage a companion to go out with him. It was resolved to make some farther inquiry respecting him, and to invite him to go back, under the patronage of our Society.”²⁰⁸

Notice Ryland’s words “just at this time” and “he was now endeavoring”. We know for a fact that Thomas arrived months earlier and that he was already very active in his efforts by August 25. Ryland in this account seems to imply that the time was early October when Thomas and the Society met. Early October would fit in well with Morris’s account given at the start of this section. The probability however is that a much earlier date is more likely.

Before going on to other dates of importance and the “note” that Carey was said to have introduced in November, there is some more evidence to look at for an early date. This comes from several sources: Michael Haykin’s comments in his book “One Heart and One Soul²⁰⁹”, James Culross’s statement on page 50 and the “note” itself.

Haykin’s chapter 10 is titled “The Baptist Missionary Society”. He introduces Thomas on pages 225 to 227. There are two statements of importance here. In the first, on page 225, he tells his readers that just before the November 13th, 1792 meeting Carey received a letter from John Thomas. As Carey was unable to attend this meeting, he sent his famous note to the society instead. As I will show this is supposed to be the first time ever that the society knew of Thomas. However, on the following page Haykin adds a very contradictory statement. As I have shown above while in India Thomas was often in contact with Rev. Booth and Samuel Stennett. Haykin tells us that very shortly after his arrival on July 8th, 1792, he went to hear both preach. In that context, he goes on to explain that Thomas shared his missionary vision with them. Most importantly, and again all in the same time context, Booth sent a letter to Carey about Thomas. Haykin, however, gives no reference or exact date for this letter. It would make sense if this letter from Booth to Carey was the letter that Morris tells us about. **Haykin carefully tells us that until this time there was no knowledge of the existence of each other.**

What then was the date this letter was sent? We must remember that this letter was from Booth to Carey. The letter Carey received from Thomas which triggered his “note” to the Society about Thomas was just before the November 13th meeting. This is supposed to be the very first time that Carey or the Society knew about Thomas. Booth’s letter could not have been sent after the 13th as it would have been superfluous and does not seem to fit with the November 13th date at all. All indications are that it must have been sent much earlier than the letter Carey got from Thomas. As shown above Thomas wrote to Dr. Rippon on August 25th, shortly after his arrival. This seems more likely to be the correct time frame.

Another source gives some tantalizing clues with regard to the Booth and Thomas meeting. It also sheds light on just what Booth’s knowledge of Thomas was like. Unfortunately, no exact date was given but an earlier date seems likely. Speaking about the missionary Mr. Campbell this source says:

He could never take his eye or his heart off from the state of evangelical religion at home or abroad. The revivals under Charles of Bala, Stuart of Moulin, and Dr. Robbins of America, which he inquired into, and made known in Scotland widely, although they did not exactly revive him, kept his "soul from death, and his feet from falling." He acquainted himself, also, with the state of the Moravian missions throughout the world, and of every chaplaincy in the East and West Indies, where the clergyman was evangelical. I find, by his letters, that he knew all about Dr. Thomas, of Bengal, years before the Baptist Missionary Society was formed. He heard of him first by letters

²⁰⁸ Ryland page 150.

²⁰⁹ Michael Haykin One Heart and One Soul Evangelical Press, London 1994.

sent from Malda to one of the Scotch bishops, who had an "enthusiastic friend"²¹⁰, that was always pestering him about the success of the Gospel in Bengal, and with questions about religion at home." "The bishop," says Mr. Campbell, "knew little of the religion which the Bible contains. I answered his friend's questions as well as I could. I then heard nothing more of the affair until 1792, when in London. I had called on Mr. Abraham Booth, and found a gentleman **in the ministerial garb** with him. He talked of Malda. I said, 'Did you ever hear of a Dr. Thomas, a surgeon, who began to preach in India?' He let me go on about him, and then said, I am the man. 'Your ladyship (Leven) may judge how agreeably I was struck with the coincidence! Just after I came home from London I received a letter from Malda, stating that his ministry there had been accompanied with the blessing of God, although not to the natives, to the religious society, which has now more life than formerly.'"

This old version of the fact is not so complete as the current one. It was written for the Countess of Leven in 1794, and is merely part of a letter; but many will recollect that Mr. Campbell, whenever he told the anecdote in public or private, dwelt upon the timeliness of his call at Mr. Booth's. **Mr. Booth was at a loss what to think of Dr. Thomas's claims, and hesitating as to his own duty, because he did not exactly know what weight to attach to the testimonials of a stranger;** but Mr. Campbell he knew well, and therefore reckoned it providential that he came in "just at the nick of time," to authenticate the testimonials, and **whilst the Baptist Mission was forming at Kettering.** Hence Mr. Campbell was wont to say, "Thus I had a finger in that pie too."^{211, 212}

This was not the first time Booth was doubtful about Thomas. Under the account of Thomas given above for late 1782 was the following quotation: "... he also sought to recommend himself, with a view to being baptized by him, to the Rev. Abraham Booth, who knew some of his relatives. **Mr. Booth, however, regarded him as too wild and enthusiastic to deserve much encouragement, especially as he was very desirous of becoming a preacher.** It is interesting that Thomas went to the length of dressing up like a minister to meet with Booth. Again, as shown above Thomas was never a minister in any sense of the word.

Next, the letter from Thomas to Carey proves that Thomas knew about the Society before he wrote to Carey. The only way that I can think of is that Booth or one of the other London ministers may have told him. One of the many references to what Carey wrote says in connection to the November 13th meeting confirms Thomas's knowledge:

Several fundamental questions called for immediate attention, namely:

What qualifications are specially requisite in missionaries? What persons are known or supposed to be both suitable and willing to be employed in this business? What advice should be given to missionaries, or what regulations adopted concerning them? Also, in what parts of the heathen world do there seem to be the most promising openings?

Of these questions, probably the last would give them most anxiety. It resolved itself into this "In what country are we to begin our work?" Samuel Pearce had been reading about the Pelew Islands and suggested that there might be an opening there. Carey's first idea was Tahiti due, of course, to his long study of Captain Cook's journals but just before this meeting his mind had begun to turn towards India, a land very prominently before the people of England just then. He was not present

²¹⁰ This person may have been Rev. Brown

²¹¹ The Life, Times, and Missionary Enterprises of the Rev. John Campbell by Robert Philip; London 1841 Pages 93-94

²¹² This is not the only reference to this event. Dr. Cox in his "History of the Baptist Missionary Society" First Ed. 1842, pages 18, 19 gives a very similar account, taken from Philip's book.

at the meeting but wrote thus: I have just received a letter from Mr. Thomas, the Bengal missionary, who informs me that **he intended being at Kettering meeting but forgot the time when it was to be.** He tells me that he is trying to establish a fund in London for a mission to Bengal; he ardently desires a companion and enquires about the result of our meeting at Kettering. The reason of my writing is a thought that his fund for Bengal may interfere with our larger plan: and whether it would not be worthy of the Society to try to make that and ours unite into one fund for the purpose of sending the Gospel to the heathen.

This was a new idea, but one well worth following up.²¹³

The introduction to this letter, how it was used and the facts it tells us are so important that I think it's necessary to quote it from at least one other source. This is from S. Pearce Carey's "William Carey, D.D., Fellow of the Linnaean Society"²¹⁴ He says:

CAREY could attend neither the second nor third meeting of the Society. To the second he sent a Newcastle friend's donation of £20, plus his promise of four guineas yearly, which in its own way was as cheering as Pearce's £70 from 'Cannon Street.' To the third he sent this note:

'I have just received a letter from Mr. Thomas, the Bengal missionary, who informs me that he intended being at the Kettering meeting, but forgot the time when it was to be. He tells me that he is trying to establish a fund in London for a mission to Bengal; he earnestly desires a companion and inquires about the result of our Kettering meeting. The reason for my writing is a thought that his fund for Bengal may interfere with our larger plan; and whether it would not be worthy of the Society to try and make that and ours unite into one fund for the purpose of sending the gospel to the heathen indefinitely.'

This cost Carey something to write. It might disarrange, delay, and destroy his own chances. Keen to be the Society's first missionary, as he undoubtedly was, he here introduced them to another, and this one an expert, who seemed to have arrived by punctual and dramatic providence. True, this other wished a colleague, and Carey might be offered this post. On the other hand, the Society might aid Thomas, and only vaguely promise him comrade, when fuller funds and surer conditions allowed. In any event, second fiddle for Carey, and a probable far postponement of his hope. Moreover, it substituted Bengal for his coveted Tahiti. It dissolved his nine years' dream-world into a scene wholly different, was a Leah for his Rachel! Yet, since it seemed God's leading, and he wished to do nought but the 'worthy,' he instantly forwarded Thomas's letter, and advised cooperation²¹⁵.

All this nonsense about what it cost Carey to be honest means nothing at all. If the rest of the committee did not already know they soon would without Carey's help. The only meeting at Kettering that Carey could be referring to is the meeting on October 2nd, 1792, as the two following meetings were at a different location (Northampton). Therefore, Thomas knew about the society and its plans sometime before October 2nd.

Finally, Culross's brief account of this letter. This brings to light two factors: 1. That it was "soon after his arrival in England" and 2. The details Thomas provided to Carey in this letter. The quote is as follows:

²¹³ Walker, page 107

²¹⁴ Ibid. Pages 96, 97

²¹⁵ S. P. Carey, William Carey D.D. Fellow of Linnaean Society, Hodder and Stoughton pages 97, 98

While in India, without any knowledge of what was passing in Carey's mind, Thomas had opened correspondence with Abraham Booth and Dr. Stennett on the subject of an Indian mission; and **soon after his arrival** in England, hearing, of the Northamptonshire movement, **he wrote to Carey**, and gave him some account of what had been already done in Bengal, and **particularly of the prospects at Maida**. The letter was read in committee, and Fuller was directed to make all necessary inquiries...²¹⁶

As shown, Thomas arrived on July 8th, 1792. It was first planned that Thomas and Carey should depart on April 3rd, 1793 with an actual date of sailing on May 23rd. Because of Thomas's debt they were not on board to sail. They were however on a different ship by May 27th 1793. If we take the date of April 3rd that time from arrival to departure is 9 months. The time till the November 13th meeting is four months. Again, an August 1792 date is much more likely to be "soon after his arrival". Secondly what about the "some account of what had been done already"? Carey says nothing about this aspect in his note to the society just before the November 13th meeting.

Unless the apparent facts I have shown above are false one thing is certain: Thomas knew about the Baptist Missionary Society sometime before October 3rd, 1792, and most likely well before that date. For example, Lewis when writing about Thomas's arrival back in England Lewis writes in highly flattering terms:

... It may be imagined with how much joy he found himself restored to the society and Christian privileges he had longed after in a distant land. With great delight, he once more resorted to the sanctuaries hallowed in his memory by so many sacred associations; and listened to the preaching of Dr. Stennett, Mr. Burnside, Mr. Beddome, and the then youthful Mr. Jay, who was visiting London at the time. He was also himself invited to preach for Dr. Stennett and others, and **he lost no time in urging his plans for the establishment of a Baptist mission to Bengal upon the good Doctor's attention and that of Mr. Booth**²¹⁷.

Thomas was well known in London early on and well before even the October meeting. This raises that question of why Fuller, Ryland Jr., Carey etc., according to their accounts, knew nothing about Thomas till Carey sent his note for the November 13th meeting? Going over all the information, I find it difficult to account for the November 13th date as the first they heard of him. To be as fair as possible, as I relate under the January dates below, S.P. Carey blames Thomas. However, even this raises more questions than it answers. Why in such extraordinary circumstances did Fuller accept Thomas so whole heartily? Perhaps it was because Fuller and others were as inapt and unsuitable as Thomas himself or were they so on the fringe that they were simply ignored at first? Also blaming Thomas does not fit all the facts.

Having brought this additional information to the readers' attention it's time to return to the other dates of importance.

Oct. 31st, 1792. Second primary meeting at Northampton.

November 13th, 1792. Northampton Third primary meeting. The account says that this is where they thought up their questions of how to proceed and were to send missionaries. This is where the famous letter from Carey in regard to Thomas is first mentioned. This is supposed to be the first time they heard of Thomas and first decided to look into him. Carey was not present but sent this letter instead. Some brief details of this meeting are given below from Dr. Rippon's account.

January 9 – 11th, 1793 (Wednesday – Friday) at Kettering.

²¹⁶ Culross page 50

²¹⁷ Lewis pages 197, 198

There are differing accounts of how the committee came to except Thomas. They had, again by their own documentation, from November 13th, 1792, to January 9th 1793 to investigate. One thing this is obvious: the weight of the decision rested upon Andrew Fuller and his acceptance of Thomas.

Ryland was not at many of the meetings during this time. Carey, however, was at the January meeting. Lewis gives a detailed description of this meeting from a letter Fuller wrote to Ryland. The letter was dated January 16, 1793.

We had a very solemn meeting on the 9th of January, 1793; but your absence, and brother Sutcliff's who was detained by indisposition, threw a great weight upon me. I invited several ministers, besides the Committee. Mr. Thomas had hurt his foot, and, therefore, was not at Northampton; nor at Kettering, till Wednesday night. We met in the morning for prayer and read over all Mr. Thomas's letters to Mr. Booth; by which **we had a perfect idea of the man and his communications**. Towards night, we resolved, not expecting him to come, 'That, from all we could learn, it appeared to us that a door was open in India for preaching the gospel to the heathen: 'That, if a union with Mr. Thomas were practicable, it was to be desired: 'That the Secretary write to Mr. Thomas immediately, and enquire whether he be willing to unite with the Society, &c.— That, if Mr. Thomas concur with this proposal, the Society will endeavour to procure him **an assistant**, to go out with him in the spring, &c.' After the prayer meeting, Mr. Carey preached from, 'Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me.'—Revelation 22:12. In the evening, Mr. Thomas arrived, accepted the invitation of the Committee, and gave us all the information he could. He thinks, after missionaries have been there a while, they may maintain themselves; but this could not be at first. Brother Carey then voluntarily offered to go with him, if agreeable to the Committee; which greatly rejoiced the heart of Thomas. You see, things of great consequence are in train. My heart fears, while it is enlarged. I have, this day, been to Olney, to converse with brother Sutcliff, and to request him to go with me to Leicester, this day se'nnight²¹⁸, to conciliate the church there, and sound Mrs. Carey's mind, whether she will go and take the family, that we may know for what number of passengers to provide, and how many to apply for to the Directors of the East India Company. Our subscriptions, I think, amount to 130 £. We advised Mr. Carey, if he be decided about going, to give up his school this quarter, that he may prepare for his voyage; and we must make up the loss to him, if his family should go, they must have, I think, 100 or 150 £ a year, between them all, for the present. If not, we must guarantee the family, as well as support him in the mission. Mrs. Thomas goes. Mr. Thomas preached with us, on Friday evening, a very good sermon. He was so lame, on Saturday, that I went for him to Biggleswade, and write this at Wellingborough on my way home. He is now at Kettering, where he was to have a public collection on Lord's-day night. I believe we may have another at Bedford, if he goes next Lord's-day. He hopes he can get 100 £ among his connections. **He should go and preach and collect wherever he can.**

We read the letters which had passed between Mr. Thomas and a very respectable gentleman, who had employed him in India. **It seemed to us that he had been rather too warm; yet this difference did not sink him, in any considerable degree, in our esteem.**

I am much concerned with the weight that lies upon us. It is a great undertaking; yet, surely, it is right. We have all felt much in prayer. We must have one solemn day of fasting and prayer, on

²¹⁸ This is how the word is spelt in Lewis's account.

parting with our Paul and Barnabas. I suppose it must be at Leicester, a little before they go; which, it is supposed, will be about April. I hope you will be there²¹⁹.

From this account of Fuller to Ryland Jr. little or nothing had been done to investigate Thomas's suitability: all was done at this meeting. However other sources give a very different account that seems more likely. Here are two such examples.

First from S.P. Carey. Carey also gives an account of the January meeting. I have quoted his account of the January 9th meeting above. After that account he asks the question: "Who was this *John Thomas*, who just at this time swam into Carey's and the Society's ken?". Obviously not understanding Lewis's book correctly he introduces Thomas in this way after the question he asked. "Thanks to the data in C. B. Lewis's invaluable Life of him, we may make his acquaintance. He had been a great human, a great Christian, a great missionary, a great unfortunate, and a great blunderer²²⁰." He then gives about six pages of information based on Lewis's book and then continues:

This was the man whom Carey's note introduced to the Society. He, of course, knew almost nothing of him then.

His forgetting of the Kettering date marked his un-businesslike self. 'He ardently desired a companion to return with to Bengal; half of his eight months' stay had passed, without avail; he heard what the Northampton Association was mooting, and of its Kettering appointment; nothing was so likely to promote his purpose; yet he forgot it and failed to be there! [It was better that they reached their decision without his presence and urging.]

Fuller made the due London inquiries, especially of Abraham Booth, with whom Thomas had corresponded from Bengal. Encouraged, he met Thomas himself; rejoiced him with his errand, told him much of Carey and of Kettering, and booked him to meet the Society there on Wednesday, January 9, at a day of fasting, business, and prayer.

When the day arrived, Fuller was distressed to have neither Ryland nor Sutcliff able to be present; nor Thomas, who had seriously injured his foot. He reported his inquiries and interview, and read some of Thomas's graphic Indian letters to Booth. The Society at length agreed that Bengal appeared to be God's opening door, that union with Thomas was wise, and that, if he concurred, 'they would endeavour to procure him an assistant, to go out with him in the spring. Then they gave themselves to prayer, in which, as Fuller wrote to Ryland, 'they all **felt** much²²¹.'

He continues his graphic account which includes some details that I have not found in other sources.

Carey preached that afternoon from the last words of the 'Apocalypse,' which he had been steadfastly expounding to 'Harvey Lane': 'Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.' In the Kettering deliberations and decisions of October and of that day he could hear their Lord's re-arriving, to test their alertness, appoint their tasks and pledge His blessing. By the close of the service, who should arrive but Thomas? All hearts went out to him, for the courage of his coming, **with his injured foot much swollen**. Strange that they should make his acquaintance first as one brave but limping, like a Jacob after Jabbok. He dragged a maimed self ever, game but lame, warrior but weakling.

²¹⁹ Lewis pages 219, 220

²²⁰ S. P. Carey page 97

²²¹ Ibid. page 102

Of course, the Society regathered, excited that he of whom they had talked and prayed all the day was with them, to speak to them. **With what a spell upon him Carey watched and listened, as, after nine years' missionary thought and reading, he now looked for the first time on a missionary's face.** After joyous assent to their resolutions of the morning, Thomas recounted his Bengal experience to this eager little company, the like of which he could have found no otherwhere in Britain. He told of India's piteous need, its poverty, material and spiritual, its pilgrimages and penances, its swingings and Sati. **Then of its Vedic hymns, and what stepping-stones he had found them to the preaching of the Cross.** Then of his pundit Ram Ram Basu, and of two Brahmin inquirers, whose joint letter to the home churches he read, and **which to Carey was the very voice of Paul's Macedonian.** 'Have compassion on us and send us preachers and such as will forward translation.' Carey could hardly repress himself.

Presently they asked of ways and means, of house rents and market prices to forecast their budget—**not knowing that this was the last man in the world to consult on such questions.** Thomas could not be financially exact, nor give them safe guidance. **His keenness to return did him honour, but it led him unintentionally to romance the business facts**²²².

There is also an account by Dr. Rippon:

AT the Meeting at Northampton, Nov. 13, 1792, the Committee was informed, that Mr. John Thomas (a Baptist minister, who for a few years past has been learning the Bengalese language; and preaching to the natives), was then in London, and that he much wished, by a subscription, to return to his work, and to take some fellow-labourer with him. The Committee then agreed to make inquiry into Mr. Thomas's character, principles, &c.

Another Committee Meeting was called, and held at Kettering, Jan. 9, 1793. The Committee Reported, as the result of the inquiry concerning Mr. John Thomas's character, principles, &c. That they had received a satisfactory account of him. After all the information that could be obtained on Mr. Thomas's late labors in India were communicated, it was then Resolved, That there appears to be an open door for preaching the gospel to the Hindoos. That, from what we have heard of the character, principles, abilities, and success of Mr. Thomas, an union with him in this important business is desirable; and That should Mr. Thomas accede to the proposal, the Committee will endeavour to provide him a companion.

On the evening of the same day Mr. Thomas arrived, cheerfully accepted the invitation, and after much interesting conversation on the business, agreed to go out in the spring. Mr. Carey, of Leicester, who was present, at the same time, engaged to go with him.

After a most serious, solemn, and affectionate meeting, attending with failing and prayer to Almighty God, the two brethren above-mentioned, having agreed to go out together, **the Committee engaged to pay every possible attention to their temporal accommodation, and that of their families; in which they hope the friends of the undertaking will generously assist them**²²³.

Possibly Fuller in the account he gives to Ryland Jr. may have felt it was not necessary to go into more detail. Whenever and however Thomas's credentials were investigated they failed completely as Thomas was unsuitable

²²² Ibid. pages 102, 103

²²³ The Baptist Annual Register for 1790 – part of 1793 by John Rippon D. D. No date given but appears to be a first edition. Page 485

in every possible sense. Perhaps the simple *'fact'* that Thomas was a *'missionary'* was all that really mattered at all. Lewis, himself, comments on the striking fact that Thomas was so easily accepted. He writes:

It is matter for not a little surprise that Mr. Thomas's unhappy pecuniary difficulties did not lead the Committee at Kettering to decline co-operation with him, **Andrew Fuller and his colleagues were the very men to feel that hopeless debt was a most serious disqualification for usefulness in the ministry of the gospel**²²⁴.

Finally, I think it is worthwhile to see an example of how this part of the story changed over time. An early 20th century author goes into some very graphic heights in his account some of which is not accurate..

... feeling that he was the man, **the Committee**²²⁵ requested him to meet them at Kettering on January 10th, 1793, for further consultation.

When the men assembled on the appointed day, **Thomas, owing to a slight accident to his foot**²²⁶, had not arrived. In his absence they spent the whole day discussing his letters and the information they had about him, and also the advisability of inviting him to be their first missionary. Being agreed that God had given them the guidance they sought and had opened before them a door in Bengal, they resolved to invite Mr. Thomas to cast in his lot with them, and then, turning to Carey, they asked if he were willing to go to India with Thomas. We can imagine the emotion in Carey's heart as, without a moment's hesitation, "he readily answered in the affirmative" (how cold and inadequate the words seem).

Late that evening Thomas himself was announced, and in a few moments entered the room in haste. **Carey, eager to greet his future colleague, rose from his seat and threw his arms around him; the pent-up emotion in his heart overflowed, and those two strong men fell upon one another's necks and wept.** Late as the hour was, those bold pioneers of the new missionary enterprise could not think of separating. Eagerly they questioned Thomas about himself and his life in India. He was very candid with them, showed them letters concerning the disagreement with Charles Grant, and also told them of some personal financial difficulties, which he hoped suitably to settle. These frank avowals, so far from arousing doubts, seem to have increased their confidence in Thomas (**though Fuller felt a little hesitation**²²⁷), and as they listened to his glowing account of the possibilities of winning India for Christ, their hearts were thrilled²²⁸.

²²⁴ Lewis page 222

²²⁵ IT was Fuller and not the committee.

²²⁶ The earlier sources state that it was much more serious.

²²⁷ I have not found this documented anywhere else.

²²⁸ F. Deaville Walker, 1926 pages 109, 110

Chapter ten

July 1792 to February 1793. Part 2: The use that was made of Thomas's accounts of himself and his "converts".

NOTE: The true facts have been related in chapter 8 above. Please refer to that section for comparison.

As has already be shown from the moment Thomas was first accepted by the English Baptists, and even before, his influence on their enterprise was colossal! Interestingly his part has been neglected to almost the same extent as Carey's was promoted. My purpose here is to show the use that the enterprise made of these personal accounts. His viewpoints were the scenes set before the public to raise funds. Thomas's methods of gaining funds became the standard for mission efforts for many years to come.

Lewis correctly states that:

Mr. Fuller was anxious that his new friend should advocate the mission cause as extensively as possible. On the 7th of March, Mr. Thomas tells his father, "I have been out three weeks preaching and begging on behalf of the three societies of Northampton, Birmingham, and Halifax, under whose united patronage we are going out as missionaries to Bengal. That excellent companion, Mr. Carey, whom the Lord has given me, you will have heard of. A man wonderfully fitted for the work. I collected large sums at Birmingham ...²²⁹"

The naivety, even sheer gullibility of the 'leaders' of the Society regarding Thomas can be explained only by their all-consuming zeal for action at any cost. This of course was coupled with pride and arrogance. Thomas rarely told them the truth but when he did, they forged ahead despite the clear warning signs. Thomas's duplicity can be clearly seen by comparing what he told them to what the facts were. With this in mind the following "account" can be found in either Volume 1 of the Baptist Periodical Accounts Vol 1. page 13ff or from Rippon cited below. The Baptist accounts give reference to Dr. Rippon's work but do not give the date or the fact that this was a letter to Dr. Rippon. It shows that for the Society all that mattered was to use this account without reference to when they first knew about it. This shows their near total dependence upon Thomas. This account is carefully worded for maximum effect. He presents himself in the best possible light, hiding his true motivation (visions and dreams) and outright lying. The situation is even worse when he deals with the native people. There he goes to two extremes. First by elevating their demon religion to be part way godly and secondly by stressing its wickedness, to gain sympathy (i.e. money). I have placed some comments via footnotes to the account as given by Thomas. These and a close comparison to the facts as presented previously earlier show just how deceitful Thomas was. Untold amounts of money were generated by this and other false accounts.

AN
ACCOUNT OF THE HINDOOS,
AND of
THE POSSIBILITY OF SPREADING THE GOSPEL AMONG THEM.

²²⁹ Lewis page 223

DRAWN UP
BY THE REV. JOHN THOMAS.
To the Rev. Mr. RIPPON²³⁰.

Rev. and Dear Sir, London, August 25th, 1792.

I NOW sit down to give you a succinct account of myself and my work among the poor Hindoos; and a sketch of their religion and manners; together with a few remarks on their country, that may afford some information to those who may send, or hereafter be sent among them, to communicate the glad tidings of salvation by Christ.

As to myself, my father is deacon of a Baptist Church at Fairford, in Gloucestershire. He trained me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but I proved for a long time a hopeless child. Very sharp convictions were often felt and repeatedly stilled, till it pleased God to make my sins a heavy burden to me, in the year 1781. I had lately married, and my nights and days were dreadful both to me and my wife; but in the month of August that year, attending on the Rev. Dr. Stennett²³¹, who preached from John, 6 27, Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; I heard with new ears; the discourse seemed all for me, and afforded me some rest till the following week, when meditating on the scriptures I had heard, and on the gospel by Matthew, I beheld a new object, in a new light, even Christ crucified, which has been followed, I trust, with newness of life. Then I could feelingly say with Dr. Watts,

“’Tis heaven to rest in thine embrace,
“And no where else but there.”

I blush to think how unworthily I have carried it ever since to this day; but upon the whole I trust that God is my portion, and my happiness. At the time mentioned, I was settled in Great Newport street, in the practice of surgery and midwifery: But finding the world more ready to receive credit than give it, I was obliged to sell all²³², and wait in lodgings, till an offer was made me of going to sea and in the year 1783 I sailed in capacity of Surgeon of the Oxford Indiaman to Bengal. On my arrival at Calcutta, I sought for religious people, but found none. At last, how was I rejoiced to hear that a very religious man was coming to dine with me, at a house in Calcutta; a man who would not omit his closet hours, of a morning or evening, at sea or on land, for all the world. I concealed my impatience as well as I could, till the joyful moment came; and a moment it was; for I soon heard him take the Lord’s name in vain, and it was like a cold dagger, with which I received repeated stabs, in the course of half an hour’s conversation: and he was ready to kick me when I spoke of some things commonly believed by other hypocrites, concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, and, with fury, put an end to our conversation, by lying, I was a mad enthusiast to suppose that Jesus Christ had anything to do in the creation of the world, who was born only seventeen hundred years ago. When I returned, he went home in the same ship, and I found him a strict observer of devotional hours, but an enemy to ail religion, and horridly loose, vain, and intemperate, in his life and conversation.²³³

²³⁰ I have edited the old English words to make this document more readable for modern readers. None of these edits change the meaning the text in any way.

²³¹ Some names were removed in this account in both versions. I have added the names when possible.

²³² No mention of his extreme debt.

²³³ This was a Mr. Reed. The reader should pay particular attention the Thomas says NOTHING about dreams or visions. Nor does he tell of Mr. Booth’s rejection of himself while still in England.

After this I advertised for a Christian; and that you may not misunderstand me, I shall give you a copy of the advertisement, from the India Gazette of November 1st, 1783, which lies now before me, and the answers I received, giving only the signature of one of them, instead of the name at length.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY.

A plan is now forming for the more effectually spreading the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and his glorious Gospel, in and about Bengal: any serious persons **of any denomination**, rich or poor, high or low, who would heartily approve of, join in, or gladly forward such an undertaking, are hereby invited to give a small testimony of their inclination, that they may enjoy the satisfaction of forming a communion, the most useful, the most comfortable, and the most exalted, in the world. Direct for A. B. C. to be left with the Editor.

The two following answers were received the next day: If A. B. C. will open a subscription for a translation of the New Testament into the Persian and Moorish languages (under the direction of proper persons), he will meet with every alliance he can desire, and a competent number of subscribers to defray the expense.

ANOTHER.

The Rev. Mr. W. Johnson, having read the advertisement of A. B. C. in this day's paper, takes the earliest opportunity of expressing his satisfaction, at a proposal for the more effectually propagating, and making known the truths of the Christian religion, in this country of superstition, idolatry, and irreligion; and for setting forth the excellence of that holy institution, so replete with the means of rendering mankind happy, both here and hereafter; most cordially offers his services for promoting and encouraging so laudable an undertaking, and will think himself happy, if he can be at all instrumental in bringing it to any degree of success. Mr. Johnson, from the above reasons therefore, wishes an opportunity of conferring with the advertiser, on the occasion.

I have never yet found out who was the author of the anonymous note; and as to Mr. Johnson, he was chaplain to the Presidency, and I was afraid to answer him lest I should be scouted; for I had heard him preach, and the sermon as well as the text was, *The unknown God*. This well-worded note of his was intended, I suppose, merely to find me out; and I have certain reasons to believe that the advertisement gave him offence. The following year being at a house in London where the Rev. Mr. John Newton had just called, I heard that a Gospel Minister was going out to Bengal, and that Mr. Newton had reason to think there were religious stirrings in that country; as he had read a certain advertisement in a newspaper of such an import; which advertisement was, indeed, what you have now read.

Just as I was returning the first time, I found out Mr. James Wittit who kept a Europe shop in Calcutta, and appeared to be a truly pious man: I learned by him there was a Mr. Charles Grant and a Mr. William Chambers up the country and one or two more, who were religious people. Mr. Wittit returned to England with a considerable fortune. I came back also, and was baptized in London in 1787, and began to exhort in private societies, and to preach in different places in town and country. On consulting the Rev. Mr. Booth, he advised me to go another voyage, which I accordingly did; and sailed the second time to Bengal in 1786, with the same captain and officers, and in the same ship as before. That very season the Rev. Mr. Brown, who now preaches in Calcutta, went over and took charge of the Orphan School, where all the illegitimate children of Europeans, by the native

women, are educated and provided for. On my arrival there I found a Mr. Robert Udney and a Mr. Chambers, and two or three more, who were connected with Mr. Grant's family, all serious people, and we used to go together to hear Mr. Brown on the Lord's Day, who preached to the children under his charge: and after a little while we had a prayer meeting, and sometimes a word of exhortation was given. Mr. Grant removed from Maida to Calcutta: on his coming to us we were increased and strengthened, and I preached at his house every Lord's Day evening. One day, as Mr. W ---- and I were walking out, he gave me to understand that Mr. Grant wished me to stay in the country, learn the language, and preach the Gospel to the Hindoos: but I was averse to the climate, dreaded a longer separation from my family, and **had no particular bent of mind to the work**²³⁴: having also the charge of a ship's company as their surgeon, without any probability of the Captain's giving me leave to stay, or of another surgeon being found to supply my place, I could not accede to the proposal; yet it would often return to my mind, and after a few weeks I became greatly concerned at heart for the condition of these perishing multitudes of Pagans, in utter darkness; and was inflamed with fervent desires to go and declare the glory of Christ among them. Waters enough have risen since to damp, but will never utterly extinguish. what was lighted up at that time. After much prayer and many tears, I gave myself up to this work, and the Lord, removed difficulties out of the way, confirming the mission, and comforting me, by adding two seals (both Europeans) to my first: labours, who continue my hope and joy, and I trust will be my crown at the day of Christ's appearing. I must here pass over many griefs and sorrows, offences and mistakes, and proceed to give you some information concerning the Hindoos, their behavior and their country, with any other interesting particulars that may occur while I write.

There are four *Shaters*, or laws, among the Hindoos, which they call the Vedas; these they hold in the highest esteem, and say it is unlawful for any man to read or hear them read, except he is a Brahman. The Vedas are said to have been written many millions of years ago, which, however, is easily disproved by other books and writings in use among themselves. These Vedas are written in *Sanskrit*, which may be called the Latin of the East, and they are the fountain of all their books of theology, as the Koran among the Moors, and the Bible among us. There are eighteen sacred books called Poorans, which are all commentaries on the Vedas: and it is the custom of all the Brahmans, to learn a great part of these by heart, and they are very apt and clever in quoting portions of them in conversation: this they find the easier to them, as all their books are written in verse. I think it is impossible to convey to any person who never was in that country, an adequate idea of that **profound reverence in which they hold their sacred books. But what is wonderful, they hear the divine authority of these books questioned with patience and moderation, at all times, and in all places.** Some of these books hold up for their veneration characters which are very profligate, and contain strange doctrines, **evidently of an infernal origin**, which have a dreadful effect on

²³⁴ This is simply not true and therefore a deliberate lie. This can be seen in a letter to his brother dated January 11th, 1787 where he writes: "I have a piece of news for you. You must understand there is a Mr. Grant here, a man of fortune and consequence, who has projected a mission of gospel ministers to this country from England. The papers are drawn up and are now in my hands, submitted to any alteration I may think necessary. Mr. and Mrs. Grant, with about eight or nine others, dependents, serve God, and he himself is a humble, teachable, strict and zealous man. He is too partial to me, a great deal, and has made an offer for my support with my family, if I would stay here and reside at Maida. He has made several alterations in the proposals of my stating and has now given the papers wholly into my hands. Mr. Brown, a preacher of the gospel here, who has the care of an Orphan House, at first regulated the plan, and named eight young men who are in the Colleges at home, as fit persons to be invited to this work. Here I have objected that young men in Colleges are tender and nice, unlikely to endure hardship that, besides, from the scarcity of gospel ministers of this denomination in England, it was to be supposed that, if either of these men were likely and promising, he would be taken particular care of for destitute churches there at the disposal of friends of the gospel. **Besides I argue that the character of missionaries ought to be settled and known, having been proved.** So, we have spared the young collegians from the undertaking. Brown is jealous of me, and severe; **but I stand as firm as a rock in mind and conscience and am too high in the favor and opinion of Mr. Grant, to whom the Lord has made me useful."** (Lewis page 38)

their minds and manners. They abound, moreover, with such contradictions (**though on the other hand with very good moral precepts**), that I am sure it is no difficult thing to convince the more intelligent persons amongst them, that they are not of divine authority: and I am persuaded, there are some to be found among them, who think there is no revelation from God yet, because they see in all these books, some **things incompatible with their notion of God. That there is one great God, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Omniscient; that he is to be worshipped and served; that the soul is immortal; that we all have sinned; and that some Atonement is necessary are truths commonly believed among them all;**²³⁵ and add to these things, the divine predictions we have of the latter day²³⁶, with the encouragements of Jehovah, to declare his glory among the Heathen; and I think, without anything more, one might find reason enough to go and preach to them. But I can truly say, wherever I have been conversing or preaching among them, I have invariably found them willing to hear, and that they always behave with great decency and respect. I trust also that the door of faith is opened to the Hindoos, by the conversion of two or more Hindoos²³⁷, and by many other striking effects, which, though short of real conversion, may, in the Lord's own time, prove a great blessing to many. You will see some little account of Boshoo²³⁸, the Munshee, one of these converts²³⁹, in a letter from him and a Brahman, which will accompany these papers. He is about 35 years of age, and a person of more than ordinary capacity, and has been well educated in the Persian language; he was recommended to me by Mr. William Chambers, who is a great Persian scholar; and I have employed him in the office of my Munshee, or teacher, all the time I have been in Bengal. It was he that composed the Bengal Hymn I send you and many other sonnets of his own accord, without any assistance from me or any other; and it was he who chiefly laboured with me, in the translation of Matthew, Mark, James, &c. and he often disputes with and confounds the Brahmans, both learned and un-learned though he is not a Brahman himself, but of the writer Class, and this is not in a small degree extraordinary, for the Brahmans think it a very great condescension to hold an argument with any person whose Class is inferior to that of a Brahman. This man has a considerable degree of knowledge and gifts, and I hope they will one day shine forth to the good of many. I should have baptized him, but his relations refused to give him his wife and children. He will accomplish his wishes I hope, before I return, and then his family will be numbered with the slated hearers, and he himself be baptized with the Brahman

²³⁶ This is not only rubbish but a sheer denial of the Scriptures. For example, Romans 1:18-25: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." And again 1 Corinthians 2:14, 15 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: **neither can he know them**, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. The people of who Thomas is speaking of knew nothing at all of these things that he attributes to their knowledge. They were as Paul says: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (Ephesians 2:1-3)

²³⁶ Not only is there a denial of the Total Depravity of Man, one of the key doctrines of particular redemption, but there was a total dependence on the doctrines of Post millennialism.

²³⁷ Here again and in what follows there are deception and lies. They showed no signs of true regeneration and Thomas was well aware of this fact.

²³⁸ That is Ram Ram Basu which is pronounce as 'Bose'

²³⁹ As has been unmistakably shown they were not converts at all.

Parbotee, of whom I shall give you a short account presently. The greatest difficulty in spreading of the Gospel in Bengal, arises from the Cast for all who are baptized, and partake of bread and wine with us, will lose Cast; and when a man has lost cast, his most intimate friends and nearest relations will forsake him forever, He cannot possibly be restored again by any means; and the meanest Hindoo, from that time, refuses to eat, drink, or converse with him; he becomes an outcast and a vagabond in their eyes, in the most strict sense. But when the way is once opened, the difficulty will gradually diminish, and, if they walk as becomes the gospel, they will become a cast of themselves, and that an honorable one too.

I might here give you an entertaining account of **many** who have left off their idolatry, flower-offerings, and vain superstitions, and are in the habit of reading the Bible²⁴⁰ as the Word of God, and the only book that discovers, to their satisfaction, the way of salvation: But I am already spinning out my paper to a greater length than I intended, and what I have to say of Parbotee will take up a considerable portion of your time. I will by the bye, just mention a few things of Mohun Chund, another Brahman, of whom I once hoped well, whose heart failed him, at last: but I cannot say, even now, that I have given up all hopes of him—far from it. This man is a Brahman of some repute, and has a vast number of disciples, who prostrate themselves at his feet wherever they meet him: He lives at Boolahant, about six miles from Maida. He came to hear me in the crowd, and was easily to be distinguished from the rest, by his fixed attention and regular attendance. One day, after I had been discoursing about prayer, he very gravely asked me, “Sir, when a man prays to God, how many days is it before he gets an answer?”—I then repeated the account of the woman of Canaan, and other different cases: he continued to attend, converse, and write, on the things of the Gospel, and seemed at length convinced that he was a great sinner before God, that there was no refuge for him among all their shasters; and that the Gospel alone was of God, discovering the way of salvation. This man continually came to see me and was reckoned by his people a convert to Christianity, for he disputed the worship and ceremony of the Hindoos, to his own temporal idols, and forbad that ho- mage which had long been superstitiously paid him from the people. He often talked publicly with great persuasion, to other Brahmans, in favour of the Bible. On the 28th of June 1790, he had been to pay me a visit, and returning to his own home, he found there Parbotee, a Brahman, who called to see him.

Parbotee was a man of title, and of **a more high and honorable rank** than this man. He was also a very strict observer of the Hindoo laws and customs, daily rising early in the morning, and repairing to the distant jungles to gather curious flowers, superstitiously valued amongst them; and these he offered, with abundant forms, in the river Mabanuddee, which was near; and repaired, at particular seasons, to their more sacred river the Ganges, which they say cleanses from sin.—There was not his equal, in all the neighborhood, for zeal and accuracy; a thorough devotee. This man having heard of our new Shafter, the Bible, was not a little displeased: and when he understood that the other Brahman who came in, had been to see me, he required of him to go and wash his clothes, for he must be defiled, and would defile, for he had been in the company of an Englishman: and it is the common custom of all religious orders among them, to go out of the company of an Englishman or Mahomettan, into the river, and immerse their bodies, with their clothes on. I have often observed the Brahmans, and Pandits do so, after holding any conversation with me. To induce this man to go and wash his clothes, Parbotee urged that I was of the Malectch, viz. unclean, if not

²⁴⁰ Thomas’s footnote here reads as follows: “They have Matthew, Mark, James, some part of Genisis, and the Psalms, with different parts of the prophecies, in Bengalee manuscript; three or four of them have all the above, and some only a single part which they lend to one another.” As I have shown already all this prideful boasting is very deceitful and dishonest. It shows lasting emphasis Thomas placed on the written word coupled with linking that to their heathen writings. His so-called translations were so defective and incomplete that they did immense harm rather than any good.

filthy. He replied, that filthy men did filthy deeds; where as he could never say so of this Englishman—and he would not go and wash his clothes. The other continued to insist upon it, and finding his injunction was not honoured, he proceeded to do a thing which will appear trivial to you but is a very formidable action among them.

It is the custom of the country to smoke very much; and their tobacco is made up into a paste, with spices, &c. this pate they place on one side of a copper-plate, and coals of fire on the other side; the tobacco being lighted, they then put it on the upper extremity of a tube, and the lower extremity runs down into a shell or other vessel, containing cold water, and sometimes rose-water, which is very common there. The smoke is agreeably drawn through the coding water by means of another flexible tube, which is the pipe, and is generally about twelve feet long:—Now, when Brahmans, or others of equal cast, meet together, it is a constant mark of friendship and good understanding for the man of the house to offer this Hookah to his visitor, and it is passed on from one to the other. But when the Brahman in question gave the Hookah to Parbotee, he emptied the water out of it: this is the action that will appear little to you, but which is a kind of formal disgrace among them and proves a forerunner to that which is worse than death, viz. losing cast. Such a proceeding, before witnesses, could not escape particular notice, nor fail of drawing the attention of many, to the great dishonor of Mohun Chund: So he left the company, and went and poured out his complaint to God in prayer²⁴¹. The day was far gone, he returned no more to his company, but retired with his family to rest. About two in the morning, he was called up by Parbotee, with vehement cries; and on opening the door, found him in great agitation, and, to his inexpressible surprise, Parbotee desired to hear the Gospel, and that the Brahman Chund would go and pray for him: he replied as well as he could, and took him to the house of Boshoo the Munshee, where they spent their time till da light in reading, praying, and singing. But matters were not yet explained: they observed he did not go to his usual ceremonies, but returned to Munshee's house in great trouble of mind, about noon, making his former requests, and, on their repeated enquiry, he related to them a very remarkable dream, in **which I have no doubt at all but he received divine admonition and instruction**²⁴². The effects of it were visible on his body and mind for several days. I found it very difficult to administer any consolation to him, and was afraid the consequences might be soon fatal; but he continued daily to hear the Gospel, and began to join the rest in singing and praying; and confessed to all his former folly, and professed to believe that the Bible was the only Word of God, and Jesus Christ the only Saviour. When I left Bengal, he had continued to walk in an orderly becoming manner and gave me and others great satisfaction. I cannot pass by one remark in my diary; though it is rather long, I shall here give you a copy of it verbatim. You must know we were all on the river, going a journey of 230 miles; and we had a prayer meeting on setting out. Mohun Chund and Ram Boshoo, the Munshee, having made their intercessions, I called upon Parbotee, whom I had never before heard; and though the Munshee's prayer was more judicious and orderly, yet that of Parbotee, both in manner and matter, was at that time inexpressibly sweet and awful to my spirit.

Extract of my Diary of August 19, 1790.

Expressions in PARBOTEE'S Prayer

I performed the rites of the Ganges; I called this good—I worshipped wood and stone; I called this good—I heard the Shatters of men, that are all false and vain; I called this good—Lord, I am a most wretched creature to this day: I know nothing—nothing. I have spent all my days in wickedness

²⁴¹ Here again the actual fact is that he was not praying to the one and only God though Jesus Christ but to his heathen imitation of a god. This was an abomination to God.

²⁴² Here again can be seen Thomas's acceptance of things that were obviously demonic in nature.

and have not obtained the least knowledge of God. O put far from me these evil things! O make them depart far from me. I have hearkened now to thy word. I will hear them no more—I will not the least regard the idols of wood and stone anymore!—Vanity: lies. Lord, I will hear no more at all these Shasters of the Hindoos ; they are all false and vain. Wretched sinner! Save me! O save—save, save me. Give—Give— O give—Give, O Lord! Give me to know—Hell! what?—Heaven! what?—Without the blood of Christ I Shall never be saved. Without the flesh of Christ I Shall never live .—Lord, what is the meaning of this? I know not what it is—how can I get the blood of Christ?—O teach me, I will do anything thou sayest—Cast! what?—Home! what?—Friends! what?—Life! what?—What is anything? all is nothing but thee.—I want no money, I want nothing but thee. O what a wretched sinner am I! O tell me thy way! O tell me by Munshee; tell me by the Sahaib. We are going to Calcutta—Many, many, wicked things are there. O keep us all while we stay there. O that I had but love! O that I had but faith!— O that I had forgiveness! O that I had but those things which thy people have. Like them—O me like them, like them. O Lord, how many evil things are in my mind every day, I am a wicked blasphemous wretch! I have Shame in me— Wicked Shame before the people, and wicked fear of men! —Far, O far away from me, put far away my Sins. Forgive me; and teach me what I shall do. I will do anything. O that I did but know what to do: O give—give---give—Lord what shall, what can I do?

Here he burst into a flood of tears, with now and then such fervent cries, as I never before heard: he continued in prayer about half an hour. I read and explained the faithful promises of God to supply the poor and needy, and to satisfy the thirsty soul with living waters; spoke of the mind, and the inner man, delighting in God manifested in the flesh, and crucified for sin; that this was eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ.

After concluding, he returned to his boat, and, as the Munshee tells me, wept there over his own sinfulness, a long time.’ Thus far my diary.,

Considering that this took place almost two months after the dream, and observing the deep concern of mind which is but imperfectly expressed in this written account; you will agree with me, that it is a very extraordinary affair; and the loss and shame among men with which it has been ever since followed, **put it beyond all doubt, with me, that it has pleased God to awaken this man.** He continues, a living witness to thousands, of the vanity of paganism, and the reality of the Christian religion. The Brahmans and relations of these people, who find their interests shaken, have railed reports, stirred up enemies, and brought accusations against them evidently false; but they behave, on these trying occasions, like men; like Christians who have their true anil hope in God; and **they are to be baptized on my return to that country**, and so lose Class forever, **in which many will join them**, and so become at least stated hearers of the Gospel. A man of Parbotee's high authority among them being on our side, if he could only say he thought that the Bible might be true, and of divine authority, would be a very great blessing to any missionary whose heart should be stirred up to go and preach to them. But I bless God, and reflect on it with great comfort, that there are thousands of Hindoos, Brahmans, and others, who are ready to own as much, and more than this; and if these were dead, I should go over to them, with all joy and confidence of hope, assuredly gathering, from these tokens, and many others, that the Lord has called me to preach unto them the unsearchable riches of Christ: and I hope and pray, he will yet enable and call others more fit for, and worthy of, this delightful work than myself. There are several Brahmans who have the book of Matthew in their hands, **who read it**²⁴³ in their families, and among their friends, whom I have never seen; and there are several with whom I have conversed, that have read the scriptures to some good effect, though not really converted to Christ. These would all rejoice to see more witnesses of

²⁴³ Again, and again one can see the un-biblical stress laid upon the written word.

the truth, as it is in Jesus, among them. The **two converts** I have mentioned to you, expressed a desire of sending a message to Dr. Samuel Stennett²⁴⁴ with whom they knew I corresponded; to this I replied, they had better write it down; they did so, and I have translated it, and a copy of their letter you will see at the close of these papers²⁴⁵.

In addition to what may be gathered from the above, of their religion and manners, I shall mention a few things which show, that the necessity of some atonement for sin²⁴⁶, is one of their prevailing ideas. I believe that human sacrifices are very rare, if not entirely unknown among them: although about four years since there was an account of one in the India' papers; but there are doubts of the authority from whence it came. Sacrifices are made, however, of buffaloes, kids, and lambs, which are to be publicly seen at their stated seasons. They have also a custom of using several voluntary tortures, which every person, who has resided in the country for a year or two, must be more or less acquainted with. I shall describe two or three of them: That off swinging. The person who makes **this atonement**²⁴⁷ has two iron fish-hooks passed through the integuments, on each side the backbone; and being suspended by ropes attached to these hooks, he is drawn up about 40 feet in the air, and there twirled round for a considerable time; all which he bears, without any expression of pain or impatience²⁴⁸. Whatever he throws down of fruit, or the like, is caught up with great avidity, and counted sacred. Sometimes the skin has given way, and the person has been dashed to pieces: so now, in all that I have seen, cloth has been, passed round the middle, for the hooks to hold by with the skin. The ceremony may be seen in almost every town once a year.

Another torture is after this manner: The man passes threads through each of his sides, in six places; and the threads being thirty yards long, and fixed at each end, he dances backward and forward as in a ropewalk.

A third is running a spit of four feet long all through the tongue, and drawing it backwards and forwards. Besides which, I might mention fitting in one position for bears, exposed to fires in hot weather, and cold dews in cold weather. Many other things of a like nature are common among them.²⁴⁹

Thomas continues in the same vein for a while then changes the subject. He then gives an account of the monetary needs of missionaries. Here he grossly underestimates what the actual costs are. This nearly led to disaster for him and Carey as is related in a later chapter. Based on his extremely limited knowledge and delusional view of the facts he makes what are supposed to be several statements as if they were actual facts. I have placed these in bold type below:

²⁴⁴ Thomas does not give the name in his account. I have added it.

²⁴⁵ Please note that I have given this letter in full in Chapter Five above.

²⁴⁶ I commented above, near the beginning of Thomas account, about his hideous sin of elevation demon worship to a level with true Godly worship. These demonic lies were accepted by the Baptists and many others as if there were God's truth. One example among many will show how God feels about such heresy it is found in 1 Kings. This is an almost a mirror image of what Thomas is relating in the prophets of Baal. It is found in 1 Kings, chapter 18. There is where Elijah exposed and killed the prophets of Baal. Verses 37 to 40 read as follows: "Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there".

²⁴⁷ Its pure demon worship and idolatry, to call it an atonement is to deny Christ.

²⁴⁸ Because of the demonic trance he is in.

²⁴⁹ Rippon pages 353 – 365 Volume 5.

As to the learning of the language, it is a work attended with difficulties: **but when the whole time is devoted to it, three or four months will bring a man through the greatest of them;** and he will begin to converse with the natives, with great amusement and pleasure to himself, and profit to them. And as to the barbarity of these people, **it is not with them as it is with other Pagans, of whom we have read and heard: for the Hindoos are certainly distinguished from all people on the face of the earth, for their harmless and inoffensive behavior;** and the province of Bengal and its inhabitants are proverbially distinguished from all other parts of India, for their gentleness of manners, and harmless behavior to their enemies as well as their friends. I have known among them men of considerable power and authority, who were highly offended with me, because they imagined my work affected their interests (Acts, 19:25.): but I lived within a mile of them, in a lonely house, with my windows and doors wide open all night, without sword or firearms, and free from the smallest apprehension of danger. However, this could not be prudently done in the neighborhood of Calcutta.

In the year 1787 I began to learn to speak and write the Bengalee. Till the month of June or July of this year, I was engaged at Calcutta, and preached to a few Europeans there. In 1788 I could converse freely with them, especially with those I was well acquainted with. In 1789 I began to find that my pronunciation was generally very defective, and consequently my preaching, for the most part, could not be understood: I had also begun to translate. I remained there the second time, from the middle of 1786, till the end of 1791 : but had no thoughts of staying there till about the beginning of 1787, nor did I sit down to the work till about the middle of that year: so all the time spent among them was five years and a half; but most of this time I have preached twice every Lord's Day to a congregation of Europeans in the country. Considering this, and the difficulties that must necessarily occur to the first adventurer, (for they have no dictionary, vocabulary, nor printed books to assist one, as in European countries); I say, considering these things, the time may be reckoned but two or three years; and I doubt not but a person of a moderate capacity, may attain, in that time, as much knowledge of the language as I have; and I can now express myself in prayer, preaching, and conversation, comfortably to myself, and so as to be understood by others.

I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, Yours's affectionately, JOHN THOMAS²⁵⁰

On March 20th, 1793, at Leicester the "committee" composed and sent a letter to both Ram Ram Boshoo and to Parbotee. This was the "sendoff" meeting for the two missionaries. The way they address these impostors shows both their actual ignorance and total acceptance of what Thomas had told them. As Thomas well knew neither were saved! Here is the introduction to this letter:

The Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen* to Ram Ram Boshoo, Parbotee, and all in India, who call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.

Dearly beloved brethren!

WE rejoice that we have an opportunity of addressing those as fellow-Christians, who till lately were lost in Heathen darkness and superstition. The accounts which our beloved brother Thomas has given of you, have greatly refreshed us. For many years we have been praying to God on your behalf; we knew but little of what our dear brother Thomas was doing among you, but had united together before we heard of his being in England, for the purpose of sending the gospel into Heathen countries. It was by the special providence of God that we heard of him, and of the state of things among you. We thankfully embraced the opportunity and have ever since been heartily engaged in

²⁵⁰ Rippon pages 366 - 367

promoting the good work. From Asia sounded out the word of the Lord into Europe; glad shall we be to have that joyful sound reverberate to Asia again, and extend to every other part of the earth!²⁵¹

²⁵¹ Rippon page 528

Chapter eleven

1785 to February 1793. Part 3: The doctrinal foundation of the Baptist Enterprise

As I intimated in Chapter one, the roots of what these so called “*Evangelical*” Baptists believed and taught go back to at least the times and teaching of David Brainerd and Jonathan Edwards. Building upon these and other sources the ‘*Enterprise*’ developed a set of doctrines based on their own zeal and rejection of the clear teaching of Scripture.

Dr. John A. Dreisbach gives his readers some significant information regarding Brainerd’s importance to the mission:

One of the rules of the mission group in India, of which he was the leader, was to read The Life and Diary of David Brainerd three times a year. Carey’s oft-quoted statement, “Attempt great things for God. Expect great things from God” sounds very much like the following entry in Brainerd’s diary of almost 100 years earlier where it is recorded, “Nothing seems too hard for God to perform, nothing too great for me to hope from Him.”²⁵²

In the context he also refers to the apostle Paul and John Elliot as primary influences on Cary.

Within this chapter more will come to light about the importance of Brainerd and Edwards to the mission.

Part 1

There are at least two doctrines at the center and source of their enterprise:

Doctrine one: A joint effort between God and Man to establish an earthly rather than a heavenly kingdom. The scriptures are adamantly opposed to such a doctrine. For example, Jesus’ statement in answer to Pilate in John 18:36: “Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world:** if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence”. Point 5 below touches upon Carey’s belief that men (and of course women) must pray for God to be able to accomplish his purposes on earth. This stems from one of the two central focus’s (doctrines) underpinning the various designs of the Enterprise. These lie intertwined with all they did. The first doctrinal belief illuminates and defines their view of Christ’s kingdom. The fact that the theology, such as it was, of the Enterprise as a whole and Carey particularly was based upon what is now called a “Post Millennial” view of the future. That is the particular view presented by Edwards highly edited biography of Brainerd. Therefore, Johnathan Edwards and David Brainerd were the primary source of this eschatological viewpoint. As a result, Enterprise believed that for God’s will for his kingdom to be accomplished man must take charge and act, otherwise, God’s purposes will fail. They used this denial of God’s sovereignty to justify all that they did, no matter how unbiblical it was. The following quotations correctly summarizes what Edwards taught on this subject:

²⁵² <https://gfamissions.org/david-brainerd/#:~:text=The%20three%20beloved%20heroes%20of,Brainerd%20three%20times%20a%20year.>

By the time of Jonathan Edwards, eschatology took a place among the progressive ideas of the Enlightenment, foretelling of a millennium gradually occurring through the normal course of history, and of a future embodying endless progress for the world.²⁵³

Holdsworth goes into more detail when he says:

In the theology of Jonathan Edwards, comprehensive as it is, one doctrine seems in particular to permeate the whole: that of eschatology, the doctrine of the last things. It colors his thinking on unfulfilled prophecy, on missionary interests, on revivals, prayer, the papacy, false religion, history, and the Jews. He contemplated at length the subjects of a latter-day glory, and of heaven and hell. Today, Jonathan Edwards would be known as a postmillennialist. "In his Work of Redemption," says J. Marcellus Kik, "he gives a fine exposition of the post-mil position. While such labels may be inappropriate to eighteenth-century theology, there is no doubt that Edwards did not expect Christ to return until after a period of peace and prosperity for the church on earth: a millennium to be ushered in by such a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit that the revivals of the Great Awakening would be seen to be but a foreshadowing by contrast²⁵⁴. Note: the reference he gives for Kik is J. Marcellus Kik, *The Eschatology of Victory* (Nutley, New Jersey: Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing Company, 1971), 7.

The Banner of Truth Trust's 2018 copyrighted article by Gary Brady²⁵⁵ also sheds some light on this subject. One must remember that it is highly biased in favor of Edwards and Carey.

Returning to Carey's Enquiry it can be seen how this worked out in practice. There are eleven references to Christ's kingdom and one instance of the devil's kingdom in the enquiry. Point one below gives details on part of Carey's first sentence: "As our blessed Lord has required us to pray **that his kingdom may come**, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven, it becomes us not only to express our desires of that event by words, but **to use every lawful method to spread the knowledge of his name**. Point four below gives some details of how Carey viewed the interaction of Christ's kingdom and the devil's kingdom. The fact is that Christ's earthly kingdom saturates Carey's reasoning throughout.

Doctrine two: This can be summarized in one word "Fullerism": Andrew Fuller, in 1785, published "The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation." This was second pillar that the whole Baptist mission was established upon²⁵⁶. This was the fodder which fueled the fire of their extreme religious zeal. The doctrines of grace with Christ being the corner stone, God's covenant of grace from eternity, God's eternal love of the elect alone, God's eternal hatred for sin and determination to punish it to the full extent upon the non-elect etc. were replaced with Fullers false teachings. God was supplanted and man was elevated to unbiblical heights. Simply put there never was such a thing as the "Particular Baptist Mission" because none of the funders were Particular Baptists in the first place! They were in fact members of a type of rank Arminianism or worse. Dr. George Ella has done much to expose

²⁵³ Eamon, William Charles, "Kingdom and church in New England; Puritan eschatology from John Cotton to Jonathan Edwards" (1970). Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers. 5529. <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/5529>

²⁵⁴ Taken from this link: 5-3_holdsworth.pdf (biblicalstudies.org.uk) Reformation and Revival Vol. 5, num 3 1996

²⁵⁵ [The Life of David Brainerd by Jonathan Edwards – Banner of Truth USA](#)

²⁵⁶ For example, this statement by George Smith: "When Fuller had published his treatise, Carey had drawn the practical deduction— 'If it be the duty of all men, when the Gospel comes, to believe unto salvation, then it is the duty of those who are entrusted with the Gospel to endeavour to make it known among all nations for the obedience of faith.' Now, after seven more years of waiting, and remembering the manuscript Enquiry which had not then seen the light, Carey thought, action cannot be longer delayed. See "The Life of William Carey, D.D. by George Smith, LL.D.C.I.E. London, John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1885 page 48.

Fuller's false gospel message²⁵⁷. Even in Fullers time many fought hard against his heresy. All who believed in the Biblical Doctrines which Fullerism replaced were then and are now labeled "Hyper Calvinists". The new style of false Calvinism was labeled 'Evangelical Calvinism'²⁵⁸.

For various reasons many, including Dr. Ella, have misunderstood Carey's dependence on Fuller. Carey is singled out and honored to the highest degree. Some even call him a great theologian in his own right. Based on these unbiblical teaching of Fuller, Carey wrote his famous "An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use means for the Conversion of the Heathens"²⁵⁹. To arrive at the truth of what transpired it is essential to have some understanding of Carey's famous Enquiry. There is only room here to touch on some of the erroneous doctrines Carey believed in. His Enquiry reveals just how totally he rebelled against the Biblical doctrines of grace. One of the major factors in Thomas's total acceptance by the Enterprise was the lack of any Biblical bases to judge him upon. In other words there was no immovable standard in which to judge his character. The same is true for Carey.

Point 1: The Enquiry marks, as it were the first draft of Carey's missionary ideals. At the end of the first sentence in the Introduction Carey writes: "... **but to use every lawful method to spread the knowledge of his name.**" As the clearly documented accounts show, this ideal was either abandoned, extensively widened to fit their needs, or it was used in a quasi-biblical sense from the beginning. Using the 'Great Commission' as an excuse Thomas and Carey were compared to Christ sending out his apostles as if they had the same divine authority. Eustance Carey when speaking of their setting sail wrote:

²⁵⁷ See Law and Gospel In the Theology of Andrew Fuller: By George M. Ella. Go Publications 1996

²⁵⁸²⁵⁸ An example of just how far Fuller had departed from the truth can be seen in first point of the sermon he preached on March 20th, 1793, at the Leicester meeting. Before getting into his sermon, he first carefully sets himself apart as having the most important place in the meeting: Addressing his brethren he says:

EVERY part of the solemnities of this day must needs be affecting; but if there be one part which is more so than the rest, it is that which is allotted to me, delivering to you a solemn parting address. Nevertheless, I must acknowledge, that the hope of your undertakings being crowned with success swallows up all my sorrow. I could myself go without a tear, so at least I think, and leave all my friends and connections, in such a glorious cause. Impressed, therefore, with these sentiments, I can the more readily and cheerfully part with you. (Rippon page 525)

After a brief introduction he comes to his first point:

First, There is an analogy between the objects of Christ's mission and those of yours. The great objects of his mission were to glorify God, and to seek and to save lost souls; and yours are the same. Men and devils have dishonored God; they had virtually called him a hard master; had thrown off his yoke, and represented him, in the punishment of sin, as a being whose ways were not equal. But Christ, by his obedience and death, rolled away these reproaches. By the former, that is, by making it his meat and drink to do the will of his Father, he proved, in the face of a rebellious world, that his yoke was easy, and his burden light. By the latter, that is, by enduring the full penalty of the divine law without a murmuring thought, he manifested its equity, declaring in effect that God was in the right, and that man deserved to fall a sacrifice to his justice. You also, my brethren, have to glorify God, and that both by your cheerful obedience to his will, and by patiently enduring affliction. The heathen will judge of the character of your God, and of your religion, by what they see of your own character. Beware that you do not misrepresent your blessed Lord and his glorious gospel. It is a great encouragement to be engaged in the same cause with Christ himself. (ibid. page 525, 526)

Fuller's hideous denial of blessed finished work of Christ coupled with his nauseatingly putting these two sinful mortal men on the same level with the glorious Savior reveal the depth of his heresy.

²⁵⁹ Leicester: 1792

It was afterwards objected, that their going to settle in the British territories without the permission of the directors, though in a foreign ship, was after all illegal and dangerous; but to this it is replied, the apostles and primitive ministers were commanded to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; **nor were they to stop for the permission of any power upon earth; but to go, and take the consequences.** If a man of God, conscious of having nothing in his heart unfriendly to any civil government whatever, but determined in all civil matters to obey and teach obedience to the powers that are, put his life in his hand, saying, ‘I will go, and (if I am persecuted in one city, I will flee to another,’) whatever the wisdom of this world may decide upon his conduct, he will assuredly be acquitted, and more than acquitted, at a higher tribunal.²⁶⁰

The truth is that in obeying Christ command the apostles and the young churches worked within the framework of the governing authority, in this case Rome. Paul specifically explains how such obedience will lead directly to the salvation of all God’s elect children both Jew and gentile:

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 lead 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 the 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.²⁶¹

Paul is even more explicit in Romans chapter 13:1-10 where he writes:

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Robert Hawker, in his “Poor Man’s Commentary” also correctly explains these passages when he writes:

The obedience which the Apostle enforceth to the civil powers, is abundantly heightened in the consideration, that what Paul here recommended to the Church then at Rome, of a peaceable submission to the higher powers, which were heathens; comes home with double argument, considered as to Christian Princes. And, indeed, the motives which the Apostle adopts in recommending those duties, are in themselves unanswerable. All government must be the result of divine ordination. And the LORD'S design in that ordination is gracious. His Church cannot but

²⁶⁰ Memoir of William Carey, D.D. by Eustance Carey, London, 1836 pages 77, 78

²⁶¹ 1 Timothy 2:1-6

derive blessedness from it, however it may be administered, agreeably to that comprehensive promise, Romans 8:28. And, if the LORD enjoined his Church, as he did, when going into captivity, to seek the peace of the city, whither they were carried, and to pray unto the LORD for it, for in the peace thereof, they should have peace; how much more under the fostering care of a Christian government, are those duties enforced? Jeremiah 29:7²⁶².

Such a God glorifying, and Christ honoring position was abandoned by the early mission enterprise. Their failure to obey God's clear word has infected the modern missionary movement to this very day. Questions are raised about what is ethical in any given situation and clear Biblical teaching is left out.

Point 2: Carey replaced God's sovereign will to save the elect alone which is the heart of the Gospel with false doctrine not found in the Bible at all. After his sentence about lawful means, he continues with this statement about his plan for a worldwide mission:

In order to this, it is necessary that we should become, in some measure acquainted with the religious state of the world; and as this is an object we should be prompted to pursue, **not only by the gospel of our Redeemer, but even by the feelings of humanity, so an inclination to conscientious activity therein would form one of the strongest proofs that we are the subjects of grace, and partakers of that spirit of universal benevolence and genuine philanthropy, which appears so eminent in the character of God himself.**²⁶³

The Bible knows of no such '*general love to mankind*' as Carey and the multitude who have sought to enlarge upon this false doctrine in modern days. The Lord Jesus reveals the scope of his work of redemption in John 17. Speaking in his office as the High Priest he says:

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: **As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.** And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: **I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.** And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. **I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.** And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. **I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them,** because they are not

²⁶² See also 1 Peter 2:13-17: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king." Among other passages.

²⁶³ Enquiry Introduction

of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. **Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.** As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. **Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;** That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. **Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.**

Point 3: In the second paragraph of his introduction Carey deals with the subject of sin. He implicitly denies the total depravity of mankind, picturing sin as something that grew stronger with time. Starting the paragraph, he says:

Sin was introduced amongst the children of men by the fall of Adam, and has ever since been spreading its baneful influence. By changing its appearances to suit the circumstances of the times, it has grown up in ten thousand forms, and constantly counteracted the will and designs of God.

After elaborating on sins growth, he concludes by saying: “Nay, as they increased in science and politeness, they ran into more abundant and extravagant idolatries.”

1 John 3:4 defines sin: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. Genesis 6:5 shows the extent of sin: “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Romans 5:12-14 shows the origin of sin:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

The Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines Total Depravity in this way: “: a state of corruption due to original sin held in Calvinism to infect every part of man's nature and to make the natural man unable to know or obey God.” This key doctrine was replaced by Fuller, Cary etc. They teach that man has a duty to God to believe in the Gospel message. Therefore, they say man must have the needed ability to do so. This they call duty faith.

In this paragraph Carey makes his fist attack in the Enquiry against the absolute sovereignty of God. Speaking of the multiplication of sins he says “... and constantly counteracted the will and designs of God.”

Point 4: Carey sought to limit God's reign to the limits of Satan's domain as well as leaving him uncertain of the results of Christs death. Thus, again denying the sovereignty of God as well as Christ's definite atonement. His third paragraph (still in the introduction) starts off like this:

Yet God repeatedly made known his intention to prevail finally over all the power of the Devil, and to destroy all his works, and set up his own kingdom and interest among men, and **extend it as universally as Satan had extended his**. It was for this purpose that the Messiah came and died, that God might be just, and the justifier of all that should believe in him. When he had laid down his life, and taken it up again, he sent forth his disciples to preach the good tidings to every creature, and to **endeavour by all possible methods to bring over a lost world to God**.

This choice of words denies both limited (definite) atonement and God's eternal decree and purpose for all things in the covenant of mercy. As with Total Depravity these two doctrines are a major part of what defines historic Calvinism. In other words what the bible teaches us of God's plan of redemption through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Point 5: Carey, seeking to explain the necessity for man's prayers, uses one of the most God glorifying prophecies in Zechariah to make God dependent on man and his works. Carey clearly denied the total sovereignty even while seeming to glorify God. To Carey human effort is essential if God's will is to be accomplished on earth. Completely ignoring their context, he reaches an erroneous conclusion. Here is what Carey says about prayer and Zechariah 12:10.14; 13:1-6.

If the prophecies concerning the increase of Christ's kingdom be true, and if what has been advanced, concerning the commission given by him to his disciples being obligatory on us, be just, it must be **inferred** that all Christians ought heartily to concur with God in promoting his glorious designs, for he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

One of the first, and most important of those **duties** which are **incumbent upon us**, is fervent and united prayer. However, the influence of the Holy Spirit may be set at nought, and run down by many, it will be found upon trial, that all means which we can use, without it, will be ineffectual. If a temple is raised for God in the heathen world, it will not be by might, nor by power, nor by the authority of the magistrate, or the eloquence of the orator; but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. **We must therefore be in real earnest in supplicating his blessing upon our labours.**

It is represented in the prophets, that when there shall be a great mourning in the land, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon, and every family shall mourn apart, and their wives apart, it shall all follow upon a spirit of grace, and supplication. And **when these things shall take place**, it is promised that there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David, and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, and for uncleanness, and that the idols shall be destroyed, and the false prophets ashamed of their profession. Zech. 12:10, 14: 13:1, 6. **This prophecy seems to teach** that **when** there shall be a universal conjunction in fervent prayer, and all shall esteem Zion's welfare as their own, **then** copious influences of the Spirit shall be shed upon the churches, which like a purifying fountain shall cleanse the servants of the Lord. Nor shall this cleansing influence stop here; all old idolatrous prejudices shall be rooted out, and truth prevail so gloriously that false teachers shall be so ashamed as rather to wish to be classed with obscure herdsmen, or the meanest peasants, than bear the ignominy attendant on their detection²⁶⁴.

Carey's own words condemn his denial of God's Sovereign judgment on the non-elect and certain saving purpose for his elect alone. He says: "**This prophecy seems to teach**" Here are the verses Carey took out of context to support his false doctrine of the necessity of united prayer.

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 me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn

²⁶⁴ First three paragraphs of Section 5

for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

God speaking through Zechariah has something very different to proclaim, so dissimilar as to be the opposite of what Carey is saying:

1The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him. 2Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. **3And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.** **4**In that day, saith the LORD, **I will smite** every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: **and I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah,** and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. **5**And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the LORD of hosts their God. **6In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood,** and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. **7The LORD also shall save** the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah. **8In that day shall the LORD defend** the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. **9**And it shall come to pass **in that day,** **that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.** **10**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 me 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 firstborn.** **11**In that day **shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem,** as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. **12**And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; **13**The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; **14**All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

1In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. **2**And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that **I will cut off the names of the idols** out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also **I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.** **3**And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, **Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD:** and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. **4**And it shall come to pass **in that day,** that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive: **5**But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth. **6**And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. **7**Awake, **O sword, against my**

shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.²⁶⁵

Verse 1 sets the whole tone and foundation of all that follows: God alone is the actor and moves man by the Holy Spirit. Carey would have man as the actor and God moved by man. There is no biblical foundation for Carey's doctrine of the necessity of human prayer before God can act. The fact is that **prayer is required** of us but not in the matter Carey represents.

Dr. John Gill's introduction to this prophecy shows both its true meaning just how mistaken Carey was:

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of the defence, protection, and salvation of the church of God; and of the effusion of the spirit; and of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day. It begins with a title and preface, describing the power of God, from the creation of the heavens and earth, and soul of man, ver. 1. then follows the subject-matter of the prophecy, in a way of judgment upon the enemies of the people of God, and in a way of salvation to them. The judgments on their enemies are signified by various metaphors; by Jerusalem's being a cup of trembling, a burdensome stone, and a hearth, and torch of fire to them, ver. 2, 3, 6. The effects of which are to them astonishment, madness, blindness, and utter destruction; and to the people of God confidence in him, salvation from him, and strength and protection by him, ver. 4, 5, 7, 8. and, at the same time that God will destroy all the enemies of his people, he will pour out his spirit upon his chosen ones among the Jews. The consequence of which will be, their faith in Christ, signified by looking to him whom they have pierced; and their repentance towards God, expressed by mourning; and this illustrated by mourning for an only and first-born son, ver. 9, 10 and which is further illustrated by the mourning for Josiah in the valley of Megiddon; and by an enumeration of the several families in Jerusalem, that should separately mourn on this account, ver. 11, 12, 13, 14.²⁶⁶

Point 6 Carey ignored the Biblical qualifications for God's ministers replacing these with his own carefully worded ideals. This is perfectly aligned with his comparing world evangelism to an ordinary commercial enterprise.

This society must consist of persons whose hearts are in the work, men of **serious religion**, and possessing a spirit of perseverance; there must be a determination not to admit any person who is not of this description, or to retain him longer than he answers to it. From such a society a committee might be appointed, whose business it should be to procure all the information they could upon the subject, to **receive contributions**, to enquire into the characters, tempers, abilities and **religious views** of the missionaries, and also to provide them with necessaries for their undertakings²⁶⁷.

The very demons that Christ encountered held to a form of "serious religion" and had strong "religious views". Doctrinally speaking this statement of Carey's is totally useless (except in a business sense) and unbiblical in the extreme. Such vague phraseology is deliberate from start to finish.

Point 7: The fact is that Carey never quotes or refers to the all the words of the "great commission" that Christ gave his disciples. It's certain that he takes Matthew's version over the other references because of various slight references to it. Matthew records Christ's words as follows:

²⁶⁵ Zechariah chapter 12 and verses 1 – 7 of chapter 14.

²⁶⁶ Gill, J. (1810). An Exposition of the Old Testament (Vol. 6, p. 737). Mathews and Leigh.

²⁶⁷ An Enquiry page 83

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.²⁶⁸

Several facts lay on the very surface of Christ's words. 1. God's sovereignty is the foundation, and the only foundation of Christ's commission. It is on this foundation that they are to go, success is with the God alone. 2. Christ commanded what action or purpose was to be achieved. They were to make disciples as the first reference to teach above is 'to disciple' in the Greek²⁶⁹. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" implicitly implies that God would bless their efforts with the conversion of his elect. The phrase 'in the name of' implies authority from God and all that is revealed about God in the scriptures. This harks back to the 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Say this to the people of Israel: 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Exodus 3:14). 3. "Teaching them to observe **all things whatsoever** I have commanded you" In other word's God in all his glory and power fulfilling all the requirements that each member of the trinity agreed to in the covenant of mercy. Or as Paul puts it:

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.²⁷⁰

Point 8: Although this commission was given in the first instance to Christ's apostles it has direct relevance to God's church throughout the ages. To be true to the great commission we must keep to Christ's blueprint given in the commission. We learn how to do this from the examples and commands laid down by the Holy Spirit in the rest of the New Testament. This and this alone must be our rule of action. Carey knew this but he chose a far different course of action both in the enquiry and on the mission field just as Thomas had done. Ignoring its meaning, Carey quotes Romans 10:12-13 at the head of his enquiry without giving the scriptural reference.

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? PAUL.

The whole context of Romans 10 is important to the subject of missions. However, I must limit this section to the verses immediately before verse 12. In verses 8-11 Paul writes:

²⁶⁸ Matthew 28:18 -20

²⁶⁹ 3100. μαθητεύω mathētēuō, math-ayt-yoo'-o; from 3101; intr. to become a pupil; tran. to disciple, i.e. enroll as scholar:— be disciple, instruct, teach. intr. intr. = intransitive²⁶, intransitively tran. tran. = transitive³⁷, transitively i.e. i.e. = that is (Strong, J. (1996). In *The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words*. Thomas Nelson.)

²⁷⁰ Ephesians 1:1- 10

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

Paul's teaching is in perfect alignment with Christ's great commission. He elaborates on some details of how disciples are made. It's through faith (which is the free gift of God to each of his elect) in Jesus Christ as he is revealed in the preaching of the Gospel. Any compromising of Christ as the only God – man mediator in his capacity of Prophet, Priest and King is not the gospel and consequently will in no means be blessed by God. The Bible knows nothing of friendship or fellowship with the heathen works of darkness.

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.²⁷¹

Preaching the Gospel of sovereign grace is God's method of calling out His elect and making them disciples. This is by far the primary duty of true Godly missionary work. This is to be performed in God's way and God's way alone and it limited to those God calls to this purpose. God in his word has revealed to us, in essence, all we need to know about how to set about obeying his commission in the time in which we live. It is the touchstone or standard by which we can tell what is dishonoring or pleasing to God. 1 Corinthians 9:16-19²⁷² is an example of how the Holy Spirit enlightens up on this subject using Paul as a prime example. Dr. John Gill in his exposition of these passages highlights the centrality of the one and only gospel to preaching.

Ver. 16. For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of, &c.] The sense is not, that if he preached the Gospel in order for a livelihood, and to serve his private advantage, he should have no room for glorying; since, if this was the case, he should be obliged to do it, or perish for want: but his meaning is, that though he preached the Gospel ever so well, or ever so freely, and might glory before men, and against the false teachers, who insulted him in his character and office; yet not before God, from whom he received all his gifts, abilities, and qualifications, to preach the Gospel; all his light and knowledge in it; all his enlargements in meditation, and liberty in expression; all his faithfulness and integrity, courage and intrepidity, in the discharge and performance of his work, were by divine grace and assistance; and his success in it owing to the power and spirit of God, so that he had nothing to glory of on any of these accounts: hence these words are a correction, or rather an explanation of the preceding: for necessity is laid upon me; not of getting a livelihood by preaching, for he could have got, and did get this another way, even by labouring with his hands; nor of force and compulsion, for no one more readily engaged in it, or more cheerfully performed it; but of obligation from the divine call to this work, and from his own conscience, in which he knew it to be an heavenly one, and from the nature of the trust committed to him, and because of the good of immortal souls, and the honour of Christ; all which lay with weight upon him, and obliged him in duty, love, and gratitude, to attend to it: yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel; which is to be understood, not of any temporal affliction, as reproach,

²⁷¹ Ephesians 5:8- 12

²⁷² "16For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! 17For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me. 18What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. 19For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more".

persecution, famine, nakedness, sword, &c. for such sort of woes frequently attend those that do preach the Gospel; but of the wounding of his conscience, and exposing himself, through the neglect of his calling, and contempt of the divine will, to the wrath and curse of God for ever; not that the apostle feared this would be his case, or that it possibly could be; but he thus speaks, to shew what he or any other minister of the Gospel would deserve, at the hand of God, who having abilities to preach, should not make use of them; or should preach, but not the Gospel; or only a part of it, and not the whole; or should entirely desist from it, through self-interest, or the fear of man, or through being ashamed of Christ and his Gospel, or as not able to bear the reproach and persecution attending it.

Ver. 17. For if I do this thing willingly, &c.] That is, not freely and without receiving any thing for preaching, without seeking any temporal profits and advantages; nor in pure love to Christ, and the good of souls, without any fear of punishment, or hope of reward; but the apostle supposes a case which was not, and his sense is, that supposing no necessity had been laid upon him, or any injunction or command given him to preach the Gospel, but he had entered on it without any obligation upon him, then, says he, I have a reward; or should have one, or might expect one; so the Jews say, that a reward is given to him, who does any thing unbidden: but if against my will, or unwillingly, a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me; which was his case; the Gospel was committed to his trust, as any thing is to the trust and charge of a steward by his lord, who is obliged to take care of it, and is accountable for it, and of whom faithfulness is required; he did not undertake this economy, or dispensation of the Gospel of himself, of his own mind and will, but it was enjoined him by one that had the command over him, and could and did oblige him to take the charge of it; though he made him willing, as well as able to do it: and therefore since this was the case, that it was not at his own option whether he would preach the Gospel or no, but he was obliged to it by one, that had a superior power and influence over him; hence, though he performed it ever so well, and with never so much faithfulness and integrity, he asks in the following verse,

Ver. 18. What is my reward then? &c.] None at all, I have none to expect, hope for, or claim, in a way of debt; I am a servant intrusted by my Lord with the Gospel, and an unprofitable one I am; I do, at most and best, but what's my duty, and for that I can claim no reward: all the reward that remains is only this, verily, that when I preach the Gospel, which I am obliged to do, I may make the Gospel of Christ without charge; to them that hear it, as he did to the Corinthians, which was his glorying in ver. 15 and is the same with his reward here; for this means not any reward from God, but his glorying among men, and against the false teachers; that when he preached the word at Corinth, he was not chargeable to any, nor would he ever be: his reason for it is, that I abuse not my power in the Gospel; his right of having a maintenance, whilst he was preaching the Gospel; to have made use of which would have been an abuse of it, since it would have given occasion to the false apostles to reproach and calumniate, and might have been an hinderance to the Gospel of Christ, and a stumbling to some weak minds.

Ver. 19. For though I be free from all men, &c.] As an apostle, being in the highest office in the church, he had none superior to him, that could exercise any power and authority over him, and was also independent of men for his maintenance, which he got by his own hand-labour: though it may be observed, that the word men is not in the original text, and the word all may as well have respect to things as men; and the sense be, that he was free, as from the curse of the moral law, so from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and all the rituals of it, and might, if he would, make use of his Christian liberty; the following verses seem to incline to this sense, as the preceding ones do to the former: yet have I made myself servant unto all; in faithfully and indefatigably preaching the Gospel to them; undergoing all manner of affliction and persecution for the sake of that and them; behaving towards them with all meekness and humility; condescending to their weakness, and accommodating himself to their capacities and customs: that I might gain the more; than other apostles have done, or than it could be reasonably thought he should, had he behaved in a more

lordly and domineering manner: his end was not to amass wealth, to gain riches and treasures of good things to himself, but many souls to Christ, who otherwise must have been lost; but being brought to the knowledge of Christ, and salvation by him through his ministry, it was profit to them, and gain to Christ: the metaphor is taken from merchants, who spare no pains, but take every method to acquire gain and profit; the ministers of the word are spiritual merchants, their traffic lies in the souls of men, whom they are studiously and anxiously careful to bring to Christ.²⁷³

Carey gives this shorted version of the Great Commission; “Our Lord Jesus Christ, a little before his departure, commissioned his apostles to Go, and teach all nations; or, as another evangelist expresses it, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”²⁷⁴ He then concentrates on the scope of this commission saying “This commission was as extensive as possible, and laid them under obligation to disperse themselves into every country of the habitable globe, and preach to all the inhabitants, without exception, or limitation.” Almost immediately he speaks of “zeal and perseverance”.

John Ryland Jr. picks up on the “Zeal” topic in the end of May 1792 circular letter called “The Northampton Letter on Godly Zeal” (end of May 1792). The move away from the historic doctrines of grace (Particular Redemption for example), can be seen from one small section of this letter. Putting meat on Cary’s bones, thus allowing the use of all means, Ryland tells his readers:

... Hence one principal effect of godly zeal will be, his abounding in fervent prayer for divine power to attend the ordinances of God’s house. But though regeneration, **strictly speaking**, be allowed to be the immediate effect of divine agency, beyond and above the use of means, **yet** God is accustomed to employ them in bringing sinners under those awakenings and convictions that usually precede regeneration; and it is likewise in the use of means, that the secret influence of renewing grace, is manifested by active conversion²⁷⁵. There is therefore nothing in the doctrine of Efficacious Grace, **when rightly explained** (*in other words ‘explained away, RCS*), that tends to discourage us from expressing our **zeal** for the conversion of fowls, **by the most diligent use of every means** that is suited to instruct, alarm, or allure the mind.

Were it needful to prevent some other of our principles from being misunderstood by those who embrace them, or misrepresented by those who oppose them, we might briefly show that the doctrines of future punishment, of God’s special electing love, or of the divine decrees in general, form no objection to your seeking the salvation of all around you, and will be no excuse for the want of zeal in this case.^{276, 277}

Point 9: Carey clearly had little or no concern for a church’s practice or doctrine. All that mattered was zeal for the cause of missions. To accomplish the ends, he had in view he introduced business practices not found in the New Testament. He did feel that he was much more likely to succeed among the “*Particular Baptists*” as he called them. At the time of his writing the Enquiry, he was known only to a few even among them. Carey’s views upon these subjects can be found near the end of Section V.

²⁷³ Gill, J. (1809). An Exposition of the New Testament (Vol. 2, pp. 664–665). Mathews and Leigh.

²⁷⁴ First sentence of Section 1.

²⁷⁵ What in the world is this? What of regeneration before conversion and the sinner being dead in sin till, he or she is regenerated first? No number of means will regenerate a sinner, only God can do this.

²⁷⁶ Rippon page 426

²⁷⁷ Of course, God uses means and evangelism is important. The point is they themselves deviated exceedingly from the truth as it is in Jesus.

If there is any reason for me to hope that I shall have any influence upon any of my brethren, and fellow Christians, probably it may be more especially amongst them of my own denomination. **I would therefore propose that such a society and committee should be formed amongst the particular Baptist denomination.**

I do not mean by this, in any wise to confine it to one denomination of Christians. I wish with all my heart, that everyone who loves our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, would in some way or other engage in it. But in the present divided state of Christendom, it would be more likely for good to be done by each denomination engaging separately in the work, than if they were to embark in it conjointly. There is room enough for us all, without interfering with each other; and if no unfriendly interference took place, each denomination would bear good will to the other, and wish, and pray for its success, considering it as upon the whole friendly to the great cause of true religion; but if all were intermingled, it is likely their private discords might throw a damp upon their spirits, and much retard their public usefulness²⁷⁸.

Point 10: What there was of Carey's theological understanding and the forces that drove him came from at least one other source. The whole group was infected with the same false theology. I have gone into this aspect in some detail already. However, Eustance Carey's views on this subject are significant to strengthen what has already been shown. He says:

Before Mr. Carey left England, **he was deeply imbued with North American theology.** President Edwards, its great master, was his admired author. The strong and absorbing view in which he exhibited some leading principles in the system of revealed truth, seemed so clearly **to explode the errors of arminianism on the one hand, and of pseudo-calvinism on the other, and to throw such a flood of irresistible light on the mediatorial dispensation,** as perfectly captivated, and almost entranced, the ministerial circle with which Mr. Carey was connected. **David Brainerd was supposed, by President Edwards, to exemplify and irradiate the main features of his own system. This, indeed, was a principal reason why he compiled the history of his religious experience and labours: and hence it became the constant manual of the devoted admirers of that great man's theological system; whilst its intrinsic worth, as offering a sublime and experimental display of religious affections, through a scene of arduous labour and patient suffering, rendered it the devotional guide of multitudes who remained strangers to that grand theory of evangelical sentiment it was conceived to illustrate. Dr. Ryland, the intimate friend of the subject of this memoir, was often heard to say, that "Brainerd's life ranked with him next to his bible."** In his esteem of this eminent saint and prince of missionaries, Mr. Carey was not behind him. **His trials during the early period of his residence in India, were not inferior to those of Brainerd; they were even more severe, complicated, and perplexing, and the religious devotion he manifested under them was equally pure, if not equally intense.** Of this the reader will presently have proof. I have simply desired to record so much of his experience as appeared relevant to his mission; so much of his pleasures or his pains, his hopes or his fears, his successes or his disappointments, as met him while pursuing the grand purpose of his life: for the missionary spirit was so much incorporated with all he thought, and felt, and did, that to commemorate the missionary is to describe the Christian.²⁷⁹

Point 11: From the very beginning the Baptist Enterprise was a vast money-making business. Thomas started this in his way. Carey took different approaches as time went on. In the enquiry he made the following suggestions.

²⁷⁸ Enquiry page 84

²⁷⁹ Eustance Carey pages 130, 131

In respect to contributions for defraying the expenses, **money will doubtless be wanting**; and suppose the rich were to embark a portion of that wealth over which God has made them stewards, in this important undertaking, perhaps there are few ways that would turn to a better account at last. Nor ought it to be confined to the rich; if persons in more moderate circumstances were to devote a portion, suppose a tenth, of their annual increase to the Lord, it would not only correspond with the practice of the Israelites, who lived under the Mosaic Economy, but of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, before that dispensation commenced. Many of our most eminent fore-fathers **amongst the Puritans** followed that practice; and if that were but attended to now, there would not only be enough to support the ministry of the gospel at home, and to encourage village preaching in our respective neighborhoods, but to defray the expenses of carrying the gospel into the heathen world²⁸⁰.

Such ideals as these had the effect of putting believers under the Law rather than under grace.

Efforts to make a hero of Carey started very early in the mission's history. Despite all the counter evidence Andrew Fuller tells us that:

From his first religious concern, his mind was much employed in obtaining just and scriptural sentiments. He thought the notions of many who called themselves Calvinists, but who in fact were hyper-Calvinists, were, in various important particulars, unscriptural, and unfriendly to all attempts for the conversion of sinners; and as to Arminianism, he had no leaning that way, considering it as subversive of the doctrine of grace. **He therefore endeavored to form a system of his own, without any human help; and which for substance proved the same with that of the ministers with whom he afterwards associated. I have heard him say, that he did not recollect to have received his views of divine truth from any writer or preacher, but merely from reading his Bible;** but that, when he found a number of brethren whose sentiments and feelings accorded with his own, it yielded him great satisfaction. The writings of President Edwards were afterwards of much use to him; and he drank in the leading principles of that great writer with approbation and delight²⁸¹.

The fact is the Carey, like Thomas, had little or no real interest in a systematic understanding of Scripture that placed the Lord Jesus Christ at the center of all things. The grand scheme of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Covenant of Grace (or Mercy) was ignored. God's love of his elect alone was replaced with belief that anyone could be saved if they only did their duty to believe. Again, God's absolute sovereignty (what was then and now falsely called hyper-Calvinism²⁸²) was replaced with a false concept of His sovereignty where God's will was dependent on man's actions. As shown above this fatal error was the touch stone of Carey's famous Enquiry. Seeking to make gold out of a dung heap of error C. J. Moore's wrote an essay titled "William Carey: The Calvinist 'Father of Modern Missions'"²⁸³ Under the heading of "Carey's Writings" he writes in part:

Sadly, Carey did not write much in the English language. However, evidence of his Calvinism can be seen both explicitly and implicitly in his writings. First to consider is his main work, An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens. While Carey does not explicitly mention Calvinism in this short book, he does summarize the work (in the fifth

²⁸⁰ Enquiry pages 84, 85

²⁸¹ Eustance Carey, page 72

²⁸² For centuries before Carey many of these so called hypers saw a vast number of genuine converts in many countries. Compared to some of them Carey accomplished little or nothing.

²⁸³ <https://biblicalmissiology.org/blog/2021/05/24/william-carey-the-calvinist-father-of-modern-missions/> Moore, May 24th 2021

section) with two words: pray and work. These two words would become foundational to Carey's ministry overseas. The first word is most important. Carey believed that without the Holy Spirit's work in missions, all his "work" would "be ineffectual." ³ For their work to succeed, Carey believed the sovereign God had to act; so, he needed to pray. Brian Stanley writes,

"The fifth and final section of the Enquiry hinged in classic moderate Calvinist fashion on the necessary connection between prayer and responsible Christian action... Divine sovereignty demanded human means; prayer required action; obligation called for obedience." 4 Conversions would only come from the "divine blessing" of God. 5²⁸⁴

Moreover, Carey wrote of his hope that a mission society would form "amongst the particular Baptist denomination, of which denomination he had said sometime before... was his denomination." ⁶ Carey belonged to this Calvinistic branch of Baptists, not the Arminian (or "general") branch. ⁷ Like Fuller's Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation, Carey wrote An Enquiry as a response to the hyper-Calvinism of his day. ⁸ Though God is sovereign over man's salvation (i.e., the "end"), this does not excuse man from evangelistic work, which God is also sovereign over (i.e., the "means")²⁸⁵.

I have omitted the footnote references as I am quoting this just to show a typical example of modern Fullerite teaching on this subject. The defenders of Carey's supposed Calvinism are legion although the Enquiry is virtually the only source actually written by Carey. In this he gives us his views of the practical outworking of such a theology. Carey, in the early days of the mission work was true to what he wrote. However, Carey's life and work took a very different, almost opposite, direction as he encountered real life situations. In the beginning, and largely because of Thomas's actions, Carey suffered a great deal. The freer he became to do as he wanted the more his situation improved materially.

He said in his Enquiry that:

A Christian minister is a person who in a peculiar sense is not his own; he is the servant of God, and therefore ought to be wholly devoted to him. By entering on that sacred office he solemnly undertakes to be always engaged, as much as possible, in the Lord's work, and not to choose his own pleasure, or employment, or pursue the ministry as a something that is to subserve his own ends, or interests, or as a kind of bye-work. He engages to go where God pleases, and to do or endure what he sees fit to command, or call him to, in the exercise of his function. He virtually bids farewell to friends, pleasures, and comforts, and stands in readiness endure the greatest sufferings in the work of his Lord, and Master. It is inconsistent for ministers to please themselves with thoughts of a numerous auditory, cordial friends, a civilized country, legal protection, affluence, splendour, or even a competency. The slights, and hatred of men, and even pretended friends, gloomy prisons, and tortures, the society of barbarians of uncouth speech, miserable accommodations in wretched wildernesses, hunger, and thirst, nakedness, weariness, and painfulness, hard work, and but little worldly encouragement, should rather be the objects of their expectation²⁸⁶.

In fact, he became as the saying is a "Master of all he surveyed." He fitted in as a round peg in a round hole, avoiding conflict but making the most of life's situations as they arose. His goal was not money but fame and affluence. This, however, is a story that gradually unfolded and for the most part must be left for now.

²⁸⁴ This is bolded in Moore's essay

²⁸⁵ Moore as referenced above.

²⁸⁶ Smith pages 37, 38 from Carey's enquiry

Chapter twelve

July 1792 to February 1793. Part 4: The changing face of the Baptist Mission: Pearce, Thomas, Ryland jr. and Fuller

The devil portrays himself as an angel of light and these early missionary Baptists kept back their true identity by using as much as possible the title of “Particular Baptists”. My purpose here is to expose just how quickly, and why they abandoned even this pretext, though when it was to their profit, they claimed it again.

Historical accounts about the Baptist mission, even up to the present day, portray the time period of the important name change as taking place between October 2nd, 1792, to “the end of the century or to 1800 at best. By name change I mean the undisputed change from “The Particular Baptist Mission” to the “Baptist Mission”. Often emphasis is placed upon these early participants, including Thomas. as being “Particular Baptists”. As I said above this is still claimed as a truth when helpful to their followers.

An example of the typical way the change is described can be seen in A. Christopher Smith’s book, “The Serampore Mission Enterprise”²⁸⁷. In summary he tells us that Carey’s “Enquiry” (**printed May 12th, 1792**) played a role leading up to and including the October 2nd, 1792, meeting. That date as detailed above is when the ‘Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to the among the Heathen’ was formed. He goes on to explain that that was the prototype of the Baptist Missionary Society that came into being by the end of that century.

The problem with this kind of approach is that it is over simplistic. The actual change came in 1792 and over a very short time frame. One person of particular importance regarding this change is the Rev. Samuel Pearce, M.A. of Bristol, England. He was one of first for wanting to do away with the ‘Particular Baptist designation as I show below. One source tells us about him in this way:

Samuel Pearce, pastor of the church in Cannon Street, Birmingham, died October 10th, 1799. He was greatly beloved by his brethren, and justly so; for his character was an embodiment of Christian loveliness. Born at Plymouth, July 20th, 1766—converted at the age of sixteen, called to the ministry by the church in 1786—he studied at Bristol College, under Dr. Caleb Evans, and was **ordained at Birmingham in 1790**. His ministry in that town was eminently successful, because it was **evangelical to the core**, ... Mr. Pearce was extremely desirous of joining Dr.; Carey in missionary labours but yielded to the advice of his friends and brethren, who judged that he could not be spared from England. They were compelled to give him up, however, for his Lord summoned him to the palace above.²⁸⁸

Another source gives some detailed information about the Bristol College under Dr. Caleb Evans. All that needs to be noted here is how Caleb and the new “evangelical Calvinism” were linked together: “But may we not see

²⁸⁷ The Serampore Mission Enterprise. A. Christopher Smith. Centre for Contemporary Christianity Bangalore 2006 page

²⁸⁸ Baptist History by J. M. Cramp, DD; London 1868. Pages 498, 499

the possible link between Bristol and the breaking with hyper-Calvinism, which led to the **evangelical Calvinism** that inspired William Carey and the Baptist Missionary Society?"²⁸⁹ I would substitute the word "Fullerism" for "evangelical" especially when applied to Samuel Pearce. Pearce and Thomas, as I will show desired to be separated from the term "*Particular Baptist*" for the sake of monetary gain.

The original October 2nd society was formed when there was only one single group of individuals. By October 31st it had expanded to two distinct societies in two locations. It is important to have as good an understanding of what happened as possible. The following rather long quotations from Doctor Rippon describe both the first and then the second meetings.

... Some months after, Brother Carey printed his pamphlet, entitled, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen, & c.* At the next annual meeting of the association at Nottingham, May 31, 1792, the subject was revived, and a resolution made. That a plan be prepared against the next Ministers' meeting at Kettering, for forming a **Baptist society for propagating the gospel among the Heathen.** And Brother Carey generously engaged, that whatever profits might arise from his late publication, should be devoted to the use of such a society: Accordingly at the Ministers' meeting at Kettering, Oct. 2, 1792, after the public services of the day were over, the ministers retired to consult farther on the subject, and to lay at least a foundation for a society; when the following resolutions were proposed and unanimously agreed to:

Resolutions at a meeting of Ministers of the Particular Baptist denomination, held at Kettering, in Northampton/hire, Oct 2, 1792.

1. Desirous of making an effort for the propagation of the gospel amongst the Heathen, **agreeably to what is recommended in Brother Carey s late publication** on that subject, we, whole names appear in the subsequent subscription, do solemnly agree to act in society together for that purpose.
2. **As in the present divided slate of Christendom, it seems that each denomination, by exerting itself separately, is most likely to accomplish the great ends of a mission, it is agreed, that this society be called, The Particular Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen.**
3. As such an undertaking must needs be attended with expense, we agree immediately to open a subscription for the above purpose, and to recommend it to others.
4. **Every person**²⁹⁰ who shall subscribe ten £ at once, or ten shillings and sixpence annually, shall be considered as a member of the society.
5. That the Rev. Messrs. John Ryland, Reynold Hogg, William Carey, John Sutcliff, and Andrew Fuller, be appointed a committee, three of whom shall be empowered to act in carrying into effect the purposes of the society.
6. That the Rev. Reynold Hogg be appointed treasurer, and Rev. Andrew Fuller secretary.
7. That the subscriptions be paid in at the Northampton Ministers' meeting, Oct. 31, 1792; at which time the subject shall be considered more particularly, by the committee and other subscribers who may be present.

Signed, John Ryland, Reynold Hogg, John Sutcliff, A.

Fuller, Abraham Greenwood, Edward Sharman, Joshua Burton, Samuel Pearce, Thomas Blundell, William Heighten, John Eayres, Jos. Timms; whose subscriptions in all amounted to 13 l. 2s. 6d. (pages 375, 376)

²⁸⁹ Baptist Quarterly, Oct. 1971, "Caleb Evens" by Norman S. Moon page 177

²⁹⁰ As it worked out in practice anyone from anywhere could join on this one condition.

Rippon continues to describe the second meeting and how the second society was formed.

Second Meeting of the Primary Society, at Northampton, October 31, 1792.

The secretary chosen at the former meeting, being ill, sent a written copy of the former resolutions, with an account of two new subscribers of one guinea, one of which engages to continue it annually, and also information from Brother Carey, who was likewise prevented from attending, that a gentleman from Northumberland had promised to send him twenty £ for the society, and had engaged further to subscribe four guineas annually.

Brother Pearce of Birmingham gave us information that having mentioned the business to his friends, at his return from the first meeting, and preached upon the subject, they were so suitably affected with the importance of the affair, as immediately, without any personal application to an individual, to offer their generous contributions, which they sent by Mr. Pearce to the amount of seventy £, which he paid into the hands of the treasurer.

Our good friends of Birmingham also adopted a most agreeable plan, of forming a distinct society in aid of the mission, for the purpose of receiving both occasional contributions, and annual, quarterly, or weekly subscriptions, and to cooperate by every other means in their power with the primary society, in pursuing the grand object we have conjointly in view.

At this meeting at Northampton-, two other friends subscribed and paid two guineas a-piece, two more one guinea each, and another half a guinea, making 6 guineas and a half in all. And such members as were present of the first subscribers paid their subscriptions into the hands of the treasurer, who proposed to put the sum now received into the hands of a banker who will pay interest for the same.

The following resolves were passed:

1. Revolved, That the most hearty thanks of the primary society are due to the congregation in Cannon-Street, Birmingham, for their generous exertions in so good a cause.
2. That we cordially approve of the step taken by our friends in Birmingham, in forming an assistant society, to act in conjunction and union with the society begun by the Northampton and Leicestershire association.
3. That if this plan shall meet with the general or increasing approbation of the Baptist churches, we shall rejoice to find a number of corresponding united societies formed in different parts of the kingdom.
4. **That Brother Pearce of Birmingham, who was a member of the primary society, and is the delegate from the corresponding society at Birmingham, be considered as a member of the committee.**
5. That in order to promote the extension of this society, it appears proper to print a brief narrative of its rise, and plan, accompanied with some short address, and such further additions as shall be determined upon by a meeting of the committee at Northampton, Nov. 13, 1792²⁹¹.

It is particularly important to notice the very principal role Pearce had, even at this early date. Thomas, according to the official version of events, did not come into prominence till the third November 13th meeting. It must be

²⁹¹ The Baptist Annual Register for 1790 – part of 1793 by John Rippon D. D. No date given but appears to be a first edition pages 376, 377

sometime around this time that the third society was formed. At least we know for sure that Thomas in a letter dated March 7th, 1793, says: “I have been out three weeks preaching and begging on behalf of the three societies of **Northampton, Birmingham, and Halifax**, under whose united patronage we are going out as missionaries to Bengal.”²⁹²

In this part of his account Rippon gives the five new resolutions from the November meeting, one of which needs some further information. Number 4, of the five stated “That it is advisable to appoint an agent in London **to receive subscriptions.**”²⁹³ **Please see Appendix 1 for accounts of this important meeting.** Rippon continues on page 485. There he tells us about Thomas.²⁹⁴

Regarding the January 1793 meeting the Periodical Accounts gives us an important insight into how the **zeal** of this small group continued to lead them on the path of giving up all pretext of being “Particular Baptists” or even “Baptists”: All for the sake of money. In part the account says: “The object now was to calculate the expenses, and obtain the means of defraying them, **in so short a space of time as three or four months.**”²⁹⁵

In the previous chapter, I mentioned Fullers doctrine of duty faith and Post Millennialism. That this were in fact so influential can be seen in the periodical accounts under the heading “Address of the society to their fellow Christians at large”. This originated in the November 13th meeting. Again, in their zeal to get support from any quarter they stoop to the low of just seeking to civilize the heathen by the gospel. It just needs man’s consent. They say:

Where these ignorant immortals but thoroughly instructed in the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, their civilization would **naturally** follow, and what miseries would be hereby prevented! How great the blessing that **must certainly ensue on their reception** of the glorious gospel.²⁹⁶

Finally, from this time we have Thomas’s own account of how he and Pearce pressured Fuller to abandon the term “Particular Baptist” for the purpose of making more money. Thomas’s (as well as Perce’s) importance is clearly visible even to the naked eye. Whatever hindered the gathering of money was rejected. At the same time whatever added these main goals was advanced.

Because of their self-imposed time limit they grew more and more desperate to make money. At the end of his letter, Thomas, writing to Fuller writes:

Brother Pearce continues indefatigable in desires and exertions for promoting the good work. 5-5 £ more, since I wrote the above.

Our sum total last night at Bristol was 44 £, and upwards. **We are in distress for time: disappointed of your letter. The words, *Particular Baptists*, seem to stand so very much in our way, that brother Pearce was minded to print a few papers at Bristol. Time fails!**²⁹⁷

Lewis immediately adds:

²⁹² Lewis page 223

²⁹³ Rippon page 378

²⁹⁴ Rippon s account of the January 9th, 1793, meeting was given above in a previous section so it is not repeated here.

²⁹⁵ Periodical Accounts Volume 1, page 35.

²⁹⁶ Accounts page 9

²⁹⁷ Lewis page 226

Mr. Carey also visited a few places in the north of England and as the result of these endeavors, **which were the commencement of those “missionary deputations,” now so familiar to the churches at home,** together with the liberality excited generally in the denomination by the enterprise, the sum in hand was augmented to upwards of 800 £ before the end of March, and a very hearty desire for the prosperity of the mission was excited.²⁹⁸

In the Northamptonshire Association Letter for 1793 Fuller shows just how little the ‘Particular’ or even ‘Baptist’ doctrines meant; again, money was all important.

Though this Society honestly acknowledged that its founders were of the Particular Baptist persuasion, we are sure it was not the interest of a party they wished to promote, but the glory of our divine Lord, and the salvation of immortal souls. Hence it was proposed at first, if no opening was soon found for a Baptist mission, to have requested the *Presbyterian* and the *Moravian* brethren, who had been already employed in labouring among the heathen, to accept some assistance from our subscriptions: for by the leave of the God of heaven, we were determined to do somewhat toward propagating his Gospel in pagan lands. The providence of God pointing out so speedily a sphere of action sufficient to require all our exertions, prevented this testimony of our brotherly love for the present; but He who knew our hearts in this request, has inclined our brethren to show us favor. Our *Pado Baptist* brethren have not looked upon us with a jealous eye; but *evangelical Episcopalians*, as well as different classes of *Dissenters*, notwithstanding their difference of judgment and practice respecting one of the positive institutions of the New Testament, have befriended our design; and some friends belonging to the people called Quakers, who suppose the ordinance from which we are denominated has ceased, have sent in unsolicited aid. One of the ministers of the *Unitas Fratrum*²⁹⁹ sent us pecuniary assistance; and another in a most friendly letter expressed his earnest wishes for our success, and with great candour and piety, answered some of our printed enquiries respecting the needful qualifications of missionaries, and the advice proper to be given them.”³⁰⁰

Perhaps this would be a good time to ask the question: Was this a work of God or a work of men? It must be one or the other because God is sovereign. If man takes over his sovereign rule, then they propose to be God themselves. Fuller seems to have been aware of this. Writing in a letter about the lack of support from London³⁰¹, he says:

Dr. Stennett predicts, I am told, that the mission will come to nothing; from this cause, people may contribute, he supposes, for once, in a fit of zeal: but how is it to be supported? For my part, I believe in God; **and have not much doubt, that a matter begun as this will meet His approbation,** and that He who has inclined the hearts of our brethren hitherto, so much beyond our expectations, will go on to incline their hearts ‘not to lose the things which they have wrought.’ I confess I feel sanguine in my hopes; **but** they are fixed in God. Instead of failing in the East India **enterprise**, I hope to see, not only that, but many others accomplished. I hope the Society will never slacken its efforts, while there are such vast numbers of heathens in almost every part of the world.³⁰²

²⁹⁸ Ibid. page 226

²⁹⁹ Unitas Fratrum, (Latin: “Unity of Brethren”), Protestant religious group inspired by Hussite spiritual ideals in Bohemia in the mid-15th century. They followed a simple, humble life of nonviolence, using the Bible as their sole rule of faith.

³⁰⁰ Lewis page 228

³⁰¹ See appendix I

³⁰² Lewis page 227 no other reference given.

Sanguine means: “optimistic or positive, especially in an apparently bad or difficult situation”. Approbation means: “approval or praise”. When he says, “I believe in God; and have not much doubt, that a matter begun as this will meet His approbation” he is almost boasting in expressing his certainty. He is boasting not in God but in the work the society has already accomplished. Much has been done by men all that is now needed to God’s stamp of approval. For me, at least, this started and continued as a work of men. Doctrine, other than duty faith, had little to do with it.

Each in their way Pearce, Thomas, Ryland jr. and Fuller, Thomas (who was the most important at this time) and Carey formed a Baptist “Enterprise” based not on God but on human zeal.

Chapter thirteen

Comparing Scripture with the policies and practices of the mission enterprise as they prepared to send out Thomas and Carey.

Throughout all the various biographies and accounts of this stage³⁰³ of the Baptist Enterprise much lip service is given to Christian themes. The unsuspecting reader can easily get carried away by the apparent godly and scriptural language. Even some eminently sound and Christ loving ministers have fallen under the spell completely. They isolate Carey and make a hero of him, casting him as the most unselfish and holy man. There is however, only one foundation that we can build upon and that is the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ as he is revealed in the Bible. By holding up some scriptural truths we will have some solid foundation to judge the facts of the case. I have already devoted much time to this end in the chapters above. My purpose here it to highlight and summarize just how vast a difference there was between the enterprise’s methods and God’s word.

As I have shown above to the enterprise human effort, expressed by the word “zeal” was of fundamental importance without it the heathen would not be evangelized. God’s purpose would fail, and his plans fall to the ground without man’s fulfilling his part of the work. As one reads the various accounts of these events there is an almost fanatical frenzy for the need for immediate action by the men involved. Any delay was insufferable. They frantically sought to raise funds by any means, and yet they were grossly short of funds. Their haste was such that little or no effort was spent to properly prepare for the journey. Heathen were being lost speed was of absolute concern. On top of that the law was after Thomas, and what they were doing was illegal in the eyes of England: they must escape quickly by any means whatsoever. In essence the sovereignty of God was forgotten, and human effort took over. As they believed it was possible for any person to accept salvation they must act now before it was too late.

I recently heard a gospel sermon on Isaiah chapter 52. Near the close of his message Pastor Meney remarked that this was one of the passages of the Bible that clearly shows the supreme sovereignty of God in the salvation of

³⁰³ This is true of all phases of the enterprise. I have endeavored to ground what I say by scripture in various locations.

all for whom Christ died to save³⁰⁴. That is for his elect in the whole world and for them alone. The ramifications of this truth compared with the Baptist missionary's efforts astounded me. As he pointed out there is only one choice: either God is sovereign with man dependent on God even for the gift of faith to believe or he is not. There is no middle ground. The Lord's commands are his every enabling. All this is required of us is first given by God freely to us. All the glory goes to God. Salvation is of the Lord, and he freely chooses the means as well as the end.

God though the prophet reveals his eternal purpose for the one and only true church of both Old and New Testament saints. Looking forward to the finished work of Christ for the redemption of all those he chose in eternity the prophet says:

1Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.
2Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.
3For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.
4For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.
5Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually every day is blasphemed.
6Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I.
7How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!
8Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.
9Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.
10The LORD hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.
11Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD.
12For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.
13Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.
14As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men:
15So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

The gospel is not about what man must do! It's all about what God has already done from eternity past! The elect does not make any contribution. Instead, they put on the beautiful garments of God's full redemption by the faith in Christ that God himself freely gives each one. All God's chosen people are commanded to flee from any form of wickedness. To do what Thomas had done and much of what Carey and others followed in doing was an anathema, in other words an abomination to the one and only Holy and exalted God.

To come more closely to the revelations in this chapter as compared to the efforts by the Baptist Enterprise special emphasis should be given to verses 7 – 12. Dr. John Gills commentary on these verses lets the bright light of God's plan for the evangelism of the world to shine before our eyes. This is a rather lengthy quotation, but it goes to the heart of these matters.

³⁰⁴ The full service is at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UUKUW-4GOHU>

Ver. 7. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, &c.] Not of the messenger that brought the news of Cyrus's proclamation of liberty to the Jews; rather of John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord; best of Christ himself, the messenger of the covenant, who was anointed to preach glad tidings to the meek, and by whom grace, peace, life, and salvation came; and **also of the apostles of Christ, for to Gospel times are these words applied, and to more persons than one, Rom. 10:15 who were not only seen upon the mountains of the land of Israel, as the Targum paraphrases it, where both Christ and his apostles preached, but upon the mountains of the Gentile world; and may denote the pains they took, the circuit they made, and the difficulties they had to encounter with; and the publicness of their ministrations, which lay in bringing good tidings of the incarnate Saviour, of God manifest in the flesh, for the word here used has the signification of flesh in it; of good things in the heart of God for his people, in the covenant of grace, in the hands of Christ, and as come by him, and to be had from him; as pardon by his blood; justification by his righteousness; eternal life and happiness through him; and of all good things to be enjoyed now and hereafter. It may be applied to all other ministers of the Gospel in after-ages, who are bringers of the same good tidings to the children of men, to whom their very feet are beautiful, and even at a distance, upon the high mountains; not to carnal men, but sensible sinners, to whom the good news of salvation by Christ is welcome.** Feet are mentioned instead of their whole persons, because the instruments of motion, and so of bringing the tidings, and of running to and fro with them from place to place, and even though they are dirty and defiled with sin; for Gospel ministers are not free from it, and are men of like passions with others; yet are beautiful when their walk and ministry, conversation and doctrine, agree together; and their feet are particularly so, being shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. **The words may with the greatest propriety, and in agreement with the context, be understood of that angel, or set of Gospel ministers in the latter-day, represented as flying in the midst of the heavens, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to all nations, which will precede the fall of Babylon, Rev. 14:6, 8: that publisheth peace; peace by the blood of Jesus Christ, a principal article of the Gospel, and of its good news; hence it is called the Gospel of peace, and the word of reconciliation; peace of conscience, which flows from the same blood applied, and of which the Gospel is the means; and peace among the saints one with another, and among men, which shall at this time be enjoyed; there, will be no discord nor animosities among themselves, nor persecution from their enemies: happy times! halcyon days! welcome the publishers of such tidings! that bringeth good tidings of good; or, that bringeth good tidings;** for the original does not require such a tautology; it means the same good tidings as before, and which follow after: **that publisheth salvation; by Jesus Christ, as wrought out by him for sinners, which is full, complete, and suitable for them, and to be had of him freely; and what better tidings than this? see Rev. 19:1: that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth; that saith to Zion, the church of Christ, that Christ, who is truly God, and their God, has taken to himself, in a more open and visible manner, his great power, and reigns as the Lord God omnipotent; and this is good news and glad tidings; see Psal. 97:1; Rev. 19:6 and 11:15, 17. The Targum is, "the kingdom of thy God is revealed;" see Matt. 3:9. This passage is interpreted of the Messiah and his times, by many Jewish writers, ancient and modern; see the note on Rom. 10:15.**

Ver. 8. The watchmen shall lift up the voice, &c.] Not the Levites in the temple, nor the prophets of the Old Testament; rather the evangelists and apostles of Christ; best of all Gospel ministers in the latter day, so called in allusion to watchmen on the walls of cities looking out, and giving notice of approaching danger; see Isa. 62:6, 7. The words may be rendered, the voice of the watchmen; they shall lift up the voice; together shall they sing; that is, this is the voice of the watchmen, namely, the voice of peace and salvation, which the bringers of good tidings, the same with these watchmen, publish. **Lifting up their voice denotes the publicness of their ministrations, the vehemency of them, and their importance; singing together, their joy and cheerfulness, their**

harmony and unity. For they shall see eye to eye; most clearly, Zion's King reigning before his ancients gloriously; the great doctrines of peace and salvation published by them; and the great and wonderful things God will do for his church, in fulfilling prophecies relating thereunto. So the Targum, "for with their eyes they shall see the great things which the Lord will do;" and as their light and discerning will be most clear, like the light of seven days, so it will be alike in them; their sentiments and doctrines will exactly agree; there will be no difference nor dissension among them: when the Lord shall bring again Zion; return his church and people to their former state, from whence they were declined; restore them as at the beginning; revive his work among them; cause his Gospel and ordinances to be professed and observed in their purity; call in his ancient people the Jews, and bring in the fulness of the Gentiles; pour out his spirit in a plentiful manner on them, and grant his gracious presence to them; so the Targum, "when he shall return his Shechinah or divine Majesty to Zion." This text is by the Jews applied to the times of the Messiah, and to the resurrection of the dead.

Ver. 9. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, &c.] This is what the watchmen shall say when they lift up their voice; this will be one part of their song, and the intent of it; to observe to the members of the churches, which shall be constituted in those parts which were formerly barren and desolate, what wonderful things the Lord has done in bringing again Zion; in building up the ruins of it; in the clear light of the Gospel he has caused to break forth, and in the good tidings of peace and salvation published; on account of all which they are called upon to express the greatest joy in a social manner, with the utmost unanimity, as having every one a concern therein: for the Lord hath comforted his people; with his divine presence, and the light of his countenance; with the discoveries of his love; with the joys of his salvation by Christ; with the comforts of his spirit; with the doctrines of the Gospel, and the exceeding great and precious promises of it; with the ordinances of his house, those breasts of consolation; and by enlarging his kingdom and interest with the conversion of Jews and Gentiles; and particularly by the donation and application of the various blessings of grace through Christ, and especially that which follows: he hath redeemed Jerusalem; the same with his people, particularly the Jews, now converted; who will have the blessing of redemption, obtained by the Messiah, made known and applied unto them; which will be matter of comfort to them: as it is to all sensible sinners, who see themselves lost and undone; liable to the wrath of God, and curses of the law; under a sentence of condemnation; the captives of sin and Satan, and prisoners of law and justice; unable to redeem themselves, or any creature capable of giving a ransom for them.

Ver. 10. **The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, &c.] Revealed his Gospel, which is a system of holy doctrines, and is the power of God unto salvation, openly, in the sight of all men, and given it a general spread all the world over; and with it has exerted his almighty power, in the marvellous conversion of multitudes of souls everywhere, in which his holiness, as well as his power, is displayed: or else Christ is here meant, who is the power of God; by whom he has made the world, and upholds it; by whom he has redeemed his people, and saved them; and by whom he keeps and preserves them; and by whom he'll raise them from the dead at the last day; and who is holy in his nature, and in his works: this arm of his was made bare or revealed at his incarnation; is evidently seen in his word and ordinances; and will be more clearly revealed therein in the latter day, as he will be most fully manifested in person at the last day, even in the eyes of the whole world.** The allusion is to military persons preparing for battle, especially in the eastern countries, where they wore loose and long garments, which they tucked up on their arms, that they might be more expeditious in it, and so in any other service. Scanderbeg used to fight the Turks with his arm bare, as the writer of his life observes. And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God; the salvation which Christ, God manifest in the flesh, has wrought out: the people of God, in the several parts of the world, shall see their need of this salvation; the suitableness of it to them; the necessity of going to Christ for it; their interest in it; and shall partake of the blessings of it: or

Christ himself is meant, the Saviour of God's providing, sending, and giving; of whom multitudes, in the several parts of the world, shall have a spiritual sight, by faith, in the latter day; and all shall have a corporeal sight of him, when he comes in person, or appears a second time, without sin unto salvation.

Ver. 11. Depart ye, depart ye, &c.] Not from Jerusalem, as some, for that is now said to be redeemed, and its waste places made joyful; but Babylon, even mystical Babylon. The Targum is, be ye separated, be ye separated; and so the apostle, 2 Cor. 6:17. It denotes a separation from the idolatrous church of Rome; and the exhortation is repeated, to hasten the thing, to urge the necessity of it, and point at the danger of delaying it; and it may be it may respect a two-fold separation, one that has been already at the time of the Reformation, and another that will be just before the destruction of Babylon, Rev. 18:4: **go ye out from thence; not only protest against the false doctrines, idolatries, and superstitions of that apostate church, but entirely relinquish her communion: touch no unclean thing; have no fellowship with her in any of her unclean and idolatrous actions, and bring none of her abominations along with you.** It was the fault of the first reformers from Popery, that they brought so many of the impurities of the church of Rome along with them, which are retained to this day; in this last separation, care is to be taken, and will be taken, that those that come out keep clear of all her defilements; see Rev. 14:4, 5: go ye out of the midst of her; which signifies much the same as before, and is repeated again and again, to shew the importance of it: be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord; not the vessels of the Lord's sanctuary, as the Targum, restored by Cyrus to the Jews, at their return from the Babylonish captivity, Ezra 1:7, 8 and so Jarchi interprets it of the priests and Levites that bore the vessels of the Lord in the wilderness; but Kimchi of the mercies and kindnesses of the Lord; Aben Ezra of the law: but it may much better be understood of the ministers of the Gospel, and of the treasure of the Gospel which they have in their earthen vessels; or the name of the Lord, which they are chosen vessels to bear and carry in the world; who ought to be pure from false doctrine, superstitious worship, and an evil conversation: though it may be applied to every Christian, since all true believers are priests under the Gospel dispensation; and as they bear the whole armour of God, and it is their duty to attend all the ordinances of the Gospel, they ought to have their conversation as becomes it. In Zohar, these vessels are interpreted of the righteous, brought as a gift to the King Messiah.

Ver. 12. For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight, &c.] **As persons afraid of their enemies, of being pursued, overtaken, and detained by them; privily or by stealth, like fugitives, as the Oriental versions render it; in like manner as the Israelites went out of Egypt:** but it signifies, that they should go out openly, boldly, quietly, and safely, and without fear of their enemies; yea, their enemies rather being afraid of them. So the witnesses, when they shall rise, will ascend to heaven in the sight of their enemies; which will be followed with a great slaughter of some, and the terror of others, Rev. 11:12, 13: for the Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rearward; the Lord will be their Captain, and will lead the van, so that they shall follow in order, and without any tumult or fear; and though they shall make all necessary dispatch, yet no more haste than good speed; the Lord, going before, will check all tumultuous and disorderly motions; and he also will bring up the rear, so that they shall be in no fear of the enemy attacking them behind, and where generally the weaker and more feeble part are; but the Lord will be gathering them up, or closing them, as the word signifies; so that they shall be in the utmost safety, and march out of Babylon with the greatest ease and freedom, without any molestation or disturbance. The allusion may be to the Lord's going before, and sometimes behind Israel, in a pillar of fire and cloud by night and day, as they passed through the wilderness.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁵ Gill, J. (1810). An Exposition of the Old Testament (Vol. 5, pp. 306–309). Mathews and Leigh.

There are many other passages in the Old Testament. The New Testament is in complete harmony. The Holy Spirit warns believers against believing in myths:

For we have not followed **cunningly devised fables**, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.³⁰⁶

Paul in First and Second Timothy and Titus, speaking by the Holy Spirit gives us some of the qualifications needed to be a minister representing the Gospel of God.

He lays down a firm foundation for the work of the ministry (and missions) in 1 Timothy 2:1-6

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 lead 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 the 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.

There is only one truthful, God honoring way to understand this scripture. God's elect are found in all classes and types of people throughout the world. God gives special instructions to his faithful ministers on how they should live and conduct themselves in the work God has given each one to do.

Paul, speaking about ministers, specifically says: "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."³⁰⁷ Many more examples could be given but I will limit this part to one more verse. In 2 Timothy 2:19 Paul gives a very important command. He says: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." One of the hallmarks of Thomas' whole ministry, as has been already shown, was his promotion of heathen, idolatrous teaching. These are all without question full of iniquity and should have no place among God's people. Unfortunately, Carey took up Thomas's practices and expanded on them. Others like Ward went to even greater lengths.

Scripture is clear and certain on these subjects:

For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light³⁰⁸

The Lord Jesus Christ tells us in Matthew chapter 7, verses 15 – 23:

³⁰⁶ 1 Peter 1:16, 17

³⁰⁷ 1 Timothy 3:7

³⁰⁸ Ephesians 5:8 - 14

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? **And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

It's time now to return to the Leicester meeting of March 20th, 1793. Some facts about this meeting highlight what I said above about fine sounding words that were not practiced by the enterprise. Thomas's false information about two of his converts was taken as gospel truth by Fuller and the committee. His words alone were all that was needed, it simply must be true, such was the position he now held among them. Thomas's emphasis on the high status (among the natives) of Ram Ram Basu and Mohan Chad was not lost upon the committee. To them the fate of the enterprise itself was dependent on them. Indeed, even after his exposure as a fraud Basu was a "pillar and ground" of the mission. In practical terms Basu was treated like a New Testament elder. The truth of this statement will become obvious.

A double standard was established by the leaders in which they placed burdens upon the two natives which they themselves constantly violated to a shocking extent. The following quotations are from part of the opening comments in a letter they sent to Basu and Chad which was written at the March 20th meeting state the facts:

We hope that upon the arrival of our brethren, you will be solemnly baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the one living and true God, thereby putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and making an open profession of His name. Expect persecutions and reproaches. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution, because the hearts of men are by nature at enmity with God and true religion. But be not disheartened; tribulations will turn to your advantage and the furtherance of the gospel, through the blessing of your and our God, who will be with you to support you in all your afflictions. Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ, that the enemies of godliness may have no evil thing to say of you. Shun all evil company, and all idolatrous assemblies and customs: 'Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you; and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.'

Nevertheless, though you have no fellowship with the unconverted in their evil works, yet be courteous, kind, affable, pitiful, and ready to do good to all men, even to your enemies, as occasions may offer. Be faithful and just in all your dealings, speaking the truth, and acting with uprightness. Pray for those that persecute you. Consider who it is that maketh you differ, and pray that the same almighty love which hath conquered your hearts may conquer theirs. Let unchastity, and all manner of uncleanness, and all intemperance in eating and drinking, be unknown among you. **Put far away all lying, and deceit, and treachery, and double dealing. Be subject to the laws of your country in all things not contrary to the laws of God.** Be obedient to your superiors, and compassionate to your inferiors. Be faithful in all your relative connections. Cultivate love, meekness, gentleness, goodness, and mercy. If any of you be overtaken in a fault, be ready to reclaim and forgive, as Christ also has forgiven you. You have read the eighteenth chapter of Matthew on this subject. **If any turn back after professing the name of Christ and are not to be reclaimed, be not stumbled at it, but withdraw yourselves from all fellowship with them.** Such things will be permitted to try your sincerity. In short, in your spirit and conduct, let your

countrymen behold the tendency of the doctrine of Christ, and we doubt not but God, your own God, will bless and multiply you abundantly.³⁰⁹

Fuller in his false zeal, pride and Christ dishonoring doctrines wrote eloquently to Mr. Fawcett, about this meeting:

I need not say it was a solemn and affectionate meeting. Thousands of tears of joy have been shed on this occasion. We love Christ better: we love one another better. A new bond of union subsists between the churches and ministers who have embarked in this cause. How many names will now be embalmed in our remembrance forever! When we review the shortness of the time, and the magnitude of the object, we seem like them that dream.' It seems to be too great to be true; but 'the Lord hath done great things for us.' May He yet do greater things **by us**. We fasted and prayed and trembled, when we set out. It seemed to us that we were launching a vessel that required superior ability to stir it. —At length we ventured; and hitherto we have succeeded. Surely the Lord hath been our pilot! Perhaps the greatest storms are yet to come. Be it so! Our eyes shall be up unto Him! When Christ was on board, the vessel could not sink; and those who doubted were reproved for their want of faith.³¹⁰

Fine sounding words indeed. However, even in them there is a strain of human effort and man's doing.

Lewis continues immediately after the quote above. In the highlighted sentence below he crystalizes where the enterprise placed its faith. Based on his dreams, visions and self-interpretation Thomas also placed his faith in the same thing. This belief was so entrenched that no matter how clearly God reproved them, they carried on regardless.

Mr. Pearce went with the missionaries to London, to arrange for their departure; and quiet enquiries were made as to the possibility of obtaining leave from the Court of Directors. To this end, Mr. Newton and Mr. Scott were asked to use their influence with Mr. Charles Grant. They did so; but quite in vain. He might, he said, have aided Mr. Carey; but he would be no party to the return to India of Mr. Thomas. All their endeavours were alike unsuccessful.

If, however, Mr. Thomas met with dislike from a former friend, he had many evidences that his own brethren regarded him most affectionately. The portrait of him which now hangs in the Museum of the Baptist College at Bristol was painted at this time by Mr. S. Medley, and a warm interest in his missionary labours spread itself throughout the denomination in England.

Most unwillingly, Mr. Fuller and his brethren abandoned the hope of obtaining formal sanction for their missionaries; but they saw clearly that no such sanction would be given by the Board of Directors. Men in power discouraged or forbade their enterprise: in this respect they were in a position similar to that of the projectors of "the Bengal Mission." **But they believed that they had divine authority to go forward in their undertaking; that it was right to obey God rather than men; and that therefore they ought to go on.**³¹¹

Like the Jews in Judges 21:25 "In those days there was no king in Israel: **every man did that which was right in his own eyes.**" From Thomas's first efforts to after Carye's death they were a law unto themselves. They therefore set about doing the very things they had instructed Basu and Chad not to do.

³⁰⁹ Lewis page 230

³¹⁰ Ibid. page 232

³¹¹ Ibid. ages 232, 233

I have already given some of the reasons for such conduct. Carey's particular motivation is again revealed in a letter he wrote to Dorothy, his wife, while he was aboard ship. In part he writes: "... You wish to know in what state my mind is. I answer, It is much as when I left you. If I had all the world, I would freely give it all to have you and my dear children with me; but the sense of duty is **so strong as to overpower all other considerations**; I could not turn back without guilt on my soul."

The "all other considerations" included the agreement with the sinful actions of Thomas but it also included much more. One of the major "other considerations" was the fact that he was married, and his wife had just had a new baby. The apostle Paul gives us God's will regarding Christian marriage in Ephesians Chapter 5

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Scripture also gives explicit instruction regarding parents and children as well.

Carey's zeal was in fact extremely sinful. He elevated the 'missionary' to a super elevated position with all others, including wife's and children subservient to such people. Everyone else connected with the mission enterprise were to be regarded as servants to the said missionary who had pride of place. This can be clearly seen in the brief section he devotes to this in his Enquiry.

It might be necessary, however, for two, at least, to go together, and in general I should think it best that they should be married men, and to prevent their time from being employed in securing necessaries, two, or more, other persons, **with their wives and families**, might also accompany hem, **who should be wholly employed in providing for them**. In most countries it would be necessary for them to cultivate a little spot of ground just for their support, which would be a resource to them, whenever their supplies failed. Not to mention the advantages they would reap from each others company, it would take off the enormous expense which has always attended undertakings of this kind, the first expense being the whole; for though a large colony needs support for a considerable time, yet so small a number would, upon receiving the first crop, maintain themselves. **They would have the advantage of choosing their situation, their wants would be few; the women, and even the children, would be necessary for domestic purposes;** and a few articles of stock, as a cow or two, and a bull, and a few other cattle of both sexes, a very few utensils of husbandry, and some corn to sow their land, would be sufficient. Those who attend the missionaries should understand husbandry, fishing, fowling, &c. and be provided with the necessary implements for these purposes. Indeed a variety of methods may be thought of, and when once the work is undertaken, many things will suggest themselves to us, of which we at present can form no idea.³¹²

Many other examples of the Truth as opposed to the error are revealed in this work.

³¹² Part of section 4, fourth point.

Chapter fourteen

March 1793 to November 11, 1793. Thomas and Carey's departure and voyage to India

In light of the many passages like Isaiah 52 (see previous chapter), the various accounts of the departure of the ‘missionaries’ and their first experience in India as related in the assorted biographies and histories of this time remind me very much of Paul’s words to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:3-4: “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” Indeed, the fairytales became more and more elaborate as time went on. The general trend in all the accounts is to elevate William Carey at the expense of Dorothy, Thomas, and the ‘home front’ back in England. It’s true that the more freedom from constraints Carey became the more central to the story he was. The fact is, however, that he never operated in a vacuum, and he was strongly influenced by the people and events that took place as time went on. During this period Thomas’s past, present and future deeply affected both Carey and the mission. Adherence to sound Biblical doctrine continued to be ignored while whatever justified the ends in view were put in their place.

Samuel Pierce’s account of this time is perhaps one of the most interesting. It must be noted that some of the ‘facts’ he recounts are at variance with earlier, biographers. Each writer has different resources and agendas, and this fact must always be kept in mind. Anything written after 1923 must be especially suspect as the writer could well have been influenced by what Samuel Pierce Carey wrote at that time. The obvious exceptions are where the author cites his references. For example, Dr. A. H. Oussoren wrote his version of events in 1945. Some of his brief remarks of Mrs. Carey’s consent to go correlate with Pierce’s. He gives no reference to his sources, so it is not possible to depend on his account in this instance.

I can only give a part of what he writes here but even that is somewhat long. Picking up his account than during the end of March 1793 he writes:

Inability to get ‘permits’ filled that last London week with care. **Without these the sailing would be illegal; its penalty, enforced return and confiscation of all goods.** Yet there had seemed fair hope of such license. When the Company’s charter was before Parliament for revision that winter, Wilberforce had won the Commons to affirm that ‘measures ought to be adopted for the gradual advancement of the people in useful knowledge and in religious and moral improvement’, to the joy of director Charles Grant, who had urged him to this effort. But, when the law-officers prepared the Bill for its further discussion, and concreted Wilberforce’s general terms into the definite sanctioning of ‘schoolmasters and missionaries,’ ‘Leadenhall Street’ took alarm, and Westminster lobbies were swept by whirlwinds of protestation. The leave for Thomas and Carey was needed at the height of this uproar. **They could not have struck a more impossible hour. Pearce consulted Mr. James Savage of India House—a fervid Baptist of ‘Eagle Street’ who met the missionaries, ‘loved them dearly,’ ‘would fain voyage with them,’ yet had to counsel wariest prudence, the serpent’s wisdom with the dove’s innocence of harm. To ask for leave as missionaries just then would slam and bolt the door. Even Grant, whom Carey approached through Scott, could promise no help.** The time was unpropitious, suspicion alert, India House

eruptive. **Besides, he was unwilling to encourage the return of eccentric Thomas to Bengal. A most awkward dilemma for Carey and Pearce! They abhorred secrecy, but the path of outright openness was blocked. Yet the urge of Jehovah was ‘Forward.’** At length, Captain White of the Earl of Oxford, whose ship-surgeon Thomas had twice been, engaged to risk taking them, without the due licenses, to Calcutta. Conscious of their pure and patriotic purpose, they, with Fuller’s distressed consent, closed with this offer, and booked the passages of all.

During this harassing week Carey called on ‘good old father Newton,’ the Anglican Spurgeon of his day, and received his warm blessing. **Asked for his counsel in the event of the Company’s bundling them home on their arrival in Bengal, ‘Conclude,’ said the rector, ‘that your Lord has nothing there for you to accomplish. If He have, no power on earth can prevent you.’ Was Carey quite satisfied, one wonders, with this Gamaliel passiveness, or did he face a possible call with Thomas to the defiance of a Peter and John?**³¹³

What insights two of Pearce’s comments open to those truly guided by the Holy Spirit. The enterprise had a God given opportunity during this time to repent and turn back to the scriptures. God’s guidance and warning to his Church is found in Isaiah 30:15 “For thus saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.” Human zeal was all they acted upon. Thus “They abhorred secrecy, but the path of outright openness was blocked. Yet the urge of Jehovah was ‘Forward.’” In answer to the question: “Was Carey quite satisfied, one wonders, with this Gamaliel passiveness, or did he face a possible call with Thomas to the defiance of a Peter and John?” The answer was again human zeal over all obstacles at any cost as opposed to God’s word.

A little later in a short paragraph Pearce made a questionable comment. He says: “At the Motherbank in the Solent they anchored for their convoy. Here they were fretted by a six weeks’ delay, and Carey was shocked and humiliated at the revealed involvements of Thomas, creditors hunting him as a partridge,’ one writ for £100 compelling him back to London to disentangle his affairs.”³¹⁴ Without doubt his creditors were after Thomas. The question is: was this the first time Carey was aware of Thomas’s debts? The evidence seems to show that Carey, Fuller and others knew early on. Perhaps this was an attempt to make Carey look better than he really was.

Referring again to Lewis’s account for more details he tells us:

Mr. Thomas’s debts were the first cause of disquietude. He had tried in vain to come to a settlement with his creditors. Always sanguine in his expectations, he had proposed to make them a payment on account, which afterwards he found himself quite unable to do. **Unquestionably, he ought then to have met them with a candid statement of his case, and should have accepted the consequences; but he neglected to do so,** and was soon beset by the disappointed creditors with clamorous importunity, he then declared his present inability, but full purpose, to pay them all; but there was little disposition to receive his assurances. **The fact that he and his family were now going out to India seemed to the creditors proof that he could pay them if he would. The consequences were most humiliating and discreditable.** “They began to hunt; and I,” wrote Mr. Thomas, “to flee as a partridge; yet still continuing to preach publicly wherever I was asked. Every day I had fears without that I should be arrested, and hopes within that I should escape; till at length the happy day was come when I was relieved **by a chain of providences,** and embarked, with my family and fellow labourer, on board the Earl of Oxford!”

³¹³ William Carey D.D. By S. Pearce Carey, M.A. Hodder and Stoughton, Limited London Fifth Printing 1926 pages 118, 119

³¹⁴ S.P. Carey page 120

Having some things yet to arrange in London, Mr. Thomas left Mr. Carey and his own family at Ryde, and went there. Just after his departure, one of his creditors called at the lodging, “with a writ and bailiff, to arrest him for £100 or less.” **This circumstance and the threats of the disappointed visitor greatly distressed them all, and Mr. Thomas endeavored to escape arrest by remaining in London.** A letter which he wrote to his father from that city on the 1st of May, speaks of the “**hurry and confusion,**” the “stagnation of all enjoyment in heaven and earth,” “without retirement, peace or quietness, or any such thing as meditation,” through which he had latterly passed. **His complaints related to circumstances for which he was himself answerable.**³¹⁵

Imprisonment, often for life, was a common form of punishment for debtors like Thomas. He was in every sense a criminal and his actions were in direct contradiction to the scriptures as to his suitability as a missionary. All those, including Carey and Fuller, who aided his escape were coconspirators with him in his guilt.

Whatever the truth of the matter is Thomas was at the heart of the practical decisions, reactionary or voluntarily, of what the Enterprise was making. That is true as I showed above from the very beginning and becomes more and more obvious as the story goes on. The whole enterprise, Thomas, Carey, Fuller etc. were like the Judaizers Paul warned the Galatians about:

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. **A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.** I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased. I would they were even cut off which trouble you.³¹⁶

Substitute Thomas, human pride, religious zeal, obsession with money and extreme haste for ‘circumcision’ and you will have the same truth regarding the Enterprise. They were against Scripture just as much as the Judaizers. My reader may object strongly to this point. The facts speak for themselves, so I give the following quotations at some length.

On the Sunday of the week in which the convoy was finally expected, Captain White received an India House letter, signed ‘Verax,’ in warning that one of his passengers had not the leave of the Court of directors, the taking of whom forward would mean the forfeit of his command.

Alarmed, he regretfully bade Thomas and Carey and another to prepare to leave his ship. Carey was persuaded that the letter was a vexed creditor’s of Thomas, whom if they found and satisfied, the captain’s anxiety would be allayed. Thomas, confident that through Mr. Savage of India House the writer might be traced, and its imagined reference to himself or Carey be disproven, rushed off, by the captain’s leave, to test this. Unsuccessful, he returned in heaviness of heart, just in time to find the escort fleet in attendance, and ‘Carey in tears.’ The captain had bidden him quit the ship that day with his baggage. Mrs. and Betsey Thomas and the cousins, having ‘leave,’ might alone go forward; which they did, ‘delicate Mrs. Thomas showing uncommon fortitude.’ The baggage was taken out, and ‘Carey, with a heart heavier than all, came away’ with Felix and Thomas. The latter

³¹⁵ Lewis pages 234, 235

³¹⁶ Galatians 5:6-12

sped once more to London for a last lightning-effort, and Carey sent to Fuller the tidings of their woe. Hitherto he had kept silence in hope of deliverance:

Ryde, May 21, '93.

My very dear Friend,

I have just time to inform you that all our plans are entirely frustrated for the present. On account of the irregular manner of our going out, an information is laid against the captain (I suppose, by one of T.'s creditors) for taking a person on board without an order from the Company. The person not being specified, both he and myself and another passenger are ordered to quit the ship, and I am just going to take all my things out. Our venture must go, or it will be seized by the custom-house officers (i.e. their stock of goods for Indian sale, for their first year's maintenance). Mrs. Thomas and her daughter go. I know not how to act, but will write more particularly as soon as I get to some settled place. I leave the island today or tomorrow, and on Thursday the ship sails without us. All I can say in this affair is that, however mysterious the leadings of Providence, I have no doubt but they are superintended by an infinitely wise God. I have no time to say more. Mr. T. is gone to London again on the business. Adieu.

Yours affectionately,

W. Carey.'

On the 23rd Thomas was back, but again unsuccessful, and only to watch with Carey and bewildered Felix from the jetty the fleet sail off through the Solent.

Were ever hopes so mocked, that this should be the end of their six weeks' waiting, and of their praying and plannings since October, the cup slipping and shattered from the lips? And how should they tell the Society and the Auxiliaries this upshot of **their sacrifice and zeal**? Any sufficing explanation would announce their attempted going without permit, and doubly bolt against them India House and Bengal. How withered lay Carey's dream-flowers, which had lately so flourished! 'What a squat turret, blind as a fool's heart' Childe Roland had reached for his valour! What a wintry May morning!

Two men were never in a drearier loneliness than Carey and Thomas on the Ryde foreshore, with the Oxford and her bodyguard vanishing, save the Emmaus two with their Christ-hopes all ruined. They stood still, looking sad 'so sad they could not sadder be.' The Oxford was protected, escorted. God seemed to have left Carey and Thomas, like the Emmaus ones, alone.³¹⁷

Here again God gave them an opportunity to repent and humble themselves before the Almighty Savior. Pearce in the quotes below expresses their prideful arrogance eloquently. To him, as well as the multitude of those who venerate Carey all this was so many acts of faith by the missionaries. Completely convinced of their own righteousness they hastened into frantic action³¹⁸. Surely, they said in effect God is with us, all that is needed is our own works. What a contrast there is in God's own words: "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay

³¹⁷ S.P. Carey pages 122, 123

³¹⁸ Some may seek to find excuses for their hast like the limited time by reason of the season of the year. The simple fact is that they were in no sense ready to embark on such a mission in the first place. All from start to final sailing was done in a made rush.

in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: **he that believeth shall not make haste.**³¹⁹ Pearce continues:

They did not, however, waste their strength in tears over the spilt and precious milk, but commanded a boat to Portsmouth, lodged there their baggage, and made instantly for London, the leaving of the baggage as sure an act of faith as Joseph's commandment concerning his bones'; for they trusted for departure by some quickly-following ship, refusing to believe the vanished Oxford God's last word. He would not mock their hunger with such scorpion and stone. **It was no time to stand still, however, for the salvation of God; they must take faith's kingdom by a holy violence.** Carey proposed an outright demand of permits from the Court of directors; failing this, the over-land route to Bengal. Magnificent, of course, but not war: a counsel of perfection rather than practical politics.³²⁰

It is at this point that Thomas again becomes crucially important to the fate of those he manipulated. He was, as I clearly demonstrated, not saved. Filled to the brim with satanic visions of his own importance and certain future, he was first and foremost out for himself. His actions on arriving in India six months later prove this, if more proof was needed. In making a hero of Thomas, Pearce could not have been more untruthful in a Biblical sense. Just as Satan himself appears as an angel of light so did this false prophet Thomas. As Paul says:

Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works³²¹.

The fairytale of Thomas and especially Carey as heroes of faith with God wholly on their side was already being established. As early as 1836 Eustance Carey, in a summary statement, exemplifies this view of the affair as follows:

Mr. Carey and his companion returned to London, depressed and almost overwhelmed with their disappointment. In the course of a few days, however, the scene began to brighten, and their spirits to rally. The elasticity of Mr. Thomas's mind, his alacrity and enterprise, and the self-denial he manifested at this trying juncture, were astonishing, and justly entitled him to the grateful remembrance of all who feel an interest in the welfare of this mission. And so speedy and evidently propitious were the interpositions of Providence, that before the various friends of the institution could well be apprised of this apparent frustration of their counsels and their hopes, they saw it resolved into one of the most beneficial dispensations that could have been conceived of, circumstanced as it then was. Immediately a ship is heard of bound to Bengal, under a foreign flag, and therefore not subject to the control of the company. Mrs. Carey, too, contrary to all expectation, is prevailed upon to accompany her husband. A passage is secured on most advantageous terms; and, in a few days, after being forcibly rejected from the Earl of Oxford, they reembark, and actually set sail for the distant East.³²²

³¹⁹ Isaiah 28:16

³²⁰ S.P. Carey pages 123, 124

³²¹ 2 Corinthians 11:11-15

³²² Eustance Carey page 90

Many examples of this false assessment could be given, both earlier and up to the present time but it's time to return to Pearce's account. He continues immediately after the last quote from him given above:

Thomas trod the footpath of reality that week; no fool this time, his head in no clouds³²³. He led things captive to his will, and pressed the clay of circumstance, and compelled the wrestling adversary to change into his friend. Nor was it just his natural resilience, but faith in the living God, faith that uprooted sycamines and tossed mountains into the sea. By faith he subdued problems, obtained promises, out of weakness was made strong, turned to flight armies of hindrances. Walls fell at his challenge. Rivers parted at the touch of his mantle. Chains were slipped and iron gates opened. He moved as one inspired. He grew in wisdom and stature. He retrieved the catastrophe to which his debts had contributed. His outward-bound wife and child, too, bade him 'nor sit nor stand but go.' What he effected in a week takes one's breath. Not content to solve the problems the Oxford had left him, he aggravated them, and then more than conquered; believing that God had provided for them some better thing than their first expectation, which the disaster was to bring within their reach. He not only made a way for Carey, Felix, and himself to get to India, but pulled Carey's whole family through as well. He found the ship, constrained the persons, raised the money, managed the packing, fixed up the journeyings, fetched the baggage, and ship boarded them all. Carey never so marveled³²⁴.

The above paragraph is sheer and total blasphemy. It ascribes to an unsaved sinner the glory that belongs to God alone. Such praise should not be given to any human, no, not to Paul himself. It is the antithesis³²⁵ of Hebrews 11, mocking those true heroes of faith. There all is ascribed to the glory of God alone. Such blasphemy will not go unpunished. God by his very essence and positive declaration³²⁶ never changes. What he was in the Old Testament he is just the same today and forever. He has known from all eternity every sinful act of every human being. All he does is for his own glory alone including the allowing of sinners to obey their depraved desires. Sin is always rebellion and disobedience to God's law: man, alone is responsible.

Isaiah in Chapter 48 and verses 9-11 speaking Gods very words show us that God will not allow his glory to be given to another:

For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, And for my praise will I refrain for thee, That I cut thee not off. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: For how should my name be polluted? And I will not give my glory unto another.

Pearce continues:

The coach road to London climbed and stretched through noblest woodland, in May at its loveliest; but even nature-loving Carey had dim eyes for the beeches and chestnuts, until hopes began to wake within him that the ill wind of that day's bitterness might blow him the good of his wife and children going with him. So, reaching town, he wrote her to expect him by the next night's coach. Thomas had also done some rapid thinking. The Eastward-bound shipping season was nearly closed. No moment must be lost. A British passage was impossible. Some Scandinavian vessel must

³²³ This is of course a frank admission that he lived and acted out a false reality prior to this event under review.

³²⁴ S. P. Carey page 124

³²⁵ Opposite

³²⁶ Malachi 3:6 "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

be sought, even if to reach her they might need to cross to Holland or to France; and then, perhaps, find her bound, not for Calcutta, but only for some other East Indian port.

He hurried to a familiar coffee-house down east, where seafarers foregathered, where he knew he best could learn the gossip of the quays. He told his waiter just what information he needed, 'whether any Swedish or Danish ship was expected to sail from Europe to Bengal, or any part of the East Indies, that season.' Presently, to 'the great relief of a bruised heart,' the prudent expert, used to these furtive inquiries, brought no oral answer, but these written 'laconic, life-giving words':

'A Danish East Indiaman, No. 10 Cannon St.'

Danish! then almost certainly bound for Calcutta and the Danish settlement along the Hooghly! Nothing could be apter. He hastened to Carey. 'No more tears,' he says, 'that night!' 'Their courage revived.' They fled to '10 Cannon St.,' under the very shadow of the cathedral, and found it the office of 'Smith & Co., Agents', most laughably indistinctive! Betimes next morning they were back, and learned that 'Smith' was brother of the Danish ship's captain, and his home in Gower Street, whither they sped. 'Yes, his brother's ship was sailing from Copenhagen to Calcutta, was believed already on her way, was daily expected to be signaled, if the winds were favorable; would only halt, not anchor, off Dover, could scarcely be later than five days.' 'Yes, there were several unoccupied berths.' 'And prices?' '£100 for adults, £50 for children, £25 for attendants.' How 'plans that soared, to earth did fall' at that! This Danish vessel seemed to vanish like yesterday's Oxford. They had only £150, refunded by Captain White³²⁷.

Thomas nobly proposed that Carey and Felix should be booked for the £150. He would take his chance and follow, when God should clear his way. But Carey scouted the suggestion. Besides, he must see whether his wife would go with him. He begged Thomas come and add his experienced persuasions to his own. So, that Friday evening at 8 o'clock the two took coach again together, the guards armed with a blunderbuss and a brace of pistols. By 5 o'clock in the morning they reached Northampton, and by breakfast-time Piddington and Mrs. Carey's home. Must she be chidden that with her not-month-old babe at her breast, and her three other laddies under nine, she could not, at a day's notice, face the forsaking of her kindred, the five months' voyage, and all the hazard and strangeness of Bengal? She could not drink the cup.³²⁸

The events as related by Peirce in the above paragraph are very suspect. Why for example did they need armed guards and how could they afford them? I have searched though the material I have for such an account but have not found any other source prior to 1923 or for that matter afterwards.

Thomas and Carey came away, forlorn than on Ryde's foreshore. So desolate was Carey, that Thomas could not bear that this should be the end. He urged a further endeavour; which Carey forbade, as only the redoubling of sorrow for her and for himself. On the Hackleton high-road Thomas pulled up. 'I don't care what you say,' he cried, 'I'm going back. I believe I can prevail.' But Carey would not. Re-entering the cottage, Thomas told of all the sobbing in his comrade's soul, all the constraints upon his own. 'I simply had to come back,' he said. 'I could not leave things so. For six years I have known the loneliness of a Sundered family. Don't doom yourselves to such a woe. **I did not press you before, but now I feel impelled in love to be severe. If you refuse to go now, you 'll repent it as long as you live, you 'll repent it as long as you live.**' Whereat 'she

³²⁷ Lewis, page 239 quoting Thomas writes: "We went away, wishing for money!"

³²⁸ S.P. Carey pages 124- 126

grew afraid. At last she cried, 'I'll go, if my sister here will go with me. How human and how right, like Moses no longer refusing God's commission, when once he knew his brother was to share its weight! 'Tis a glimpse into that home-circle that, as she in after years told Ryland, Kitty slipped up into her bedroom to pray. 'When she came down, she was willing.'

'He maketh my feet like hinds' feet,' Thomas could have said. Before he was near enough for words, Carey understood, and his own feet were 'hinds' feet.' Not even in his love-making youth had he ever taken Piddington's hill-crest so quickly. She soon knew how he blessed her.

Again, some of Peirce's comments in the two paragraphs above are suspicious. There are both similarities and differences in the account Lewis gives of what Thomas himself tells of this encounter.³²⁹ Also Thomas, perhaps unknowingly, reveals his wicked heart. Lewis writes:

It was, indeed, to all appearance, an impossibility that so much could be done in so short a time as probably would be available. Not a moment was lost, however. At 9 o'clock on Friday night, May 24th, Messrs. Thomas and Carey left London, and reached Northampton the next morning. They breakfasted with Mrs. Carey at Piddington, and said all they could to induce her to accompany them to India. Mr. Thomas says:

She refused to go with us; which gave Mr. Carey much grief.

I reasoned with her a long time, to no purpose. **I had entreated the Lord in prayer to make known His will, and not to suffer either of us to fight against Him, by persuading her to go, on the one hand, or to stay, on the other.** This expression moved her; but her determination not to go was apparently fixed. We now set off to Mr. Ryland of Northampton, to ask for money [for the passage]: and on our way thither I found Mr. Carey's hope of his wife all gone. I proposed to go back once more; but he overruled it, saying it was of no use. At last, I said, 'I will go back.' 'Well, do as you think proper,' said he, 'but I think we are losing time.' **I went back; and told Mrs. Carey her going out with us was a matter of such importance that I could not leave her so. Her family would be dispersed and divided forever. She would repent of it as long as she lived! As she tells me since, that last saying, frequently repeated, had such an effect upon her, that she was afraid to stay at home;** and afterwards, **in a few minutes**, determined to go with us, trusting in the Lord: but this should be on condition of her sister going with her. This was agreed to. We now set off for Northampton like two different men: our steps so much quicker, our hearts so much lighter. The counting of the cost, however, was still enough to damp all our hopes. No less than eight persons' passage to be paid for, besides the necessaries to be bought for fitting all out for so long a voyage, would require £700 at least³³⁰.

These actions of Thomas in forcing Dorothy to come were not from God. They led to her being driven insane and badly abused by both Carey and Thomas. The effect on some of the children was just as bad. Even though Thomas states that "I had entreated the Lord in prayer to make known His will, and not to suffer either of us to fight against Him, by persuading her to go on the one hand, or to stay, on the other." He went ahead and did the very opposite thing instead. Again, and again human effort and religious zeal replaced any true reliance and faith in God or what God actually wanted.

The difficulty of getting at the true facts is daunting. When I purchased and first read James Beck's "Dorothy Carey: The tragic and untold story of Mrs. William Carey" I had high hopes of getting some solid information. It's not

³²⁹ Ibid page 126

³³⁰ Lewis pages 239, 240

that Beck's book fails completely as there are some facts and many helpful references. The problem is that so much of the book is based on speculation and imagination. For example, he postulate's seven possible reasons why she decided to stay in England³³¹. He correctly shows how Dorothy's decision to stay took months of time and thought while her choice to go took mere minutes. Sadly, his account of what took place at this time is very brief. Fortunately, the different accounts all agree that it was Thomas's sinful persuasion was the cause of her going. Unfortunately, Thomas is often praised and even attributed to being on God's side in this matter.

Pearce continues immediately following the last quote from his book given above:

The next thing was to report themselves to a responsible member of the executive, and get the needed cash. 'We now,' says Thomas, 'set off for Northampton like two different men; our steps so much quicker, our hearts so much lighter' like the Emmaus ones returning. 'The counting of the cost, however, was still enough to damp our hopes. No less than eight fares, besides their necessary outfit; £700 at least, for the four adults, £400; the four children, at least £150; the outfit and heavy sundries another £150.' But Thomas believed he could strike vastly better terms.

Ryland had that morning received this breathless note. This bombshell had fallen:

Kettering, Friday, May 24.

My dear Ryland,

Perhaps Carey has written to you—We are all undone—I am grieved—**yet, perhaps, 'tis best—Thomas's debts and embrangement's damped my pleasure before. Perhaps 'tis best he should not go**—I am afraid leave will never be obtained now for Carey, or any other—and the "adventure" seems to be lost—He says nothing of the £250 for voyage—'Tis well if that be not lost— Committee must be called immediately. You write to (so and so): I to the rest.

Yours ever,

A. Fuller.³³²

Interestingly Fuller, by his own admission, acted against his better judgment. The whole story of how Fuller's ineptitude, both in actions and in false doctrine is beyond the scope of this work.

Even Fuller's faith had shivered, and he had concluded the worst. Ryland was summoning the emergency committee, when Thomas and Carey were announced.

Well, I don't know whether I'm glad or sorry to see you,' he said.

If you are sorry, your sorrow will be turned to joy; for all is proving for the best. We have seen Mrs. Carey; she is well recovered,' and can accompany her husband, and is willing to do so, if her sister goes with her, and her sister has agreed.'

But by what ship?

There's a Danish ship expected within the next four days, and we can board her off Dover, and there's room for us all. We must all go to London tomorrow. **It's the Lord's day, but it's the Lord's business.'**

³³¹ Beck pages 71 to 76

³³² SP Carey pages 126, 127

But how about money?

That's just why we are here. **We must have at least another £200.**

£200! Impossible.

I have £18 from Leighton and from Thorn. That's all.

But we must have £200.

Oh, I just remember, there's a bill for £200 from Fawcett from Yorkshire; not negotiable yet, but very soon.

Go to Kettering, and Fuller will advance it.' 'We've no time for Kettering. We must be back in Piddington this morning for the packing, and in London tomorrow. There's not a minute to lose.' Then Ryland, conquered by this firm soul, scribbled notes to London brother-ministers, begging them advance the needed help, upon promise of early repayment. And they parted, 'never more to meet on earth.' So Fawcett saved the situation, and Carey's enkindling of him earned its opportune reward.

But even with £200 and the refunded £150, how could they meet Smith's business terms? Surely, Thomas was heading for a fresh and worse disappointment. Nay, he knew the thing to do. Once back in Piddington, he consulted Catharine Plackett, telling her the need, and his own secret purpose. He would forego a cabin and be Carey's attendant, with just the fare of a ship's servant, reducing his cost to £25. Would she rough it in like manner and be her sister's attendant? She would. '**Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached, let that also which this woman did be spoken of for a memorial of her.**' Then Thomas ordered and hustled them all. Some of the furniture was sold: the rest was reserved for Fuller's disposal. And the next morning, albeit Sunday, there were the two filled chaises and the farewell; for the boys, the ride to London; for the sisters and the home-folk, the wrench, 'such parting as those make, whose hope to meet again is as the spider's web.' **Ryland's chits opened London purses, as Thomas's breathless story opened hearts.** Friends advanced £72 more than the £200. In this tight corner of the Mission, London leaders proved most generous and prompt. With heavy pockets and light heart, Thomas repaired to 10 Cannon Street once more, astounding Smith by the family he had emboldened to the voyage and spirited to London.

In faith he had done it.³³³ They had sold up home and come, though the usual business-terms were out of all question.

Theirs was no business-errand, however, but a **strange new enterprise**³³⁴ for India and Christ. He implored his interest. He could only offer 800 guineas for the eight; but only two cabins would be needed, he and Miss Plackett going as attendants of the rest, with the fare of ship's servants. Shipping offices are credited with little sentiment, but Smith was so taken by this amazing story and appeal, that without more ado he accepted 'these lowest terms ever heard of.' The Careys, after many purchases, were soon on the packet for Dover, to be ready for the boarding of the ship. Thomas coached once again to Portsmouth for the baggage, to take it round to Dover by boat. But, with the Channel beset with pirates, only one boatman would venture, and he asked twenty guineas;

³³³ Here again God was working out his own purposes. He used this unsaved sinner just like he used Pharaoh whose heart he also hardened. There was simply no real faith involved in this whole business.

³³⁴ The use of this terminology should not be ignored by the reader. Proposing to be a mission to save souls it was in spite of his denial actually a business enterprise from start to finish.

which Thomas dared not promise, though he dreaded losing his ship. At length, one faced it for nine, and ‘they ran through all the pirates in the dark,’ and reached Dover and the Careys ‘with great gladness of heart.’ On the last day of that May-month Pearce wrote from Birmingham to his wife:

Prepare, my love, to rejoice and wonder and be grateful! On the evening of the day you left I received a letter from Ryland, and what d’ ye think he wrote? Why, Carey with all his family are gone to India!! When? How? you are ready to ask, and I cheerfully satisfy you.’

And he tells her the story, and then adds:

By this time I suppose they have sailed. O what a wonder-working God is ours! Tell the whole now to others for the honour of our great Redeemer and the encouragement of His people. Three advantages are now secured: (1) **The missionaries will go out more honourably, and the enemies of the Cause will not be able to reproach the Society with duplicity in transporting them under false pretences;** (2) as the Danes are a neutral power, there is no fear of their being captured by the French on their way; and (3) **Carey has the satisfaction of his whole family being with him, and the world has lost thereby one objection often raised against his going.**³³⁵

While he starts the last part of his letter seemingly to give God glory His three reasons show they were more than ready to break the law, lie etc. They were more concerned with what the world might think than about Mrs. Carey’s welfare. So much was sacrificed at the altar of human pride, making money and putting William Carey first above all things.

Not only was there any real need to depart that year rather than the next, which was the correct thing to do but they had no need to be in such a rush at this time either. God had different plans. Pierce continues his account:” For a whole fortnight, however, the *Kron Princessa* came not, the winds being contrary. At last, before three one morning, they were all roused in Crane Street, the ship and its frigate-escort being in the roads. By five o’clock they were on board, but at a cost of three guineas.”³³⁶ Pearce had, at least up to this point had made Thomas the hero that saved the mission almost single handedly. Astoundingly, just a few short paragraphs later he makes this statement as he changes the subject: “**Along the track which Carey blazed** other British and English-speaking missionary societies followed in remarkably rapid succession.” Not only was Thomas dropped to the background but all the others who were involved.

Lewis’s account of the two-week wait is worthwhile:

And now the *Kron Princessa Maria*, could not come too soon. But their patience was yet to be tried. Day after day, for a whole fortnight, passed and she did not appear. On the 6th of June, they had to write to Mr. Fuller, and ask for a further supply of money, as their funds were fast running out, at their lodgings at “Reynolds’ in Crane Street, Dover.” As summer advanced, holiday-keepers became more numerous there, day by day, and the cost of living grew more and more oppressive to the missionaries. The boatmen here also were found to be an extortion- ate set of men. Not one would agree to put the party on board for less than three guineas! The missionaries were living “in earnest hope and expectation; but no ship yet.” “The winds were unfavorable for her coming down.” At last, before 3 o’clock in the morning of June 13th, they were all roused up from their slumbers by the joyful tidings that the ship was in the Roads. While the Careys got their children ready...³³⁷

³³⁵ S.P. Carey 128-129

³³⁶ S P Carey pages 179, 180

³³⁷ Lewis page 242

The party left England on June 13th, 1793, and finally made it to the mouth of the Calcutta River on November 9th. By November 11th, 1793, they were at Calcutta itself.

APPENDIX I

Rev. Cox in his “History of the Baptist Missionary Society” says:

In the mean time, an effort was made in London, by calling a meeting at Devonshire Square, to consider the propriety of forming an auxiliary society. Thirty-one persons were present, of whom eight were ministers. In a letter to Mr. Fuller, the chairman states that some who were invited felt indisposed to attend; and that two of the principal people in a leading church spoke decidedly against the formation of such a society. The objection was sustained by a very long appeal from one of the most distinguished of the ministers. “I asked,” says he, “what must be said, in ease anyone wants to know the opinion of the meeting.” It was universal, so far as I observed, that they were willing to assist it (the design) as individuals; but if they were formally to take up the Society, they should commit the whole denomination. This was the expression used again and again.” It was also inquired of the particular friends of a well known individual, whether he would receive subscriptions; and it was intimated that the probability was he would not, for he had considered it as an “Utopian scheme.”³³⁸

James Culross, also writes in total favor of the Enterprise about his meeting:

THE new Society had to justify its existence. It had been originated by a few young men who were scarcely known beyond their own parishes. The whole district which they represented might be surveyed from the top of a steeple. With a solitary exception, no minister or man of mark in London would look at the concern; and when a meeting was convened there to consider whether an auxiliary should be formed, an over-whelming majority carried the negative. Not improbably there was a tincture of jealousy against a movement of origin so obscure. London was London, and did not care to follow the lead of a handful of country nobodies, the chief among them a shoemaker. “When we began in 1792,” says Fuller, “there was little or no respectability among us, not so much as a squire to sit in the chair, or an orator to address him with speeches. Hence good Dr. Stennett, (yea, and even Abraham Booth also) —advised the London ministers to stand aloof, and not commit themselves.”³³⁹

Again the enterprise, in their religious zeal pushed ahead with their own agenda.

³³⁸ Cox, History of the Baptist Missionary Society, Vol. 1 London 1842. Pages 21, 22

³³⁹ William Carey by James Culross, D.D. London, (no pub. date) Chapter 3, page 47