

THE LIFE

DAVID BRAINERD,

MISSIONARY TO THE [AMERICAN] INDIANS:

CHIEFLY TAKEN FROM HIS OWN DIARY AND OTHER PRIVATE
WRITINGS.

BY JONATHAN EDWARDS.

WITH PREFACE

BY THE REV. HORATIUS BONAR,
KELSO.

LONDON:
T. NELSON AND SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW;
EDINBURGH; AND NEW YORK.

MDCCCLVIII.

1858

First Edition printed 1749.

Source: http://archive.org/stream/lifeofdavidbrain00braiuoft/lifeofdavidbrain00braiuoft_djvu.txt

CONTENTS

PREFACE	4
1. AGAINST THE EASY-MINDED RELIGION OF OUR DAY.	8
2. AGAINST THE SECOND-RATE RELIGION OF THE DAY.....	10
3. AGAINST THE UNCERTAIN RELIGION OF THE DAY.....	11
4. AGAINST THE SELF-PLEASING RELIGION OF THE DAY.....	12
5. AGAINST THE IMITATIVE RELIGION OF THE DAY.	14
PART I.....	22
FROM HIS BIRTH, TO THE TIME WHEN HE BEGAN TO STUDY FOR THE MINISTRY.	22
PART II.....	37
FROM ABOUT THE TIME THAT HE FIRST BEGAN TO DEVOTE HIMSELF MORE ESPECIALLY TO THE STUDY OF DIVINITY, TILL HE WAS EXAMINED AND LICENSED TO PREACH.	37
PART III.	50
FROM THE TIME OF HIS BEING LICENSED TO PREACH, TILL HE WAS APPOINTED MISSIONARY TO THE INDIANS.	50
PART IV.	61
FROM THE TIME OF HIS APPOINTMENT AS A MISSIONARY TO HIS FIRST ENTRANCE ON HIS MISSION AMONG THE INDIANS AT KAUNAUMEEK.	61
PART V.	71
FROM HIS FIRST BEGINNING TO INSTRUCT THE INDIANS AT KAUNAUMEEK, TO HIS ORDINATION.....	71
PART VI.....	108
FROM HIS ORDINATION, TILL HE FIRST BEGAN TO PREACH TO THE INDIANS AT CROSWEKSUNG, AMONG “WHOM HE HAD HIS MOST REMARKABLE SUCCESS.	108
PART VII.....	141
FROM HIS FIRST BEGINNING TO PREACH TO THE INDIANS AT CROSWEKSUNG, TILL HE RETURNED FROM HIS LAST JOURNEY TO SUSQUEHANNAH, ILL WITH CONSUMPTION, WHEREOF HE DIED.	141
PART VIII.	182
AFTER HIS RETURN FROM HIS LAST JOURNEY TO SUSQUEHANNAH, UNTIL HIS DEATH.....	182
LETTERS WRITTEN BY MR. BRAINERD TO HIS FRIENDS.....	217

REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRECEDING MEMOIRS.....	228
------------------------------------------------------------	-----

PREFACE.

VERY much of a man's *true* life must be lived *alone*; under no eye but the Father's, with no companionship save that of the Son, and without guidance, or help, or teaching, save from the Holy Ghost.

It has never been otherwise *here*, whatever it may be hereafter. From the time that earth fell off from God, and the air became the seat of devils, and sin took up its dwelling in every scene and object, and things seen became enemies and tempters, and the creation was made subject to vanity, and the world became an unreality, and "the things of the world" gay shadows or idle flatteries, and man began to "walk in a vain show," from that time the realities of man's being have been constrained to betake themselves to "secret places," finding there a more healthful atmosphere, and a more genial companionship. By the chill vagueness, the unsatisfying hollowness of what it finds in the bustle around, it has been driven into the quiet of closet-solitude, where it meets with Him who is infinitely real, and true, and personal, and with things which are all as real, and true, and personal as himself.

It was thus with Him who came "not to be ministered unto but to minister." We read once that "in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place and there prayed." (Mark i. 35.) Again we read that when he had sent the multitudes away, "he departed into a mountain to

viii PREFACE.

pray." (Mark vi. 46.) In the *day-time* he sought the desert, for we read that "when it was day he departed and went into a desert-place." (Luke iv. 42.) At *night* he sought the desert, for we read that "he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." (Luke vi. 12.) One who followed his Lord closely, and walked in his footsteps, thus writes — "I have more to do with God than with all the world; yea, more and greater business with him in one day than with all the world in all my life. Therefore, let man stand by; I have to do with the eternal God, and with him I am to transact in this little time the business of my endless life. Alas, what have I to do with man! What can it do but make my head ache to hear a deal of senseless chat about the words and thoughts of men, or their lands and titles, and a thousand impertinances, which only prove that the dreaming world is not awake? What pleasure is it to see the bustles of a bedlam world, and how they strive to prove, or make themselves unhappy? I have never returned from the presence of God when I have really drawn near to him as I have from the company of mortals, repenting the loss of my time, and trembling for my discomposure contracted by their vain and earthly discourse. O that I had lived more with God, though I had been less with some that are eminent in the world, or even with the dearest of my friends! O how much more pleasing is it now to my remembrance, to think of the hours in which I have lain at the divine footstool, though it were in tears and agonies, than to think of the time I have spent in converse with the greatest, most learned, or nearest of my acquaintance!"¹ Nor is this a rare experience. Thus all have found it who have

¹ "Baxter's Converse with God in Solitude."

tried really to LIVE. They have learned, after much weariness, and many disappointments, and keen vexations, and sharp buffetings, that the life which is lived amid too frequent fellowship with outward things is an unsatisfying and fictitious one. They have discovered that it contains much of what is

PREFACE. ix

false and unreal, much of what is unhealthy and unstable, much that will not last beyond the hour, and which, when it evaporates, leaves the spirit poorer and emptier than before.¹

Nor is it possible that it should ever be otherwise in such a world as this. For existence and life are not the same; spending life and filling up life are not the same. It is one thing to keep the limbs and faculties in motion, and it is another thing to *live*. Life is not the mere transit through a certain space, or the consumption of a certain amount of time, or the performance of a certain number of evolutions. It is not measured by days and years, nor yet by the multitude of points at which it comes into contact with the outward world. Those things which go down into the depths of our spiritual being are the things which make up life. They fill up every void; they do not change nor disappoint; they offer us not only present satisfaction, but eternal companionship. So that the amount of reality in life must be far more proportioned to the extent of our direct intercourse with Him “in whose favour is life” than to the amount of our fellowship with men, or contact with the movements of the world.

Those parts of life which are *not true* may be lived any where. It matters little what may be the place, or the circumstances, or the company, or the nature of the employment that may be filling our hands. That which is unreal can suit itself to any soil, or find congeniality in any atmosphere. Earth has a thousand busy circles, smaller and wider, where, in pastime or

x PREFACE.

politics, or business, all reality is lost. Any one of these will do for the development of that life which is not life. But the life which is real, springs up in quiet and kindly shade. It comes forth unhidden and unforced, when the soul, left alone with God, gets full play to itself, and brings all its manifold parts into unobstructed contact with Him in whom “we live, and move, and have our being.”

Not that all of life which is spent alone must be true, or that all which is not spent alone must be untrue. It would be unfair to affirm either of these points; nay, it would be false. One may *waste* life in solitude as completely as in a crowd; and one may fill up life well in vigorous service and labour for God. Monasteries prove the former, —such lives as those of Luther, and Knox, and Calvin, prove the latter.

¹ Thus Brainerd writes concerning his days of solitude “My state of solitude does not make the hours hang heavy upon my hands. Oh, what reason of thankfulness have I on account of this retirement! I find that I do not, and it seems I cannot, lead a Christian life when I am abroad, and cannot spend time in devotion, Christian conversation, and serious meditation, as I should do. Those weeks that I am obliged now to be from home, in order to learn the Indian tongue, are mostly spent in perplexity and barrenness, without much relish of divine things; and I feel myself a stranger at the throne of grace for want of a more frequent and continued retirement.” —*Diary*, January 4, 1734.

But still, we may say, that there is a greater mixture of the untrue in those parts of life which are not lived alone. Into them the artificial and unreal are more largely introduced, so that the natural and simple are not seldom hidden or stifled. When alone, the simple growth is unchecked, and the natural process of unfolding goes on. But, bring in other beings and objects, and we obstruct what is natural, we call forth what is artificial. The greater the amount of foreign influence brought to bear upon a man, the less of himself, and the more of what is not himself, we are likely to have. Were man's soul like metal, to be fused and cast into a mould, or were it like marble, to be chiselled and polished after the design of the sculptor, then the greater the amount and pressure of foreign influence, the better for his perfect manifestation; but, if he be rather like a seed, or a plant, all whose individualities have been wrapped up by the Creator in itself, requiring free scope for growth so as to bring out fully every branch, and leaf, and flower, then to attempt to fashion him into a shape of our own devising, by bringing him into contact with other objects, would be to change his very nature, to destroy that which is real

PREFACE. xi

about him, to cramp his vitalities, nay, perhaps, to destroy his very life.

These surely are points to which our attention may well be called. For, if depth in spirituality, and warmth in religion, and truth in life, be things desirable, then must we set about seeking them in good earnest, and without delay.¹ And, if they are to be reached by us, then of a surety the outward must occupy less of our time, and the inward more. There must be more of privacy than Christians seem now to think needful; and, in that privacy, there must be more of direct converse with the things of the eternal kingdom, and more of unbroken fellowship with the Father and the Son. No doubt, a man may be often alone and yet gain nothing by it. His private hours may be as empty and unfruitful as his public ones; but still no man can attain to much of what is true in life who is not often' alone. In public, we *give* rather than *receive*; and hence the necessity for going alone in order to be replenished. In public, there is an incessant tear and wear, not only of body but of soul; and, in order to have it repaired, we must retire to privacy, and to God. "There are some things," says Samuel Rutherford, "in which I have been helped; as, (1.) I have been benefited by riding alone a long journey, in giving that time to prayer; (2.) by abstinence, and giving days to God."² Of Robert Blair we read, that "he spent many days and nights in prayer, alone, and with others; and was one very intimate with God."³ And thus writes another: "I had a deep impression of the things of God; a natural condition and sin appeared worse than hell itself; the world, and the vanities thereof, terrible and exceeding dangerous; it was fearful to

xii PREFACE.

¹ "Feeling and considering my extreme weakness and want of grace, the pollution of my soul, and danger of temptations on every side, I set apart this day for fasting and prayer, neither eating nor drinking, from evening to evening, beseeching God to have mercy on me; and my soul intensely longed that the spots and stains of sin might be washed away." *Diary*.

² Letters, New Edition, p. 288.

³ Livingstone's Characteristics.

have ado with them, and to be rich; I saw its day coming; Scripture expressions were weighty; a Saviour was a big thing in my eyes; Christ's agonies were then earnest with me, and I thought that all my days I was in a dream till now, or like a child in jest, and I thought the world was sleeping." And, in another place, he tells us how he sought to deepen and perpetuate this sense of everlasting realities: "In imitation of Christ and his apostles, I purpose to rise timely every morning; once in the month, either the end or middle of it, I keep a day of humiliation for the public condition; I spend, besides this, one for my own private condition, in conflicting with spiritual evils, and to get my heart more holy, once in six weeks. I spend once every week four hours over and above my daily portion in private for special causes. I spend six or seven days together once a year wholly and only on spiritual accounts." ¹

It was in such ways that these men of God maintained the vigour of the spiritual life. In these instances, we see what is *reality* in the life of man, and that that which is *true* in life has more affinity with the solitude of the closet than with the stir of more public scenes. Brainerd's life brings out all this most vividly. ²

¹ Eraser's Life, Wodrow Edition, p. 275.

² I cannot resist the temptation to throw into a note the following incident in the life of Flavel, known to some, no doubt, but not generally known. What a reality would there be in a life made up of such passages!

"I have with good assurance this account of a minister, who, being alone in a journey, and willing to make the best improvement he could of that day's solitude, set himself to a close examination of the state of his soul, and then of the life to come, and the manner of its being and living in heaven, in the views of all those things which are now pure objects of faith and hope. After a while he perceived his thoughts begin to fix, and come closer to these great and astonishing things than was usual; and as his mind settled upon them, his affections began to rise with answerable liveliness and vigour.

"He therefore (whilst he was yet master of his own thoughts) lifted up his heart to God in a short ejaculation, that God would so order it, in his providence, that he might meet with no interruption from company, or any other accident in that journey; which was granted him; for in all that day's journey he neither met, overtook, or was overtaken by any. Thus going on his way, his thoughts began to swell, and rise higher and higher, like the waters in Ezekiel's vision, till at last they became an overflowing flood. Such was the intention of his mind, such the ravishing taste of heavenly joys, and such the full assurance of his interest therein, that he utterly lost a sight and sense of this world, and all the concerns thereof, and for some hours knew no more where he was, than if he had been in a deep sleep upon his bed. At last he began to perceive himself very faint, and almost choked with blood, which, running in abundance from his nose, had coloured his clothes and his horse from the shoulder to the hoof. He found himself almost spent, and nature to faint under the pressure of joy unspeakable and insupportable; and at last, perceiving a spring of water in his way, he with difficulty alighted to cleanse and cool his face and hands, which were drenched in blood, tears, and sweat.

"By that spring he sat down and washed, earnestly desiring, if it were the pleasure of God, that it might be his parting place from this world. He said, death had the most amiable face in his eye that ever he beheld, except the face of Jesus Christ, which made it so; and that he could not remember (though he believed he should die there) that he had one thought of his dear wife or children, or any other earthly concernment.

"But having drunk of that spring, his spirits revived, the blood stanchd, and he mounted his horse again; and on he went in the same frame of spirit, till he had finished a journey of near thirty miles, and came at night to his inn, where being come, he greatly admired how he came thither, that his horse without his direction had brought him thither, and that he fell not all that day, which passed not without several trances of considerable continuance.

"Being alighted, the innkeeper came to him with some astonishment (being acquainted with him formerly): 'O, sir, said he, 'what is the matter with you? You look like a dead man.' 'Friend,' replied he, 'I was never better in my life. Show me my chamber, cause my cloak to be cleansed, burn me a little wine, and that is all I desire of

PREFACE. xiii

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.

We might make use of it as a protest against many things in our condition, which are too little heeded, and hardly recognised as evil at all. It is a protest,

xiv PREFACE.

1. AGAINST THE EASY-MINDED RELIGION OF OUR DAY.

A believed gospel most certainly brings with it immediate peace, else its news are neither good nor true. To receive the peace-bringing news, and yet to be without peace, is an inconsistency hard to be accounted for. "Joy and peace in believing," poured into us by the God of hope, is our present heritage. But to be at peace with God, and with our own conscience, is one thing, and to be easy-minded is quite another. The former is the true and healthy condition of the renewed soul, the latter its state of fatal disease and sad decay. The gospel truly believed, no doubt, unbinds and unburdens us; for it brings us forgiveness and an endless life. But in doing so, it makes us thoroughly *in earnest*. It gives us back our lost buoyancy of being, it renews our broken elasticity of spirit, it quickens our sinking pulse, it draws out into vigorous and noble action the buried and stifled feelings of the

PREFACE. xv

you for the present.' Accordingly it was done, and a supper sent up, which he could not touch, but requested of the people that they would not trouble or disturb him for that night. All this night passed without one wink of sleep, though he never had a sweeter night's rest in all his life. Still, still the joy of the Lord overflowed him, and he seemed to be an inhabitant of another world. The next morning being come, he was early on horseback again, fearing the divertisement in the inn might bereave him of his joy; for he said it was now with him as with a man that carries a rich treasure about him, who suspects every *passenger* to be a *thief*, but within a few hours he was sensible of the ebbing of the tide, and before night, though there was a heavenly serenity and sweet peace upon his spirit, which continued long with him, yet the transports of joy were over, and the fine edge of his delight blunted. He many years after called that day one of the days of heaven, and professed he understood more of the light of heaven by it than by all the books he ever read, or discourses he ever had entertained about it."

soul; and in doing all this, it transfuses throughout our inner man, as well as imprints upon our outer man, a calm, resolute solemnity, mingled with a strenuous and irrepressible earnestness, that cannot rest till it has carried all before it.

Instead of this, we see men “professing godliness “taking things so easily and coolly, that we are led to wonder how far they attach any importance to them at all. There is no lack of fervour in carrying out other pursuits; the whole heart is thrown into business, and literature, and pleasure, but religion sits lightly on them. They are sound in the faith, and ready at a moment’s notice to man its bulwarks when assault is threatened; they are forward in schemes of usefulness; all is regular and reputable in their walk; yet the vitalities of religion are sadly wanting. Their religion seems to be a thing picked up by the way, easily put on; as easily worn, and, were persecution arising for the Word’s sake, in all likelihood as easily put off. It is a religion which knew nothing of the pangs of the new birth as its origin, and which knows nothing of struggle and warfare for its maintenance. “Taking up the cross,” “fighting the good fight of faith,” “wrestling with principalities and powers,” “resisting the devil,” “keeping under the body,” “crucifying the flesh,” “mortifying the members,” —these are things unthought of. With such, it is an easy thing to be religious, an easy thing to walk with God, an easy thing to pray, an easy thing to deny self, an easy thing to follow Christ. It costs them nothing either in the way of sacrifice or conflict to be religious. They own themselves sinners, but they take it easily. They acknowledge the cross, but they take it easily. They ask forgiveness, and though they never seem to obtain it, they take it easily. They speak of sonship, and though they will not venture to say, “Abba, Father,” they take it easily. They are no further on at this day than when first they became religious, yet they take it easily!

Of the religion of this class, it may be said that it

xvi PREFACE.

had no starting-point no decided commencement in the souls of those to whom it belongs. The characteristics of the change in their case are so vague and ambiguous, that to speak of it as conversion or regeneration, is to turn the most solemn words into an unmeaning sound. A few anxious days and nights, a few struggles against outward sin, a few tears of sentimental tenderness these are all. Men congratulate themselves on these undefined impressions, and deem themselves CONVERTED! And in their after life, they reassure themselves, or rather they soothe their consciences to sleep, by recalling these feelings, and persuading themselves that about such a time they passed through a certain change, and that therefore all must be well with them! ‘Their religion had an easy beginning; it has an easy progress, but if grace prevent not, it will have a woful end. For the hope of such men must perish. Their blossom shall go up as dust.

How far this religious easy-mindedness prevails among us, I do not say. That it does prevail to a very considerable extent, will hardly be denied.¹ Nor will it be questioned that such a condition is as false as it is fearful. The Bible knows it not. The gospel utterly condemns it.

¹ “I fear,” says Brainerd, writing to his brother John, “you are not sufficiently aware how much false religion there is in the world.”

He who “holdeth the seven stars in his right hand,” threatens it with wasting judgment. It may be man’s religion, but it is not God’s.

It holds out an awful contrast to the religion of David Brainerd. Every page of his memoir, every entry in his diary, every letter from his pen, breathes an intensity of earnestness which not only protests against the tame and facile piety above adverted to, but makes us feel that if it be true godliness, then Brainerd’s was fanaticism; and that, on the other hand, if Brainerd’s be the simple reality of religion, then the other is a mere piece of ill-acted mimicry or cold externalism. Hear how he writes — “Prayed privately with a dear Christian friend or two, and I think I scarcely ever

PREFACE. xvii

launched so far into the eternal world as then; I got so far out on the broad ocean, that my soul with joy triumphed over all the evils on the shores of mortality; time, and all its gay amusements and cruel disappointments, never appeared so inconsiderable to me before; I was in a sweet frame; I saw myself nothing, and my soul *went out after God with intense desire*; O I saw what I owed to him in such a manner as I scarcely ever did; I knew I had never lived a moment to him as I should do; indeed, it appeared to me I had never done any thing in Christianity; my soul longed with a *vehement desire to live to God*.” Again he writes — “*My spiritual conflicts to-day were unspeakably dreadful*, heavier than the mountains and overflowing floods; I seemed inclosed, as it were, in hell itself; I was deprived of all sense of God, even of the being of God, and that was my misery... Oh, I feel that if there is no God, though I might live for ever here, and enjoy not only this but all other worlds, I should be ten thousand times more miserable than the meanest reptile; my soul was in such anguish, that I could not eat, but felt, as I supposed, a poor wretch would that is just going to the place of execution.” I do not cite these passages as embodying feelings necessary for all to pass through; for I would specially guard against the idea that we are to imitate others, and that any one Christian can be or ought to be the reproduction of another. But I quote them as containing the most awful condemnation which could be pronounced upon the easy-minded religion of multitudes in the present age of wide profession.

2. AGAINST THE SECOND-RATE RELIGION OF THE DAY.

There is no profit in declaiming against the times, and comparisons between this age and other ages should be cautiously indulged in. But one cannot help feeling, that amid the luxuriant foliage of profession, the “sere

xviii PREFACE.

and yellow leaf” prevails. There is a want of greatness as well as a want of simplicity in much of modern religion. It has, as one remarks, “no fervour, no keenness, no elevation, no splendour of soul.” It lacks the freshness, the vigour, the vitality, the power which marked it in earlier times.

And must it remain so? Must we be content with inferiority? Is there not such a thing as spiritual *ambition* a desire to get up to a higher level, nay, to raise up our fellow saints to such a level? Surely we are to covet the best gifts and to be satisfied with no second-rate religion, no inferior attainments, no common-place Christianity.

In Brainerd we see one specially fitted to arouse us. He has reached no common eminence, and he stands above us, calling to us who are still in the valley beneath, or only on the lower slope of the mountain, "Come up hither." He was a man of like passions as we are. He was fashioned of the same vile clay. He had the same obstructions to encounter, the same steep slopes to climb, the same enemies to do battle with. Yet he reached the height; and no one can read this diary without feeling how lofty that height was. And if he gained it, why not we? And can we read such utterances as these, and not be quickened? "Had some intense and passionate breathings after holiness." Again, "I feel it is heaven to please Him, and to be just as he would have me to be; O that my soul were holy as he is holy; that it were pure, even as Christ is pure." Again, "Felt exceeding dead to the world and all its enjoyments; I longed to be perpetually and entirely crucified to all things here below by the cross of Christ; it was 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!" From these "delectable mountains," these hills of frankincense," he beckons us upward, telling us of the green slopes and the pleasant air, and the fresh fragrance and the fair prospect which we may

PREFACE. xix

thus obtain. He entreats us not to remain in the plains, or linger on any of the lower ridges. Let us arise and follow him.

3. AGAINST THE UNCERTAIN RELIGION OF THE DAY.

Brainerd was often in deep waters, broken with many a tempest, and buffeted with many a surge; but he never for a moment let go his anchorage. He was moored too fast at the outset of his career to be easily drifted. The abyss of iniquity within him often made him cry out, "wretched man;" but his sense of forgiveness and consciousness of reconciliation and sonship never forsook him. He "held the beginning of his confidence firm to the end." Knowing that a man is saved, not by doubting but by believing, he believed and was established. He discerned nothing humbling, nothing sanctifying, nothing elevating in uncertainty as to the relationship subsisting between him and God. He did not conceive that uncertainty could enlarge his heart, or heal his wounds, or stimulate activity, or warm his zeal, or brighten his hope, or kindle his love. Uncertainty might stupify him, but it could not arouse him; it might paralyze and benumb him, but it could not quicken and invigorate him; it might dispirit him, but could not animate him; it might elate, but could not humble him. Hence there is nothing of it throughout his whole diary. He knew whom he believed, and was persuaded that he would keep that which was committed to him against the great day. He did not always rejoice, but he always rested and trusted as a child. He was often brought down to the very gates of hell under a sense of unutterable vileness in himself, yet he did not allow

this to estrange him from his God or loosen his hold of the Saviour, or throw up a wall of darkness between him and the cross. His walk with God was not in uncertainty. His hold of God was a *conscious* thing. His relationship to God was a settled

xx PREFACE

and ascertained fact, from which, as from a centre, all the movements of his spiritual life went forth. His is a case from which we may learn not only how perfectly consistent are a profound sense of sin and an unbroken assurance of forgiveness, but how the latter is the true source of the former, —so that it is in proportion as we realize the forgiveness of the cross that our sense of sin is deepened. The consciousness of reconciliation and sonship, the certain knowledge of pardon, the firm hope of the inheritance these are the things that humble, and empty, and purify.

And what, after all, can this uncertain religion do for us? Can it comfort? No, it only saddens. Can it speak peace? No, it only troubles. Can it light up the drooping eye? No, it only makes it droop the more heavily. Can it tin wrinkle the vexed brow? No, it only adds fresh wrinkles. Can it heal wounds? No, it only inflicts new ones. Can it give us the u single eye?" No, it only makes the eye "evil." Can it break our bonds? No, it only adds new links to our cutting chain. Can it give us rest? No, it only augments our weariness. Can it fire us with zeal? No, it cools and quenches it. Does it make duty sweet, and turn labour into refreshment? No, it takes away all relish for the service of God, unnerving and unmaning us, as well as turning all that work for Christ, which should have been so pleasant and easy, into irksomeness and pain.

It seems strange that so many should be content under this uncertainty, nay, cleave to it as desirable and needful, counting it proud presumption in any one to say, "I am a son." According to man's scheme, uncertainty may be humility, and filial confidence presumption, but certainly not according to God's. If it be a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, then the authentic evidence of our being children of God, is not the extent of our doubting, but the simplicity of our believing. If any one would know the difference between a certain and an uncertain religion, between

PREFACE. xxi

the results of doubting and the results of believing, let him study the lives of Brainerd or Edwards.

4. AGAINST THE SELF-PLEASING RELIGION OF THE DAY.

One cannot read a page of his diary without feeling rebuked and ashamed. He "sought not his own but the things that are Jesus Christ's." "He pleased not himself." His was pre-eminently a life of self-denial; and his was as truly a ministry of self-denial. Half a century ago, a German minister thus wrote in his diary: "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.”¹ The whole life of Brainerd is a comment upon this. 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. Thus Brainerd writes: “When I felt any disposition to consult my ease and worldly comfort, God has never suffered me to feel happy. ... It appeared to me that God’s dealings towards me had fitted me for a life of solitariness and hardship; it appeared also that I had nothing to lose, nothing to do with earth; and consequently nothing to lose by a total renunciation of it; it was, therefore, right that I should be destitute of house and home, and many comforts of life, which I rejoiced to see others of God’s people enjoy; at the same time, I saw so much of the excellency of Christ’s kingdom, and the infinite desirableness of its advancement in the world, that it swallowed up all my other thoughts, and made me willing,

xxii PREFACE.

yea even rejoice, to be a pilgrim or hermit in the wilderness to my dying moment, if I might thereby promote the blessed interest of the great Redeemer; at the same time, I had as quick and lively a sense of the value of worldly comforts as ever I had; but saw them infinitely overmatched by the worth of Christ’s kingdom.” There is no self-pleasing here; no flesh-pleasing; no love of ease; no concern about earthly enjoyments. He is engrossed with something higher and more glorious. He has risen above things seen and temporal; he has got within view of things eternal; he has his eye on but one thing, in comparison with which every thing else is vanity. It is the glory of God that absorbs him; it is the kingdom of Christ on which his heart is set. What a single eye! what a straightforward aim! what an unselfish attitude! Here is a pattern for a minister or missionary. Here is one whose example puts us awfully to shame, and yet it stirs us up, nay it gladdens us too, as we think that such a man as this once walked on our earth and breathed our air.

Yet there was nothing morose about Brainerd. In one place, he tells us of his having “diversions” for his health; and his biographer thus describes him: “I found him remarkably sociable, pleasant, and entertaining in his conversation; yet solid, savoury, spiritual, and very profitable; appearing meek, modest, and humble; far from any stiffness, moroseness, superstitious demureness, or affected singularity in speech or behaviour, and seeming to nauseate all such things.” In several parts of his diary he breathes out his love to his fellow-men: “I felt much of the sweetness of a gospel temper; was far from bitterness, and found a dear love to all mankind.” Again — “I felt serious, kind. and tender towards all mankind.” Again — “Spent an hour in prayer with great intenseness and freedom, and with the most soft and tender affection towards mankind; I longed that those that bear me ill-will might be eternally happy; it seemed refreshing to think of meeting them in heaven.” Thus, with all the depth and self-denial that

PREFACE. xxiii

¹ Rauschenbusch’s Memoir, p. 126.

marked his religion, there was nothing ungentle or unloveable. He “pleased not himself;” but he sought to please others, to love others, to care for others, to overflow with tenderness to all around.¹

5. AGAINST THE IMITATIVE RELIGION OF THE DAY.

When religion ceases to be persecuted, and comes into general favour, so as to be reckoned among the necessities or at least the decencies of life, then men set themselves to acquire it as part of their education. In doing so, they get hold of certain models after which they endeavour to shape their religious life. These models are various; and hence the variety of the imitations.

xxiv PREFACE.

¹ How tender and how natural some of the scenes upon his deathbed! It seems he was engaged to the daughter of Edwards; and three days before his death, we are told that when she came into the room he “looked on her very pleasantly,” and said, “Dear Jerusha, are you willing to part with me? I am quite willing to part with you I am willing to part with all my friends I am willing to part with my dear brother John, although I love him the best of any creature living: I have committed him and all my friends to God, and can leave them with God. Though, if I thought I should not see you, and be happy with you in another world, I could not bear to part with you. But we shall spend a happy eternity together!” “She survived Brainerd only four months, and died in her eighteenth year. “She was a person,” says her father, “of much the same spirit with Mr. Brainerd. She had constantly taken care of and attended him in his sickness, for nineteen weeks before his death; devoting herself to it with great delight, because she looked on him as an eminent servant of Jesus Christ. In this time, he had much conversation with her on things of religion; and in his dying state often expressed to us, her parents, his great satisfaction concerning her true piety, and his confidence that he should meet her in heaven; and his high opinion of her not only as a true Christian, but a very eminent saint; one whose soul was uncommonly fed and entertained with things that appertain to the most spiritual, experimental, and distinguishing parts of religion; and one who, by the temper of her mind, was fitted to deny herself for God, and to do good, beyond any young woman whatsoever that he knew of. She had manifested a heart uncommonly devoted to God in the course of her life, many years before her death; and said on her deathbed, that ‘she had not seen one minute for several years, wherein she desired to live one minute longer, for the sake of any other good in life, but doing good, living to God, and doing what might be for his glory.’ “In these respects she seems remarkably to have resembled her mother, whose experience was of such a pre-eminently spiritual kind, and of whom her husband, before their marriage, drew the following exquisite portrait. It was written when he was twenty, and was found on the blank page of one of his books. “They say there is a young lady in _____, who is beloved of that great Being who made and rules the world; and that there are certain seasons in which this great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her, and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight; and that she hardly cares for any thing except to meditate on him; that she expects, after a while, to be received up where he is; to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven; being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight for ever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, she disregards it, and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do any thing wrong or sinful if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevolence of mind, especially after the great Being has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place singing sweetly, and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure, and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her.”

From the lowest pattern of mere externalism up to the highest form of spirituality they range; and thus form that vast Babel-fabric of profession or religiousness, which, reared by human hands, rises, circle after circle, seeking to scale the heavens. According to the nature of our education, the friends we move amongst, the books we read, the characters we admire, the natural tone of our mind, will be our selection of the pattern after which we frame our religion. But whatever be the model we adopt, an imitated religion is the result. Hence that part of our character which should of all others be most genuine, becomes the most artificial. It is but a copy. It has not sprung up from a root within us; it has come solely from without; hence it is hollow; and its hollowness makes it of but little service amid the buffetings or griefs of life. It rings with the sad sound of emptiness whenever it is called into use, either in the day of toil or the night of suffering. It fails us as a broken reed, or mocks as an idle shadow.

PREFACE. xxv

Sad truth! The most real thing in the universe is turned into the greatest of all unrealities! That which should be most spontaneous and authentic, becomes a forced and unnatural production! Men profess to fear God, nay, perhaps, persuade themselves that they are doing so; yet it turns out that they have never yet come into living contact with this Being whom they say they fear; but are merely imitating the emotions and actions of another who has left on record how he feared God, and how he felt, and how he acted! Men profess to have been converted, to have undergone the vital change which fits them for the kingdom; yet after all it turns out that they are only imitating the movements of the divine life, the play of the spiritual organs in a fellow-man! They speak of God, and of Christ, and of his gospel, and of the narrow way, and of the endless life, not because the Holy Spirit from within has taught them to do so, but because they have seen or heard a man who is held up to them as an example, thus speak of God, and of Christ, and of his gospel, and of the narrow way, and of the endless life! Fearful facility of imitation! What a source of self-deception is here! How needful for us, on reading such a life as Brainerd's, to beware lest we be giving way to this imitative tendency, intent merely on producing in ourselves a facsimile of the holy man, a facsimile, in working out which the Spirit has had no hand, but which passes for the work of the Spirit, and thereby deludes ourselves, and imposes upon others.

As, then, we know of few things more subtle and more fatal to the genuineness of spiritual religion, or more likely to produce a mere artificial spirituality, than the plan of taking any man as the model of Christian experience, and insisting on conformity to his likeness as the test of excellence, we would deprecate the idea of calling Brainerd master, or setting up his Diary as the touch-stone of religious experience. In reading his life, we require to guard against our tendency to religious imitativeness, as utterly destructive of all that is fresh and real and natural in religion.

xxvi PREFACE.

In one way, Brainerd's Diary may be more likely than many others to lead to imitation. The depth, the intensity, and the loftiness of his experience, make it strongly attractive to a large class of minds. A commonplace life may often furnish most pleasant reading; but it draws

after it no imitators, even among the most ordinary minds. All men, however commonplace themselves, turn away from any but a striking character as their model. And the revelation of the workings of a human soul, given us in this Diary, is of no common kind. It often takes a hue of solemnity quite overpowering, and sometimes rises to a sublimity quite unearthly. This is its *dangerous* side.

But, in another aspect, it presents a warning against imitation. It is throughout so genuine, so true, so natural, that we feel rebuked and condemned at the thought of attempting to *imitate* it. It overawes us too much to think of this; and yet it does stir up within us the desire to put *our* souls entirely in the Spirit's hands, that He may work in us, not the same experience — for the experiences which *He* produces are all different the one from the other —but an experience as thorough, as pervading, and as profound. He who uses Brainerd's life as a copy which he must labour to imitate as closely and correctly as he can, will succeed in producing nothing but a piece of unhealthy religionism; he who uses it to arouse and stimulate, to detect flaws and deficiencies, to quicken his conscience, and urge him forward in the same path of high attainment, will find it an unspeakable blessing. It is a life which, in all its parts, inner and outer, is worthy of being kept before our eye; it is so solemn, yet so loveable, —so striking, yet so unaffected and unobtrusive, —so noble, yet so gentle, —so elevated, yet so childlike, —so intensely fervent and unearthly, yet so simple, so genuine, and so true!

In casting the eye over Brainerd's Diary, we find so many points to notice, that it is difficult to select. The features of his Christianity are all of them prominent and decided. His was neither a second-rate nor a

PREFACE. xxvii

second-hand spirituality. There was a breadth, and power, and intensity about it that one seldom lights upon. Though his course was brief, and his life passed in deserts, —not in cities, though it was, in one sense, obscure and unknown, —yet it contained too much of what was heavenly to allow it to pass unnoticed upon earth. It had nothing of the ostentatious; yet it was so unlike the usual run of religious profession, —it had so little of the tame and the commonplace about it, it was so vivid in its spiritual tints, —that it could not be hidden. Whether it might attract or repel —whether it might be scoffed at or wondered at, it was too unambiguous to be mistaken. Unconsciously, and in simply giving himself up to the Holy Spirit's guidance, he had been led up to a height which few attain.

Of spiritual childhood or nonage, one finds almost nothing in his life. He seems to stand before us at once in the full strength and proportions of Christian *manhood*. He has outgrown his childhood ere he has well entered it, —leaving behind him, at once, the fragility, the delicacy, and incompleteness of the babe, and taking on the ripeness, and vigour, and hardihood of the man. In self-denial, self-mastery, self-discipline, he exhibits a rapidity of growth which amazes us, and yet which, at the same time, lets us know that the same Spirit which wrought in him is willing and able to work in us as mightily and as swiftly, would we but as unreservedly throw ourselves into his almighty hands, that he may work in us according to the greatness of his power, and according to the good pleasure of his will.

There is, undoubtedly, a question here very naturally coming up for consideration. How far, and in what way, is God honoured and Christ confessed by a life like that of Brainerd? It was not a public life. It was not a life of mark and fame, and wide-ranging popularity. It was not a life like Whitefield's, or even like Edwards. It was a life to which few eyes were turned, and in which the world could take little interest, either to love or to hate, to praise or to revile, the man who

xxviii PREFACE.

lived it. In outward incident, it was not fitted to strike or overawe. It was not a stormy life, like Luther's; nor a bold life, like Knox's; nor a commanding life, like Calvin's. It was different from all these; for it was made up of few events, and these few not likely to be known, or, even when known, to awaken a world's interest or call forth its admiration. It was, besides, a brief life, —a race swiftly run, so that the goal was reached ere the progress of the runner could be marked. Few years were his, for he died in the prime of his manhood, —being one of those to whom God, in his tender love, seems to grant the glad privilege of getting their work finished quickly, and making haste to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.

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 great, 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. And there may often be concentrated in one hour's blessed communion, or in one hour's desperate struggle with the unseen adversary, more of what honours God and bears testimony to his name, than in long years of public labour acknowledged and applauded on every side. It is not upon the platform, or amid the listening crowd, nor even in the pulpit, that we confess Christ with the purest lip and the most noble testimony. These, doubtless, are fit places for confessing him, just as, in truth, any place is where we can name his name; but the confession in which there mingles least of what is earthly and human, most of what is heavenly and divine, is the

PREFACE. xxix

confession made upon the bended knee in the lonely closet, unlistened to by any ear but God's. There we are less tempted to be insincere; and though even there we are at times conscious of trying to impose even on him, and speaking of ourselves, not as we really are, but as we know he desires us to be, yet, when alone with him, our witness-bearing is of a truer and more thoroughly expressive kind.

Besides, it is evident that God attaches more importance to the private history of our souls in their transactions with himself than we are accustomed to do. Not that he makes the private to supersede the public, or the individual to exclude the corporate; but still he gives us to

understand that his glory is strangely wrapt up in all the secret movements of the soul, and that there is a weight and importance connected with our closet history which we know not now, but which we shall know hereafter.

Thus Enoch walked with God, and obtained the testimony of pleasing him. Thus Moses passed his forty years' sojourn in Midian, glorifying God in the solitudes of Horeb as truly as afterwards amid the thousands of Israel. Thus David honoured God when feeding his sheep on the plains of Bethlehem. Thus Elijah honoured him at the brook Cherith, and at the widow's house in Zarephath. Thus did John the Baptist in the wilderness of Judea. And thus was it with the Lord himself, whose public life was so short, whose private life so long. Ah! is it not evident that, whether we see it or not, God has some most wondrous way of glorifying himself by those parts of our lives which are lived alone? There is something about the silent, solitary growth of his "trees of righteousness" that we are slow to understand. How much of delight in them, and of glory from them, he is continually receiving, we know not; yet that this is not only great, but of the purest and most precious kind, we cannot doubt.

Nor, indeed, is this altogether wonderful; for it is here that the soul gets fullest room and liberty to ex-

xxx PREFACE.

pand itself. It is here that we are brought into directest contact with God. It is here that there is least of earth and most of heaven. It is here that the spikenard flows forth with its unchecked fragrance. It is from this that our sweetest songs arise. It is here that we unbosom and unveil ourselves without reserve, delighting to make mention to God of all that he has done for us, in loving, forgiving, quickening, gladdening us. It is here that we fondly dwell upon the whole story of our saved life, telling, over and over again, in his listening ear, the wonders of his grace towards us, —wonders of grace which all proclaim aloud the unutterable glory of his name! Here too our battles are fought, and our noblest victories won; and who can tell the glory that goes up to God from such a battle-field! Our conflict with sin, our struggles with unbelief, our crucifying of the flesh, our resistance to self, our strife with the world, our wrestling with principalities and powers, —all in loneliness, and amid tears, and sighs, and groanings that cannot be uttered, —these fill up the story of an unseen life, in which Christ is confessed and. God is glorified in the way in which he most delights to be. Man's love of show and effect and outward scene, would pronounce a life like this wasted and lost. But He who plants flowers in the desert, whose fragrance ascends to none but himself; He who studs the secret cave with its dazzling crystals, which none but himself has ever gazed upon; He who lights up stars in myriads in the depths of space, far beyond the range of man's widest vision; —*He* glorifies himself in a way more befitting the loftiness of his nature and the simple majesty of his name. He can afford to be unseen himself, and he can afford to let that be hidden in which he takes the profoundest interest, and from which he means to draw the largest revenue of glory.

Yet all is not hidden. The indwelling Spirit is ever shining through. Rays of divine light find their way out from the recesses of the closet, —and these are rays

PREFACE. xxxi

of the purest and heavenliest kind. One such beam thus issuing forth will bring more glory to God than myriads of less pure, less heavenly beams, coming from those whose religion is of a more mingled and less expressive kind. And then the face of such a man, when standing forth before his fellow-men in public life, is like the face of Moses; —it shines, though he is unconscious of it; and, though many around are ignorant of the source whence the impression comes, they cannot help feeling a strange and unearthly influence exercised over them. They feel, but do not understand the spell that binds them. They do not understand either the man or his influence. There is a mystery about him, —a secret wrapt up in him which they cannot fathom. He is unintelligible to them; they know not whither to mock or to revere, whether to draw near or to stand aloof. Yet they are inwardly forced to confess, that surely God is with him. And thus he has proved the truest and most faithful witness for God that could have been found. There was no mistaking him. There was no misapprehending of his testimony. His deeds might not be many; his words might be fewer than his deeds: his public life might have little breadth or magnitude, but he has given forth a testimony for God more decided and more *telling* than that of a hundred others whose names have been honoured among the children of men.¹

In another way, also, all is not hidden in the life of such a man. The hosts of darkness compass him about. They see him and know him, even when man sees and knows him not. They put forth the utmost of their craft and power to ensnare or to overcome him. He is but one, and they are legion. They know no pity, they

xxxii PREFACE.

allow no breathing, they give no quarter. The strife is awfully unequal, yet it must not be fled from. One against thousands, and these mysteriously invisible, each one mightier far than he! Help from his fellow saints he cannot look for. They have their own battles to fight, and, besides, their help would avail nothing. He must fight, and he must overcome alone.² Wo to him if he blanches or yields one footbreadth, or even entertains the thought of fleeing, or proposing terms of peace! It is not the fight of a day, it is the fight of years, —the protracted

¹ It has been said by an anonymous literary writer, in reference to the really great thinkers of the race, that “the mill-streams which turn the wheels of the world, rise in solitary places.” How much more true of such men as Brainerd! From their solitudes there comes forth a power of which the world knows nothing. Yet it is all-pervading, all-influential. It looks like human, yet it is divine. It is man wielding the invisible power of God.

² Take Brainerd’s own description of this solitary conflict: —“I live in the most lonely, melancholy *desert*, about eighteen miles from Albany (for it was not thought best that I should go to Delaware river, as I believe I hinted to you in a letter from New York). I board with a poor Scotchman; his wife can talk scarce any English. My *diet* consists mostly of hasty-pudding, boiled corn, and bread baked in the ashes, and sometimes a little meat and butter. My *lodging* is a little heap of straw, laid upon some boards, a little way from the ground; for it is a log-room, without any floor, that I lodge in. My work is exceedingly hard and difficult; I travel on foot a mile and half, the worst of way, almost daily, and back again; for I live so far from my Indians. I have not seen an English person this month. These and many other circumstances as uncomfortable, attend me; and yet my *spiritual conflicts* and *distresses* so far *exceed* all these that I scarce think of them, or hardly mind but that I am entertained in the most sumptuous manner. The Lord grant that I may learn to ‘endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ!’”

battle of a lifetime; but he fights it well. He conquers. It has been a desperate strife, but he has “overcome through the blood of the Lamb.” And what glory does God now receive before these defeated enemies, —in the face of these legions of hell, —by such a victory! They who are passing smoothly over a summer sea or a sunny earth, untried, untempted, unbuffeted, —whose religion has in it nothing of the battle-field, only of the parade, —may not understand this; but they who have known the terrors of the warfare and the joy of the triumph, they who have entered single-handed into combat with the rulers of the darkness of this world, and, in coming off more than conquerors, have learned to ascribe the glory to Him in whose name and might they overcame, can understand it well.

PREFACE. xxxiii

There is yet another way in which all is not hidden, even in such a life as Brainerd’s. No doubt that part of the life that is turned earthwards or manwards, that part which man can see and know, is much veiled, with little else, perhaps, than occasional beams straying through. But let us not forget that there is another part or aspect of his character, —that which looks heavenward and God ward; and, whatever may be the dimness of the earthward aspect, the heavenward one is unutterably bright. And that brightness has its witnesses, —witnesses who can see it all and appreciate it all, the angelic hosts, who “desire to look into these things,” and to whom, as we read, is “made known, *by the church*, the manifold wisdom of God.” The under part of the clouds that float above us in the firmament does oftentimes cheer us with its brightness; but what is that brightness, as it shows itself to us who are looking up to it on earth, compared with the burst of radiance which the upper surface of these same clouds must present to the eye that can look down upon it all from above! So with the saint’s life. It is only its under side, its darker aspect, that we see. Its upper side, its brighter aspect, is turned to the gaze of heaven, and is always visible to the dwellers in the upper kingdom. They see it and stand in awe. They see it and praise. They see it and love. They see it, and learn the depths of the riches of the wisdom, and knowledge, and grace, of a redeeming God. What inconceivable glory may thus go up to God from the unseen life of the saint, before that “innumerable company of angels!”

Such was Brainerd’s life. While here, it was but its lower surface that men saw, —its upper surface was only visible from above. But now that he has gone to be with Christ, that upper surface is now turned to us, and shines down on us with unhindered radiance. His Diary laid before men, is the full unveiling of that which was once hidden, so that in it we now can see what, during his earthly sojourn, could be seen only from within the veil.

xxxiv PREFACE.

His life was not a great life, as men use the word. It was no life of vulgar incident or exciting changes. It was not coloured with romance or sentiment. It had no originality about it, save that of acting out all that he believed. It was not made up of many parts, nor filled with varied doings, nor diversified with manifold schemes. It was thus far a monotonous life —a life of one plan, expending itself in the fulfilment of one great aim, and in the doing of one great

deed —serving God, so that at its close he could say, “I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”¹

He walked this earth as one hastening to be done with it, yet glad while in it to be spent for God. And though, in some respects, his life does look like an unfinished one —an unfulfilled career —yet he did marvellously much in little time, and he has left behind him, in his example, a quickening influence which, during a century, has wrought blessedly in many a soul. His mantle may not have been caught, but the fragrance of his name and memory has come with a stimulating power, we may say, to thousands.

This is something worth living for. How great the honour and the joy!

No man who lives near to God lives in vain. He may not be conscious of doing any thing directly for others; yet his life is putting forth a power and an influence which he understands not. Unknown to him—

PREFACE. xxxv

self, he is doing much for God and for his fellow-men. In his retirement, he speaks, and is heard, though he knows it not. The *witness-bearing of the closet*, is a thing little understood; but it is not the less true on that account. It is little believed in; but its efficacy is not the less mighty. It is like one of those secret influences in nature, which are not the less powerful because unheeded or not easily accounted for. And then, when the closet-testimony is arrested here by the translation of the witness to his home within the veil, it is renewed in another form. The fragrance diffuses itself wider than in his lifetime. It becomes more largely known how he lived and how he walked, and how he communed with God. He has departed, but his testimony has not departed with him. It survives, nay, seems to acquire new power, as well as extend itself over a more ample circle. His memory lives after him, and ceases not to speak and operate for ages.

The life of the loneliest saint thus becomes at length *manifested*. It shines out and is seen. That which had here but little of attractive lustre, becomes a many-sided gem, sparkling with heavenly brilliance. The ancients had many a fable about their heroes being caught up from earth and transformed into stars. In the case of such a saint as Brainerd, this is no fable, but a truth and a fact. He walks with God on earth —it may be briefly, or it may be through a long life of prayer and toil; and when he passes away to the nearer presence above, it is not to perish and be forgotten, nor is it simply to be “tad in everlasting remembrance;” it is to have the veil removed from his life, and its true glory unfolded, —to become a star to men for ever.

¹ Thus he spoke from his deathbed “I was born on a *Sabbath-day*; and I have reason to think I was new-born on a *Sabbath-day*; and I hope I shall die on this *Sabbath-day*. I shall look upon it as a favour, if it may be the will of God that it should be so. I long for the time. *O, why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariot?* I am very willing to part with all: I am. willing to part with my dear brother John, and never to see him again, to go to be for ever with the Lord. O, when I go there, how will God’s dear church on earth be upon my mind! “Afterwards, the same morning, being asked how he did-, he answered, “I am almost in eternity: I long to be there. My work is done, I have done with all my friends, all the world is nothing to me. I long to be in heaven, *praising and glorifying God* with the holy *angels*, all my desire is to glorify God.”

THE LIFE OF DAVID BRAINERD.

PART I.

FROM HIS BIRTH, TO THE TIME WHEN HE BEGAN TO STUDY FOR THE MINISTRY.

DAVID BRAINERD was born April 20, 1718, at Haddam, a town belonging to the county of Hartford, in the colony of Connecticut, New England. His father, who died when David was about nine years of age, was the worshipful Hezekiah Brainerd, one of his Majesty's council for that colony. His mother was Mrs. Dorothy Hobart, daughter to the Rev. Jeremiah Hobart, who preached for some time at Topsfield, and then removed to Hempstead on Long-Island, and afterwards removed from Hempstead (by reason of numbers turning Quakers, and many others being so irreligious, that they would do nothing towards the support of the ministry), and came and settled in the work of the ministry at Haddam, where he died in the 85th year of his age; of whom it is remarkable, that he went to the public worship in the forenoon, and died in his chair between meetings. And this reverend gentleman was son of the Rev. Peter Hobart, who was first minister of the gospel at Hingham, Norfolk, in England; and, by reason of the persecution of the Puritans, removed with his family to New England, and was settled in the ministry at Hingham, in the Massachusetts. His wife (David Brainerd's grandmother) was daughter to the Rev Samuel Whiting, minister of the gospel, first at Boston in Lincolnshire, and afterwards at Lynn in

2 THE LIFE OF

Massachusetts, New England. He had three sons that were ministers of the gospel.

David Brainerd was the third son of his parents. They had five sons and four daughters. Their eldest son was Hezekiah Brainerd, Esq., a justice of the peace, and for several years a representative of the town of Haddam, in the general assembly of Connecticut; the second was the Rev. Nehemiah Brainerd, a worthy minister of Eastbury in Connecticut, who died of consumption, Nov. 10, 1742; the fourth was Mr. John Brainerd, who succeeded his brother David, as missionary to the Indians, and pastor of the same church of Christian Indians in New Jersey; and the fifth was Israel, student at Yale college, in Newhaven, who died shortly after his brother David. Mrs. Brainerd, having lived several years a widow, died when David was about fourteen years of age; so that in his youth he was left both fatherless and motherless. "What account he has given of himself, and his own life, may be seen in what follows:

I was, I think, from my youth, something sober, and inclined rather to melancholy, than the contrary extreme; but do not remember any thing of conviction of sin worthy of remark, till I was, I believe, about seven or eight years of age; when I became something concerned for my soul, and terrified at the thoughts of death, and was driven to the performance of duties; but it appeared a melancholy business, and destroyed my eagerness for play. And alas! this religious concern was but short-lived. However, I sometimes attended to secret prayer, and thus lived at "ease in Zion, without God in the world," and without much concern, as I

remember, till I was above thirteen years of age. 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 Chris-

DAVID BRAINERD. 3

tian." I was also exceedingly distressed and melancholy at the death of my mother, in March 1732. But afterwards my religious concern began to decline, and I by degrees fell back into a considerable degree of security, though I still attended secret prayer frequently.

About the 15th of April 1733, I removed from my father's house to East Haddam, where I spent four years, but still "without God in the world;" though, for the most part, I went a round of secret duty. I was not exceedingly addicted to young company, or frolics (as it is called): but this I know, that when I did go into company, I never returned from a frolic in my life with so good a conscience as I went with; it always added new guilt to me, and made me afraid to come to the throne of grace, and spoiled those good frames I was wont sometimes to please myself with. But, alas! all my good frames were but self-righteousness, not founded on a desire for the glory of God.

About the latter end of April 1737, being full nineteen years of age, I removed to Durham, and began to work on my farm, and so continued the year out, or till I was near twenty years old; frequently longing, from a natural inclination, after a liberal education. When I was about twenty years of age, I applied myself to study; and some time before, was more than ordinarily excited to and in duty: but now engaged more than ever in the duties of religion. I became very strict, and watchful over my thoughts, words, and actions, and thought I must be sober indeed, because I designed to devote myself to the ministry; and imagined I did dedicate myself to the Lord.

Some time in April 1738, I went to Mr. Fiske's, and lived with him during his life.¹ And I remember he advised me wholly to abandon young company, and associate myself with grave elderly people; which counsel I followed, and my manner of life was now exceeding regular, and full of religion, such as it was; for I read my Bible more than twice through in less than a year —I spent much time every day in secret prayer, and other secret duties —I gave great attention to the Word preached, and endeavoured to my utmost to retain it. So much concerned was I about religion, that I agreed with some young persons to meet privately on Sabbath evenings for religious exercises, and thought myself sincere in these duties: and after our meeting was ended, I used to repeat the discourses of the day to myself, and re-

¹ Mr. Fiske was the pastor of the Church in Haddam.

4 THE LIFE OF

collect what I could, though sometimes it was very late in the night. Again on Monday mornings I used sometimes to recollect the same sermons.” And I had sometimes considerable movings of affection in duties, and much pleasure, and had many thoughts of joining to the church. In short, I had a very good outside, and rested entirely on my duties, though I was not sensible of it.

After Mr. Fiske’s death, I proceeded in my learning with my brother, and was still very constant in religious duties, and often wondered at the levity of professors; it was a trouble to me that they were so careless in religious matters. Thus I proceeded a considerable length on a *self-righteous* foundation, and should have been entirely lost and undone, had not the mere mercy of God prevented.

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 pretences 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 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

DAVID BRAINERD. 5

and foundation of my hope was some imagination of *goodness* in my heart meltings, 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 nattered 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

Some time in February 1738-9, I set apart a day for secret fasting and prayer, and spent the day in almost incessant cries to God for mercy, that he would open my eyes to see the evil of sin, and the way of life by Jesus Christ. And God was pleased that day to make considerable discoveries of my heart to me. But still I *trusted* in all the duties I performed; though there was no manner of *goodness* in the duties I then performed —there being no manner of respect to the glory of God in them, nor any such principle in my heart —yet God was pleased to make my endeavours that day a means to show me my *helplessness* in some measure.

Sometimes I was greatly *encouraged*, and imagined that God loved me and was pleased with me, and thought I should soon be reconciled to God; while the whole was founded on mere *presumption*, arising from enlargement in duty, or flowing of affections, or some good resolutions, and the like. And when, at times, great distress began to arise, on a sight of my vileness and nakedness, and inability to deliver myself from a sovereign God, I used to put off the discovery, as what I could not bear. Once, I remember, a terrible pang of distress seized me, and the thoughts of renouncing myself, and standing naked before God, stripped of all goodness, were so dreadful to me, that I was ready to say to them as Felix to Paul, “Go thy way for this time.” Thus, though I daily longed for greater conviction of sin —supposing that I must see more of my dreadful state in order to a remedy —yet when the discoveries of my vile hellish heart were made to me, the sight was so dreadful, and showed me so plainly my exposedness to damnation, that

6 THE LIFE OF

I could not endure it. I constantly strove after whatever *qualifications* I imagined others obtained before their reception of Christ, in order to recommend me to his favour. Sometimes I felt the power of a *hard heart*, and supposed it must be *softened* before Christ would accept of me, and when I felt any meltings of heart, I hoped now the work was almost done, and hence, when my distress still remained, I was wont to murmur at God’s dealings with me, and thought, when others felt their hearts softened, God showed them mercy, but my distress remained still.

Sometimes I grew *remiss* and *sluggish*, without any great convictions of sin, for a considerable time together; but after such a season, convictions sometimes seized me more violently. One night, I remember in particular, when I was walking solitarily abroad, I had opened to me such a view of my sin, that I feared the ground would cleave asunder under my feet, and become my grave, and send my soul quick into hell, before I could get home. And though I was forced to go to bed, lest my distress should be discovered by others, which I much feared, yet I scarce durst sleep at all, for I thought it would be a great wonder if I should be out of hell in the morning. And though my distress was sometimes thus great, yet I greatly dreaded the loss of convictions, and returning back to a state of carnal security, and to my former insensibility of impending wrath; which made me exceeding exact in my behaviour, lest I should stifle the motions of God’s Spirit. When at any time I took a view of

my convictions of my own sinfulness, and thought the degree of them to be considerable, I was wont to trust in my convictions; but this confidence, and the hopes that arose in me from it (of soon making some notable advances towards deliverance), would ease my mind, and I soon became more senseless and remiss. But then, again, when I discerned my convictions to grow languid, and I thought them about to, leave me, this immediately alarmed and distressed me. Sometimes I expected to take a large step, and get very far towards conversion, by some particular opportunity or means I had in view.

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

DAVID BRAINERD. 7

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 for ever, 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 thereupon to beg and plead for mercy to me. But when I found no relief, and was still oppressed with guilt and fears of wrath,

8 THE LIFE OF

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

While I was in this distressed, bewildered, and tumultuous state of mind, the *corruption* of my heart was especially *irritated* with these things following:

1. The *strictness* of the divine *law*. For I found it w r as impossible for me (after my utmost pains) to answer the demands of it. I often made new resolutions, and as often broke them. I imputed the whole to carelessness and the want of being more watchful, and used to call myself a fool for my negligence. But when, upon a stronger resolution, and greater endeavours, and close application of myself to fasting and prayer, I found all attempts fail, then I quarrelled with the law of God as unreasonably rigid. I thought if it extended only to my outward actions and behaviours, I could bear with it: but I found it condemned me for my evil thoughts and sins of my heart, which I could not possibly prevent. I was extremely loath to give out and own my utter helplessness in this “matter: but, after repeated disappointments, thought that rather than perish I could do a little more still, especially if such and such circumstances might but attend my endeavours and strivings; I hoped that I should strive more earnestly than ever, if the matter came to extremity (though I never could find the time to do my utmost in the manner I intended); and this hope of future more favourable circumstances, and of doing something great hereafter, kept me from utter despair in myself, and from seeing myself fallen into the hands of a sovereign God, and dependent on nothing but free and boundless grace.

2. Another thing was, that *faith alone* was the *condition* of salvation, and that God would not come down to lower terms, that he would not promise life and salvation upon my sincere and hearty prayers and endeavours. That word (Mark xvi. 16), “He that believeth nor shall be damned,” cut off all hope there: and I found faith was the sovereign

DAVID BRAINERD.

gift of God, that I could not get it as of myself, and could not oblige God to bestow it upon me by any of my performances. (Eph. ii. 1, 8.) “This,” I was ready to say, “is a hard saying, who can hear it? “I could not bear that all I had done should stand for mere nothing, who had been very conscientious in duty, and had been exceeding religious a great while, and had (as I thought) done much more than many others that had obtained mercy. I confessed indeed the vileness of my duties; but then, what made them at that time seem vile was my wandering thoughts in them; not because I was all over defiled like a devil, and the principle corrupt from whence they flowed, so that I could not possibly do any thing that was good. And therefore I called what I did by the name of honest faithful endeavours, and could not bear it that God had made no promises of salvation to them.

3. Another thing was, that I could not find out *what* faith was, or *what* it was to believe and come to Christ. 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 any thing 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.

4. Another thing that I found a great inward opposition to, was the *sovereignty* of God. I could not bear that it should be wholly at God's pleasure to save or damn me, just as he would. That passage, Rom. ix. 11-23, was a constant vexation to me, especially verse 21. The reading or meditating on this always destroyed my seeming good frames. When I thought I was almost humbled, and almost resigned to God's sovereignty, the reading or thinking on this passage would make my enmity against the sovereignty of God appear. And when I came to reflect on my inward enmity

10 THE LIFE OF

and blasphemy that arose on this occasion, I was the more afraid of God, and driven farther from any hopes of reconciliation with him; and it gave me such a dreadful view of myself, that I dreaded more than ever to see myself in God's hands, and at his sovereign disposal; and it made me more opposite than ever to submit to his sovereignty—for I thought God designed my damnation.

All this time the Spirit of God was powerfully at work with me, and I was inwardly pressed to relinquish all *self-confidence*, all hopes of ever helping myself by any means whatsoever; and the conviction of my *lost* estate was sometimes so clear and manifest before my eyes, that it was as if it had been declared to me, in so many words—"It is done, it is done, it is for ever impossible to deliver yourself." For about three or four days, my soul was thus distressed, especially at some turns, when for a few moments I seemed to myself lost and undone, but then would shrink back immediately from the sight, because I dared not venture myself into the hands of God, as wholly helpless, and at the disposal of his sovereign pleasure. I dared not see that important truth concerning myself, that I was dead in trespasses and sins. But when I had as it were thrust away these views of myself at any time, I felt distressed to have the same discoveries of myself again—for I greatly feared being given over of God to final stupidity. When I thought of putting it off to a *more convenient season*, the conviction was so close and powerful with regard to the present time, that it was the best time, and probably the *only* time, that I dared not put it off. It was the sight of the truth concerning myself—*truth* respecting my state, as a creature fallen and alienated from God, and that consequently could make no demands on God for mercy, but must subscribe to the

absolute sovereignty of the Divine Being —it was the sight of the *truth*, I say, that my soul shrank away from, and trembled to think of beholding. Thus, “he that doth evil” (as all unregenerate men continually do) “hates the light of truth,” neither cares to *come to it*, because it will *reprove his deeds*, and show him his just deserts. (John iii. 20.) And though, some time before, I had taken much pains (as I thought) to submit to the sovereignty of God, yet I mistook the thing, and did not once imagine that seeing and being made experimentally sensible of this truth —which my soul now so much dreaded and trembled at a sense of — was the frame of soul that I had been so earnest in pursuit of heretofore: for I had ever

DAVID BRAINERD. 11

hoped, that when I had attained to that humiliation which I supposed necessary to go before faith, then it would not be fair for God to *cast me off*; but now I saw it was so far from any goodness in me, to own myself spiritually dead and destitute of all goodness, that, on the contrary, my mouth would be for ever *stopped* by it; and it looked as dreadful to me to see myself and the relation I stood in to God, as a sinner and a criminal, and he a great Judge and Sovereign, as it would be to a poor trembling creature to venture off some high precipice. And hence I put it off for a minute or two, and tried for better circumstances to do it in. Either I must read a passage or two, or pray first, or something of the like nature, or else put off my submission to God’s sovereignty, with an objection that I did not know *how* to submit. But the truth was, I could see no safety in owning myself in the hands of a sovereign God, and that I could lay no claim to any thing better than damnation.

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 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 for ever impossible for me to do any thing 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 for ever 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 for ever 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

12 THE LIFE OF

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, &c., 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 any thing *for* God, I had no claim to lay to any thing *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 endeavouring

DAVID BRAINERD. 13

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, some where away in the third heavens, or any thing 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 any thing 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 all* 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 every thing 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

14 THE LIFE OF

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.

About the latter end of August, I again fell under great darkness; it seemed as if the presence of God was *clean gone for ever*; though I was not so much distressed about my spiritual state, as at my being shut out from God's presence, as I then sensibly was. But it pleased the Lord to return graciously to me, not long after.

In the beginning of September I went to college,¹ and entered there, but with some degree of reluctancy, fearing lest I should not be able to lead a life of strict religion, in the midst of so many temptations. After this, in the vacancy, before I went to tarry at college, it pleased God to visit my soul with clearer manifestations of himself and his grace. I was spending some time in prayer and self-examination, and the Lord by his grace so shined into my heart, that I enjoyed full assurance of his favour for that time, and my soul was unspeakably refreshed with divine and heavenly enjoyments. At this time especially, as well as some others, sundry passages of God's Word opened to my soul with divine clearness, power, and sweetness, so as to appear exceeding precious, and with clear and certain evidence of its being the *Word of God*. I enjoyed considerable sweetness in religion all the winter following.

In Jan. 1739-40, the measles spread much in college, and I having taken the distemper, went home to Haddam. But some days before I was taken sick, I seemed to be greatly deserted, and my soul mourned the absence of the Comforter exceedingly: it seemed to me all comfort

¹ Yale College in New- Haven.

was for ever gone; I prayed and cried to God for help, yet found no present comfort or relief. But, through divine goodness, a night or two before I was taken ill, while I was walking alone in a very retired place, and engaged in meditation and prayer, I enjoyed a sweet refreshing visit, as I trust, from above, so

DAVID BRAINERD. 15

that my soul was raised far above the fears of death; indeed I rather longed for death, than feared it. O, how much more refreshing this one season was, than all the pleasures and delights that earth can afford! After a day or two, I was taken with the measles, and was very ill indeed, so that I almost despaired of life, but had no distressing fears of death at all. However, through divine goodness I soon recovered: yet, by reason of hard and close studies, and being much exposed on account of my freshmanship, I had but little time for spiritual duties; my soul often mourned for want of more time and opportunity to be alone with God. In the spring and summer following, I had better advantages for retirement, and enjoyed more comfort in religion. Though indeed my ambition in my studies greatly wronged the activity and vigour of my spiritual life, yet this was usually the case with me, that “in the multitude of my thoughts within me, God’s comforts *principally* delighted my soul.” These were my greatest consolations day by day.

One day I remember in particular (I think it was in June 1740), I walked to a considerable distance from the college, in the fields alone at noon, and in prayer found such unspeakable sweetness and delight in God, that I thought if I must continue still in this evil world, I wanted always to be there, to behold God’s glory: my soul dearly loved all mankind, and longed exceedingly that they should enjoy what I enjoyed. It seemed to be a little resemblance of heaven.

On Lord’s day, July 6, being sacrament day, I found some divine life and spiritual refreshment in that holy ordinance. When I came from the Lord’s table, I wondered how my fellow-students could live as I was sensible most did. Next Lord’s day, July 13, I had some special sweetness in religion. Again, Lord’s day, July 20, my soul was in a sweet and precious frame.

Some time in August following, I became so weakly and disordered, by too close application to my studies, that I was advised by my tutor to go home, and disengage my mind from study, as much as I could; for I was grown so weak, that I began to spit blood. I took his advice, and endeavoured to lay aside my studies. But being brought very low, I looked death in the face more steadfastly, and the Lord was pleased to give me renewedly a sweet sense and relish of divine things.

Sat. Oct. 18 —In my morning devotions, my soul was exceedingly melted for, and bitterly mourned over, my ex-

16 THE LIFE OF

ceeding *sinfulness and vileness*. I never before had felt so pungent and deep a sense of the odious nature of sin, as at this time. My soul was then unusually carried forth in love to God, and had a lively sense of God's love to me; and this love and hope, at that time, cast out fear. Both morning and evening I spent some time in self-examination, to find the truth of grace, as also my fitness to approach to God at his table the next day; and through infinite grace, found the Holy Spirit influencing my soul with love to God, as a witness within myself.

Lord's day, Oct. 19. —In the morning I felt my soul *hungering and thirsting after righteousness*. In the forenoon, while I was looking on the sacramental elements, and thinking that Jesus Christ would soon be "set forth crucified before me," my soul was filled with light and love, so that I was almost in an ecstasy: my body was so weak, I could scarcely stand. I felt at the same time an exceeding tenderness and most fervent love towards all mankind, so that my soul and all the powers of it seemed, as it were, to melt into softness and sweetness. But in the season of the communion, there was some abatement of this sweet life and fervour. This love and joy cast out fear, and my soul longed for perfect grace and glory. This sweet frame continued till the evening, when my soul was sweetly spiritual in secret duties.

Mon., Oct. 20. —I again found the sweet assistance of the Holy Spirit in secret duties, both morning and evening, and life and comfort in religion through the whole day.

Tues., Oct. 21. —I had likewise experience of the goodness of God in "shedding abroad his love in my heart," and giving me delight and consolation in religious duties; and all the remaining part of the week, my soul seemed to be taken up with divine things. I now so longed after God, and to be freed from sin, that when I felt myself recovering, and thought I must return to college again, which had proved so hurtful to my spiritual interest the year past, I could not but be grieved, and I thought I had much rather have died; for it distressed me to think of getting away from God. But before I went, I enjoyed several other sweet and precious seasons of communion with God (particularly October 30 and November 4), wherein my soul enjoyed unspeakable comfort.

I returned to college about November 6, and through the goodness of God, felt the power of religion almost daily, for the space of six weeks.

DAVID BRAINERD. 17

Nov. 28. —In my evening devotion, I enjoyed precious discoveries of God, and was unspeakably refreshed with that passage, Heb. xii. 22-24, so that my soul longed to wing away for the paradise of God; I longed to be conformed to God in all things. A day or two after, I enjoyed much of the light of God's countenance, most of the day, and my soul rested in God.

Tues., Dec. 9. —I was in a comfortable frame of soul most of the day, but especially in evening devotions, when God was pleased wonderfully to assist and strengthen me, so that I thought nothing should ever move me from the love of God in Christ Jesus my Lord. O! *one hour with God* infinitely exceeds all the pleasures and delights of this lower world!

Some time towards the latter end of January 1740-41, I grew more *cold* and *dull* in matters of religion, by means of my old temptation, viz. ambition in my studies. But through divine goodness, a great and general awakening spread itself over the college, about the latter end of February, in which I was much quickened, and more abundantly engaged in religion.

This awakening here spoken of, was at the beginning of that extraordinary religious commotion through the land, which is fresh in every one's memory. It was for a time very great and general at New-Haven, and the college had no small share in it: the students in general became serious, and many of them remarkably so, and much engaged in the concerns of their eternal salvation. And however undesirable the issue of the awakenings of that day have appeared in many others, there have been manifestly happy and abiding effects of the impressions then made on the minds of many of the members of that college. And by all that I can learn concerning Mr. Brainerd, there can be no reason to doubt but that he had much of God's gracious presence, and of the lively actings of true grace, at that time: but yet he was afterwards abundantly sensible, that his religious experiences and affections at that time were not free from a corrupt mixture, nor his conduct to be acquitted from many things that were imprudent and blameable; which he greatly lamented himself, and was willing that others should forget, that none might make an ill improvement of such an example. And therefore, although in the time of it he kept a constant diary containing a very particular account of what passed

18 THE LIFE OF

from day to day for the next thirteen months (from the latter end of January 1740-41 fore-mentioned), in two small books, which he called the two first volumes of his diary, — following the account before given of his convictions, conversion, and consequent comfort, —yet, when he lay on his deathbed, he gave orders (unknown to me till after his death) that these two volumes should be destroyed, and in the beginning of the third book of his diary, he wrote thus (by the hand of another, he not being able to write himself), “The two preceding volumes, immediately following the account of the author's conversion, are lost. If any are desirous to know how the author lived, in general, during that space of time, let them read the first thirty pages of this volume, where they will find something of a specimen of his ordinary manner of living, through that whole space of time, which was about thirteen months, excepting that here he was more refined from some *imprudencies* and *indecent heats*, than there; but the spirit of devotion running through the whole was the same.”

It could not be otherwise than that one whose heart had been so prepared and drawn to God, as Mr. Brainerd's had been, should be mightily enlarged, animated, and engaged at the sight of such an alteration made in the college, the town, and land, and so great an appearance of men's reforming their lives, and turning from their profaneness and immorality, to seriousness and concern for their salvation, and of religion's reviving and flourishing almost every where. But as an intemperate, imprudent zeal, and a degree of enthusiasm soon crept in, and mingled itself with that revival of religion; and so great and general an awakening being quite a new thing in the land, at least as to all the living inhabitants of it —neither people nor ministers had learned thoroughly to distinguish between solid religion and its

delusive counterfeits. Even many ministers of the gospel, of long standing and the best reputation, were for a time overpowered with the glaring appearances of the latter. And therefore surely it was not to be wondered at that young Brainerd, but a sophomore at college, should be so; who was not only young in years, but very young in religion and experience, and had had but little opportunity for the study of divinity, and still less for observation of the circumstances and events of such an extraordinary state of things. In these disadvantageous circumstances, Brainerd had the unhappiness to have a tincture of that intemperate, indiscreet zeal, which was at that time

DAVID BRAINERD. 19

too prevalent; and was led, from his high opinion of others that he looked upon as better than himself, into such errors as were really contrary to the habitual temper of his mind. One instance of his misconduct at that time gave great offence to the rulers of the college, even to that degree that they expelled him the society; which it is necessary should here be particularly related, with its circumstances.

In the time of the awakening at college, there were several religious students that associated themselves one with another for mutual conversation and assistance in spiritual things, who were wont freely to open themselves one to another, as special and intimate friends. Brainerd was one of this company. And it once happened, that he and two or three more of these his intimate friends were in the hall together, after Mr. Whittelsey, one of the tutors, had been to prayer there with the scholars; no other person now remaining in the hall, but Brainerd and these his companions. Mr. Whittelsey having been unusually pathetic in his prayer, one of Brainerd's friends on this occasion asked him what he thought of Mr. Whittelsey; he made answer, "He has no more grace than this chair." One of the freshmen happening at that time to be near the hall (though not in the room) overheard those words of his, though he heard no name mentioned, and knew not who the person was that was thus censured. And he informed a certain woman that belonged to the town, telling her his own suspicion, viz. that he believed Brainerd said this of some one or other of the rulers of the college. Whereupon she went and informed the rector, who sent for this freshman, and examined him; and he told the rector the words that he heard Brainerd utter, and informed him who were in the room with him at that time. Upon which the rector sent for them: they were very backward to inform against their friend, of that which they looked upon as private conversation, and especially as none but they had heard or knew of whom he had uttered those words; yet the rector compelled them to declare what he said, and of whom he said it. Brainerd looked on himself as greatly abused in the management of this affair, and thought what he said in private was injuriously extorted from his friends, and that then it was injuriously required of him (as it was wont to be of such as had been guilty of some open notorious crime) to make a public confession, and to humble himself before the whole college in the hall, for what he had said

20 THE LIFE OF

only in private conversation. He not complying with this demand, and having gone once to the separate meeting at New-Haven, when forbidden by the rector, and also having been accused by one person of saying concerning the rector, that he wondered he did not expect to

drop down dead for fining the scholars who followed Mr. Tennent to Milford, though there was no proof of it (and Mr. Brainerd ever professed that he did not remember his saying any thing to that purpose) —for these things he was expelled the college.

Now, how far the circumstances and exigences of that day might justify such great severity in the governors of the college, I will not undertake to determine; it being my aim, not to bring reproach on the authority of the college, but only to do justice to the memory of a person, whom I think to be eminently one of those whose *memory is blessed*. The reader will see, in the sequel of the story of Mr. Brainerd's life,¹ what his own thoughts afterwards were of his behaviour in these things, and in how Christian a manner he conducted himself with respect to this affair: though he ever, as long as he lived, supposed himself much abused in the management of it, and in what he suffered in it.

His expulsion was in the winter anno 1741-2, while he was in his third year in college.

¹ Particularly under the date Wednesday, Sept. 14, 1743.

PART II.

FROM ABOUT THE TIME THAT HE FIRST BEGAN TO DEVOTE HIMSELF MORE ESPECIALLY TO THE STUDY OF DIVINITY, TILL HE WAS EXAMINED AND LICENSED TO PREACH.

Mr. BRAINERD, the spring after his expulsion, went to live with the Rev. Mr. Mills of Ripton, to follow his studies with him, in order to his being fitted for the work of the ministry; where he spent the greater part of the time till the association of ministers belonging to the eastern district of the county of Fairfield in Connecticut licensed him to preach; but frequently rode to visit the neighbouring ministers, particularly Mr. Cooke of Stratfield, Mr. Graham of Southbury, and Mr. Bellamy of Bethlehem.

DAVID BRAINERD. 21

Here (at Mr. Mills's) he began the third book of his diary, in which the account he wrote of himself is as follows:

Thurs., Ap. 1, 1742. —I seem to be declining with respect to my life and warmth in divine things; had not so free access to God in prayer as usual of late. O that God would humble me deeply in the dust before him! I deserve hell every day for not loving my Lord more, “who has (I trust) loved me, and given himself for me;” and every time I am enabled to exercise any grace renewedly, I am renewedly indebted to the God of all grace for special assistance. “Where then is boasting? “Surely “it is excluded,” when we think how we are dependent on God for the being and every act of grace. O, if ever I get to heaven, it will be because God will, and nothing else; for I never did any thing of myself, but get away from God! My soul will be astonished at the unsearchable riches of divine grace, when I arrive at the mansions which the blessed Saviour is gone before to prepare.

Fri., Ap. 2. —In the afternoon I felt something sweetly in secret prayer —much resigned, calm, and serene. What are all the storms of this lower world, if Jesus by his Spirit does but come *walking on the seas!* Some time past, I had much pleasure in the prospect of the heathen's being brought home to Christ, and desired that the Lord would improve *me* in that work: but now my soul more frequently desires to die, *to be with Christ*. O that my soul were wrapt up in divine love, and my longing desires after God increased! In the evening, was refreshed in prayer with the hopes of the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world.

Sat., Ap. 3. —Was very much amiss this morning, and had an ill night last night. I thought if God would take me to himself now, my soul would exceedingly rejoice. O that I may be always humble and resigned to God, and that God would cause my soul to be more fixed on himself, that I may be more fitted both for doing and suffering!

Lords-day, Ap. 4. —My heart was wandering and lifeless. In the evening God gave me faith in prayer, and made my soul melt in some measure, and gave me to taste a divine sweetness.

my blessed God! Let me climb up near to him, and love, and long, and plead, and wrestle, and reach, and stretch after him, and for deliverance from the body of sin and death. Alas! my soul mourned to think I should

22 THE LIFE OF

ever lose sight of its beloved again. “O come, Lord Jesus. Amen.”

On the evening of the next day, he complains that he seemed to be void of all relish for divine things, felt much of the prevalence of corruption, and saw in himself a disposition to all manner of sin; which brought a very great gloom on his mind, and cast him down into the depths of melancholy —so that he speaks of himself as astonished, amazed, having no comfort, being filled with horror, seeing no comfort in heaven or earth.

Tues., Ap. 6. —I walked out this morning to the same place where I was last night, and felt something as I did then; but was something relieved by reading some passages in my diary, and seemed to feel as if I might pray to the great God again with freedom; but was suddenly struck with a damp, from the sense I had of my own vileness. Then I cried to God to wash my soul, and cleanse me from my exceeding filthiness, to give me repentance and pardon; and it began to be something sweet to pray. And I could think of undergoing the greatest sufferings in the cause of Christ with pleasure, and found myself willing (if God should so order it) to suffer banishment from my native land, among the heathen, that I might do something for their souls’ salvation, in distresses and deaths of any kind. Then God gave me to wrestle earnestly for others, for the kingdom of Christ in the world, and for dear Christian friends. I felt weaned from the world, and from my own reputation amongst men, willing to be despised, and to be a gazing-stock for the world to behold. It is impossible for me to express how I then felt: I had not much joy, but some sense of the majesty of God, which made me as it were tremble: I saw myself mean and vile, which made me more willing that God should do what he would with me; it was all infinitely reasonable.

Wed., Ap. 7. —I had not so much fervency, but felt something as I did yesterday morning, in prayer. At noon I spent some time in secret, with some fervency, but scarce any sweetness; and felt very dull in the evening.

Thurs., Ap. 8. —Had raised hopes to-day respecting the heathen. O that God would bring in great numbers of them to Jesus Christ! I cannot but hope I shall see that glorious day. Every thing in this world seems exceeding vile and little to me. I look so to myself. I had some little dawn of comfort to-day in prayer; but especially to-night I think I

DAVID BRAINERD. 23

had some faith and power of intercession with God, was enabled to plead with God for the growth of grace in myself, and many of the dear children of God then lay with weight upon my soul. Blessed be the Lord! it is good to wrestle for divine blessings.

Fri., Ap. 9. —Most of my time in morning devotion was spent without sensible sweetness, yet I had one delightful prospect of arriving at the heavenly world. I am more amazed than ever at such thoughts, for I see myself infinitely vile and unworthy. I feel very heartless and dull; and though I long for the presence of God, and seem constantly to reach towards God in desires, yet I cannot feel that divine and heavenly sweetness that I used to enjoy. No poor creature stands in need of divine grace more than I, and none abuse it more than I have done, and still do.

Sat., Ap. 10. —Spent much time in secret prayer this morning, and not without some comfort in divine things, and I hope had some faith in exercise: but am so low, and feel so little of the sensible presence of God, that I hardly know what to call faith, and am made to “possess the sins of my youth,” and the dreadful sin of my nature, and am all sin; I cannot think, nor act, but every motion is sin. I feel some faint hopes that God will, of his infinite mercy, return again with showers of converting grace to poor gospel-abusing sinners; and my hopes of being improved in the cause of God, which of late have been almost extinct, seem now a little revived. O that all my late distresses and awful apprehensions might prove but Christ’s school, to make me fit for greater service, by learning me the great lesson of humility!

Lord’s day, Ap. 11. —In the morning felt but little life, excepting that my heart was something drawn out in thankfulness to God for his amazing grace and condescension to me, in past influences and assistances of his Spirit. Afterwards had some sweetness in the thoughts of arriving at the heavenly world. O for the happy day! After public worship God gave me special assistance in prayer; I wrestled with my dear Lord, with much sweetness; and intercession was made a sweet and delightful employment to me. In the evening, as I was viewing the light in the north, was delighted in contemplation on the glorious morning of the resurrection.

Mon., Ap. 12. —This morning the Lord was pleased to lift up the light of his countenance upon me in secret prayer, and made the season very precious to my soul. And though I have been so depressed of late, respecting my hopes of

24 THE LIFE OF

future serviceableness in the cause of God, yet now I had much encouragement respecting that matter. I was specially assisted to intercede and plead for poor souls, and for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom in the world, and for special grace for myself to fit me for special services. I felt exceeding calm, and quite resigned to God, respecting my future improvement, when and where he pleased: my faith lifted me above the world, and removed all those mountains that I could not look over of late: I thought I wanted not the favour of man to lean upon, for I knew Christ’s favour was infinitely better, and that it was no matter *when*, nor *where*, nor *how* Christ should send me, nor what trials he should still exercise me with, if I might be prepared for his work and will. I now found sweetly revived in my mind the wonderful discovery of infinite wisdom in all the dispensations of God towards me, which I had a little before I met with my great trial at college; every thing appeared full of the wisdom of God.

Tues., Ap. 13. —Saw myself to be very mean and vile; wondered at those that showed me respect. Afterwards was something comforted in secret retirement, and was assisted to wrestle with God with some power, spirituality, and sweetness. Blessed be the Lord, he is never unmindful of me, but always sends me needed supplies, and from time to time, when I am like one dead, raises me to life. O that I may never distrust infinite goodness!

Wed., Ap. 14. —My soul longed for communion with Christ, and for the mortification of indwelling corruption, especially spiritual pride. O, there is a sweet day coming, wherein “the weary will be at rest! “My soul has enjoyed much sweetness this day, in the hopes of its speedy arrival.

Thurs., Ap. 15. —My desires apparently centred in God, and I found a sensible attraction of soul after him sundry times to-day: I know *I long for God*, and a conformity to his will in inward purity and holiness, ten thousand times more than for any thing here below.

Fri. and Sat., Ap. 16, 17. —Seldom prayed without some sensible sweetness and joy in the Lord. Sometimes I longed much “to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.” O that God would enable me to grow in grace every day! Alas! my barrenness is such, that God might well say, ““Cut it down.” I am afraid of a dead heart on the Sabbath now begun: O that God would quicken me by his grace!

Lord’s day, Ap. 18. —Retired early this morning into the

DAVID BRAINERD. 25

woods for prayer; had the assistance of God’s Spirit, and faith in exercise, and was enabled to plead with fervency for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom in the world, and to intercede for dear absent friends. At noon, God enabled me to wrestle with him, and to feel (as I trust) the power of divine love in prayer. At night, saw myself infinitely indebted to God, and had” a view of my shortcomings. It seemed to me that I had done as it were nothing for God, and that I never had *lived to him* but a few hours of my life.

Mon., Ap. 19. —I set apart this day for fasting and prayer to God for his grace, especially to prepare me for the work of the ministry, to give me divine aid and direction in my preparations for that great work, and in his own time to “send me into his harvest.” Accordingly, in the morning, endeavoured to plead for the divine presence for the day —and not without some life. In the forenoon, I felt a power of intercession for precious immortal souls, for the advancement of the kingdom of my dear Lord and Saviour in the world, and withal a most sweet resignation, and even consolation and joy, in the thoughts of suffering hardships, distresses, and even death itself, in the promotion of it: and had special enlargement in pleading for the enlightening and conversion of the .poor heathen. In the afternoon, “God was with me of a truth.” O it was blessed company indeed! God enabled me so to agonize in prayer, that I was quite wet with sweat, though in the shade, and the wind cool. My soul was drawn out very much for the world: I grasped for multitudes of souls. I think I had more enlargement for sinners than for the children of God, though I felt as if I could spend my life in cries for both. I enjoyed great sweetness in communion with my dear

Saviour. I think I never in my life felt such an entire weanedness from this world, and so much resigned to God in every thing. O that I may always live to and upon my blessed God! Amen, Amen.

Tues., Ap. 20. —This day I am twenty-four years of age. O how much mercy have I received the year past! How often has God “caused his goodness to pass before me! “And how poorly have I answered the vows I made this time twelvemonth, to be wholly the Lord’s, to be for ever devoted to his service! The Lord help me to live more to his glory for time to come. This has been a sweet, a happy day to me: blessed be God. I think my soul was never so drawn out in intercession for others, as it has been this night. Had a most fervent wrestle with the Lord to-night for my enemies,

26 THE LIFE OF

and I hardly ever so longed to *live to God*, and to be altogether devoted to him; I wanted to wear out my life in his service, and for his glory.

Wed., Ap. 21. —Felt much calmness and resignation, and God again enabled me to wrestle for numbers of souls, and had much fervency in the sweet duty of intercession. I enjoy of late more sweetness in intercession for others than in any other part of prayer. My blessed Lord really lets me “come near to him, and plead with him.”

The frame of mind, and exercises of soul, that he expresses the next three days, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, are much of the same kind with those expressed the two days past.

Lord’s day, Ap. 25. —This morning spent about two hours in secret duties, and was enabled more than ordinarily to agonize for immortal souls. Though it was early in the morning, and the sun scarcely shined at all, yet my body was quite wet with sweat. Felt much pressed now, as frequently of late, to plead for the meekness and calmness of the Lamb of God in my soul; through divine goodness felt much of it this morning. O it is a sweet disposition, heartily to forgive all injuries done us, to wish our greatest enemies as well as we do our own souls! Blessed Jesus, may I daily be more and more conformed to thee! At night was exceedingly melted with divine love, and had some feeling sense of the blessedness of the upper world. Those words hung upon me with much divine sweetness, Ps. lxxxiv. 7, “They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.” O the *near access* that God sometimes gives us in our addresses to him! This may well be termed *appearing before God*: it is so indeed, in the true spiritual sense, and in the sweetest sense. I think I have not had such power of intercession these many months, both for God’s children, and for dead sinners, as I have had this evening. I wished and longed for the coining of my dear Lord: I longed to join the angelic hosts in praises, wholly free from imperfection. O the blessed moment hastens! All I want is to be more holy, more like my dear Lord. O for sanctification! My very soul pants for the complete restoration of the blessed image of my sweet Saviour; that I may be fit for the blessed enjoyments and employments of the heavenly world.

“Farewell, vain world, my soul can bid adieu:
My Saviour’s taught me to abandon you.
Your charms may gratify a sensual mind.
Not please a soul wholly for God designed;
Forbear t’entice, cease then my soul to call.
‘Tis fix’d through grace; my God shall be my all.
While he thus lets me heavenly glories view,
Your beauties fade, my heart’s no room for you.”

The Lord refreshed my soul with many sweet passages of his word. O the new Jerusalem! my soul longed for it. O the song of Moses and the Lamb! And that blessed song, that no man can learn, but they that are “redeemed from the earth!” and the glorious *white robes* that were given to “the souls under the altar! “

“Lord, I’m a stranger here alone;
Earth no true comforts can afford:
Yet, absent from my dearest one,
My soul delights to cry, My Lord!
Jesus, my Lord, my only love,
Possess my soul, nor thence depart:
Grant me kind visits, heavenly dove,
My God shall then have all my heart.”

Mon., Ap. 26. —Continued in a sweet frame of mind; but in the afternoon felt something of spiritual pride stirring. God was pleased to make it a humbling season at first, though afterwards he gave me sweetness. O my soul exceedingly longs for that blessed state of perfection of deliverance from all sin! At night, God enabled me to give my soul up to him, to cast myself upon him, to be ordered and disposed of according to his sovereign pleasure, and I enjoyed great peace and consolation in so doing. My soul took sweet delight in God to-night: my thoughts freely and sweetly centred in him. O that I could spend every moment of my life to his glory!

Tues., Ap. 27. —Retired pretty early for secret devotions, and in prayer God was pleased to pour such ineffable comforts into my soul, that I could do nothing for some time but say over and over, “O my sweet Saviour! O my sweet Saviour! whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.” If I had had a thousand lives, my soul would gladly have laid them all down at once to have been with Christ. My soul never enjoyed so much of heaven before; it was the most refined and most spiritual season of communion with God I ever yet felt; I never felt so great a degree of resignation in my life.

I felt very sweetly all the forenoon. In the afternoon I

28 THE LIFE OF

withdrew to meet with my God, but found myself much declined, and God made it a humbling season to my soul: I mourned over the *body of death* that is in me: it grieved me exceedingly, that I could not pray to and praise God with my heart full of divine, heavenly

love. O that my soul might never offer any dead cold services to my God! In the evening had not so much sweet divine *love* as in the morning, but had a sweet season of fervent intercession.

Wed., Ap., 28. —Withdrew to my usual place of retirement in great peace and tranquillity, and spent about two hours in secret duties. I felt much as I did yesterday morning, only weaker and more overcome. I seemed to hang and depend wholly on my dear Lord, wholly weaned from all other dependences. I knew not what to say to my God, but only *lean on His bosom*, as it were, and breathe out my desires after a perfect conformity to him in all things. Thirsting desires and insatiable longings after perfect holiness possessed my soul: God was so., precious to my soul, that the world with all its enjoyments was infinitely vile: I had no more value for the favour of men, than for pebbles. The LORD was my ALL, and *he* overruled all; which greatly delighted me. I think my faith and dependence on God scarce ever rose so high. I saw him such a fountain of goodness, that it seemed impossible I should distrust him again, or be any way anxious about any thing that should happen to me. I now enjoyed great sweetness in praying for absent friends, and for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom in the world. Much of the power of these divine enjoyments remained with me through the day. In the evening my heart seemed sweetly to melt, and, I trust, was really humbled for indwelling corruption, and I "mourned like a dove." I felt that all my unhappiness arose from my being a sinner, for with resignation I could bid welcome all other trials; but sin hung heavy upon me, for God discovered to me the corruption of my heart —so that I went to bed with a heavy heart, because I was a sinner, though I did not in the least doubt of God's love. O that God would "purge away my dross, and take away my tin," and make me seven times refined!

Thurs., Ap. 29. —Was kept off at a distance from God, but had some enlargement in intercession for precious souls.

Fri., Ap. 30 —Was something dejected in spirit: nothing grieves me so much, as that I cannot live constantly to God's glory. I could bear any desertion or spiritual con-

DAVID BRAINERD. 29

flicts, if I could but have *my heart* all the while burning within me with love to God and desires of his glory. But this is impossible; for when I *feel* these, I cannot be dejected in my soul, but only *rejoice in my Saviour*, who has delivered me from the reigning power, and will shortly deliver me from the indwelling of sin.

Sat., May 1. —Was enabled to cry to God with fervency for ministerial qualifications, and that God would appear for the advancement of his own kingdom, and that he would bring in the heathen world, &c. Had much assistance in my studies. This' has been a profitable week to me; I have enjoyed many communications of the blessed Spirit in my soul.

Lord's day, May 2. —God was pleased this morning to give me such a sight of myself, as made me appear very vile in my own eyes: I felt corruption stirring in my heart, which I could by no means suppress: felt more and more deserted: was exceeding weak, and almost sick with my inward trials.

Mon., May 3. —Had a sense of vile ingratitude. In the morning I withdrew to my usual place of retirement, and mourned for my abuse of my dear Lord: spent the day in fasting and prayer: God gave me much power of wrestling for his cause and kingdom, and it was a happy day to my soul. God was with me all the day, and I was more above the world, than ever in my life.

Through the remaining part of this week, and the next, he complains almost every day of desertion, and inward trials and conflicts, attended with dejection of spirit; but yet speaks of times of relief and sweetness, and daily refreshing visits of the Divine Spirit, affording special assistance and comfort, and enabling, at some times, to much fervency and enlargement in religious duties.

Fri., May 14. —Waited on a council of ministers convened at Hartford, and spread before them the treatment I had met with from the rector and tutors of Yale College; who thought it advisable to intercede for me with the rector and trustees, and to intreat them to restore me to my former privileges in college.¹ After this, spent some time in religious exercises with Christian friends.

30 THE LIFE OF

Sat., May 15. —Rode from Hartford to Hebron; was something dejected on the road; appeared exceeding vile in my own eyes, saw much pride and stubbornness in my heart. Indeed I never saw such a week before as this; for I have been almost ready to die with the view of the wickedness of my heart. I could not have thought I had such a *body of death* in me. O that God would *deliver my soul!*

The next three days (which he spent at Hebron, Lebanon, and Norwich) he complains still of dulness and desertion, and expresses a sense of his vileness, and longing to hide himself in some cave or den of the earth: but yet speaks of some intervals of comfort and soul-refreshment each day.

Wed., May 19. —[At Millington] I was so amazingly deserted this morning, that I seemed to feel a sort of horror in my soul. Alas! when God withdraws, what is there that can afford any comfort to the soul!

Through the next eight days he expresses more calmness and comfort, and considerable life, fervency, and sweetness in religion.

Fri., May 28. —[At New-Haven] I think I scarce ever felt so calm in my life; I rejoiced in resignation, and giving myself up to God, to be wholly and entirely devoted to him for ever.

On the three following days, there was, by the account he gives, a continuance of the same excellent frame of mind last expressed: but it seems not to have been altogether to so great a degree.

¹ The application which was then made on his behalf, had not the desired success.

Tues., June 1. —Had much of the presence of God in family prayer, and had some comfort in secret. I was greatly refreshed from the Word of God this morning, which appeared exceeding sweet to me: some things that appeared mysterious were opened to me. O that the kingdom of the dear Saviour might come with power, and the healing waters of the sanctuary spread far and wide for the healing of the nations! Came to Ripton, but was very weak. However, being visited by a number of young people in the evening, I prayed with them.

DAVID BRAINERD 31

The remaining part of this week, he speaks of being much diverted and hindered in the business of religion, by great weakness of body and necessary affairs that he had to attend to, and complains of having but little power of religion; but signifies, that God hereby showed him he was like a helpless infant cast out in the open field.

Lord's day, June 6. —I feel much deserted: but all this teaches me my nothingness and vileness more than ever.

Mon., June 7. —Felt still powerless in secret prayer. Afterwards I prayed and conversed with some little life. God feeds me with crumbs: blessed be his name for any thing. I felt a great desire, that all God's people might know how mean and little and vile I am: that they might see I am nothing, that so they may pray for me aright, and not have the least dependence upon me.

Tues., June 8. —I enjoyed one sweet and precious season this day: I never felt it so sweet to be nothing, and less than nothing, and to be *accounted* nothing.

The next three days he complains of desertion, and want of fervency in religion; but yet his diary shows that every day his heart was engaged in religion, as his great, and, as it were, only business.

Sat., June 12. —Spent much time in prayer this morning, and enjoyed much sweetness. Felt insatiable longings after God much of the day: I wondered how poor souls live that have *no God*. The world, with all its enjoyments, quite vanished. I see myself very helpless: but I have a blessed God to go to. I longed exceedingly “to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, to behold his glory.” Oh, my weak weary soul longs to arrive at *my Father's house!*

Lords day, June 13. —Felt something calm and resigned in the public worship: at the sacrament saw myself very vile and worthless. O that I may always lie low in the dust. My soul seemed steadily to go forth after God, in longing desires to live upon him.

Mon., June 14. —Felt something of the sweetness of communion with God, and the *constraining* force of *his love*: how admirably it captivates the soul, and makes all the desires and affections to centre in God! I set apart this day for secret fasting and prayer, to intreat God to direct and bless

me with regard to the great work I have in view, of preaching *the gospel*, and that the Lord would return to me, and “show me the light of his countenance.” Had little life and power in the forenoon. Near the middle of the afternoon, God enabled me to wrestle ardently in intercession for absent friends. But just at night, the Lord visited me marvellously in prayer; I think my soul never was in such an agony before; I felt no restraint, for the treasures of divine grace were opened to me; I wrestled for absent friends, for the ingathering of souls, for multitudes of poor souls, and for many that I thought were the children of God, personally, in many distant places. I was in such an agony, from sun half an hour high, till near dark, that I was all over wet with sweat; but yet it seemed to me that I had wasted away the day, and had done nothing. Oh, my dear Jesus did sweat blood for poor souls! I longed for more compassion towards them. Felt still in a sweet frame, under a sense of divine love and grace; and went to bed in such a frame, with my heart set on God.

Tues., June 15. —Had the most ardent longings after God that ever I felt in my life: at noon, in my secret retirement, I could do nothing but tell my dear Lord, in a sweet calm, that he knew I longed for nothing but *himself*, nothing but holiness, that he had given me these desires, and he *only* could give me the thing desired. I never seemed to be so unhinged from myself, and to be so wholly devoted to God. My heart was swallowed up in God most of the day. In the evening I had such a view of the soul’s being, as it were, enlarged to contain more holiness, that my soul seemed ready to separate from my body, and stretch to obtain it. I then wrestled in an agony for divine blessings; had my heart drawn out in prayer for some Christian friends, beyond what I ever had before. I feel differently now from what I ever did under any sweet enjoyments before, more engaged to *live to God* for ever, and less pleased with my own frames: I am not satisfied with my frames, nor feel at all more easy after such sweet strugglings than before; for it seems far too little, if I could always be so. Oh, how short do I fall of my duty in my sweetest moments!

In his diary for the next two days, he expresses something of the same frame, but in a far less degree.¹

DAVID BRAINERD. 33

Fri., June 18. —Considering my great unfitness for the work of the *ministry*, my present deadness, and total inability to do any thing for the glory of God that way, feeling myself very helpless, and at a great loss “what the Lord would have me to do,” I set apart this day for prayer to God, and spent most of the day in that duty, hut was amazingly deserted most of the day. Yet I found God graciously near; once in particular, while I was pleading for more compassion for immortal souls, my heart seemed to be opened at once, and I was enabled to cry with great ardency, for a few minutes.

¹ Here end the first 30 pages of the third volume of his diary, which he speaks of in the beginning of this volume (as was observed before), as containing a specimen of his ordinary manner of living, through the whole space of time, from the beginning of those two volumes that were destroyed.

O I was distressed to think that I should offer such dead, cold services to *the living God*! My soul seemed to breathe after holiness —a life of constant devotedness to God. But I am almost lost sometimes in the pursuit of this blessedness, and ready to sink because I continually fall short and miss of my desire. O that the Lord would help me to hold out yet a little while, till the happy hour of deliverance comes!

Sat., June 19. —Felt much disordered; my spirits were very low, but yet enjoyed some freedom and sweetness in the duties of religion. Blessed be God.

Lord's day, June 20. —Spent much time alone. My soul longed to be holy and reached after God, but seemed not to obtain my desire: I *hungered* and *thirsted*, but was not sweetly refreshed and satisfied. My soul hung on God as my only portion. O that I could grow in grace more abundantly every day!

The next day he speaks of his having assistance in his studies, and power, fervency, and comfort in prayer.

Tues., June 22. —In the morning, spent about two hours in prayer and meditation, with considerable delight. Towards night, felt my soul go out in longing desires after God, in secret retirement. In the evening, was sweetly composed and resigned to God's will, was enabled to leave myself and all my concerns with him, and to have my whole dependence upon him. My secret retirement was very refreshing to my soul; it appeared such a happiness to have God for my portion, that I had rather be any other creature in this lower creation, than not come to the enjoyment of God. I had

31 THE LIFE OF

rather be a beast, than a man without God, if I were to live here to eternity. Lord, endear thyself more to me!

In his diary for the next seven days, he expresses a variety of exercises of mind: he speaks of great longings after God and holiness, and earnest desires for the conversion of others, of fervency in prayer, and power to wrestle with God, and of composure, comfort, and sweetness, from time to time: but expresses a sense of the vile abomination of his heart, and bitterly complains of his barrenness, and the pressing body of death, and says, he “saw clearly that whatever he enjoyed, better than hell, was free grace.” Complains of his being exceeding low, much below the character of a child of God, and is sometimes very disconsolate and dejected.

Wed., June 30. —Spent this day alone in the woods, in fasting and prayer; underwent the most dreadful conflicts in my soul that ever I felt, in some respects. I saw myself so vile, that I was ready to say, “I shall now perish by the hand of Saul.” I thought, and almost concluded, I had no power to stand for the cause of God, but was almost “afraid of the shaking of a leaf.” Spent almost the whole day in prayer, incessantly. I could not bear to think of Christians showing me any respect. I almost despaired of doing any service in the world. I could not feel any hope or comfort respecting the heathen, which used to afford me some refreshment

in the darkest hours of this nature. I spent away the day *in the bitterness of my soul*. Near night I felt a little better, 'and afterwards enjoyed some sweetness in secret prayer.

Thurs., July 1. —Had some sweetness in prayer this morning. Felt exceeding sweetly in secret prayer to-night, and desired nothing so ardently as that God *should do with me just as he pleased*.

Fri., July 2. —Felt composed in secret prayer in the morning. My desires sweetly ascended to God this day, as I was travelling; and was comfortable in the evening. Blessed be God for all my consolations.

Sat., July 3. —My heart seemed again to sink. The disgrace I was laid under at college seemed to damp me, as it opens the mouths of opposers. I had no refuge but in God only. Blessed be his name, that I may go to him at all times, and find him a *present help*.

Lord's day, July 4. —Had considerable assistance. In the evening I withdrew and enjoyed a happy season in secret

DAVID BRAINERD. 35

prayer: God was pleased to give me the exercise of faith, and thereby brought the invisible and eternal world near to my soul, which appeared sweetly to me. I hoped that my weary *pilgrimage* in the world would be *short*, and that it would not be long before I was brought to my heavenly home and Father's house. I was sweetly resigned to God's will, to tarry his time, to do his work, and suffer his pleasure. I felt *thankfulness* to God for all my pressing desertions of late; for I am persuaded they have been made a means of making me more humble, and much more resigned. I felt pleased to be *little*, to be *nothing*, and to *lie in the dust*. I enjoyed life and sweet consolation in pleading for the dear children of God and the kingdom of Christ in the world; and my soul earnestly breathed after holiness, and the enjoyment of God. "O come, Lord Jesus! come quickly. Amen."

By his diary for the remaining days of this week, it appears that he enjoyed considerable composure and tranquillity, and had sweetness and fervency of spirit in prayer from day to day.

Lord's day, July 11. —Was deserted and exceeding dejected in the morning. In the afternoon had some life and assistance, and felt resigned; I saw myself exceeding vile.

On the next two days he expresses inward comfort, resignation, and strength in God.

Wed., July 14. —Felt a kind of humble, resigned sweetness: spent a considerable time in secret, giving myself up wholly to the Lord. Heard Mr. Bellamy preach towards night; felt very sweetly part of the time; longed for nearer *access to God*.

The next four days he expresses considerable comfort and fervency of spirit in Christian conversation and religious exercises.

Mon., July 19. —My desires seem especially to be carried out after weanedness from the *world*, perfect deadness to it, and to be even *crucified* to all its allurements. My soul longs to feel itself more of a *pilgrim* and *stranger* here below, that nothing may divert me from pressing through the lonely desert, till I arrive at my Father's house.

36 THE LIFE OF

Tues., July 20. —It was sweet to give away myself to God, to be disposed of at his pleasure; and had some feeling sense of the sweetness of being a *pilgrim on earth*.

The next day he expresses himself as determined to be wholly devoted to God, and it appears by his diary, that he spent the whole day in a most diligent exercise of religion, and exceeding comfortably.

Thurs., July 22. —Journeying from Southbury to Ripton, called at a house by the way, where being very kindly entertained and refreshed, I was filled with amazement and shame, that God should stir up the hearts of any to show so much kindness to such a *dead dog* as I; was made sensible, in some measure, how exceeding vile it is, not to be wholly devoted to God. I wondered that God would suffer any of his creatures to feed and sustain me from time to time.

In his diary for the next six days, are expressed various exercises and experiences, such as sweet composure and fervency of spirit in meditation and prayer, weanedness from the world, being sensibly a pilgrim and stranger on the earth, engagedness of mind to spend every inch of time for God, &c.

Thurs., July 29. —Was examined by the association met at Danbury, as to my learning and also my experiences in religion, and received a licence from them to preach the gospel of Christ. Afterwards felt much devoted to God; joined in prayer with one of the ministers, my peculiar friend, in a convenient place; went to bed resolving to live devoted to God all my days.

PART III.

FROM THE TIME OF HIS BEING LICENSED TO PREACH, TILL HE WAS APPOINTED MISSIONARY TO THE INDIANS.

Fri., July 30, 1742. —Rode from Danbury to Southbury; preached there from 1 Pet. iv. 8. Had much of the com-

DAVID BRAINERD. 37

fortable presence of God in the exercise. I seemed to have power with God in prayer, and power to get hold of the hearts of the people in preaching.

Sat., July 31. —Exceeding calm and composed, and was greatly refreshed and encouraged.

It appears by his diary, that he continued in this sweetness and tranquillity almost through the whole of the next week.

Lord's day, Aug. 8. —In the morning felt comfortably in secret prayer; my soul was refreshed with the hopes of the heathen's coming home to Christ; was much resigned to God —I thought it was no matter what became of me. Preached both parts of the day at Bethlehem, from Job xiv. 14. It was sweet to me to meditate on *death*. In the evening felt very comfortably, and cried to God fervently in secret prayer.

It appears by his diary that he continued, through the next three days, engaged with all his might in the business of religion, and in almost a constant enjoyment of the comforts of it.

Thurs., Aug. 12. —This morning and last night was exercised with sore inward trials; I had no power to pray, but seemed shut out from God. I had in a great measure lost my hopes of God's sending me among the heathen afar off, and of seeing them flock home to Christ. I saw so much of my hellish vileness, that I appeared worse to myself than any devil, I wondered that God would let me live, and wondered that people did not stone me, much more that they would ever hear me preach! It seemed as though I never could nor should preach any more; yet about nine or ten o'clock, the people came over, and I was forced to preach. And blessed be God, he gave me his presence and Spirit in prayer and preaching, so that I was much assisted, and spake with power from Job xiv. 14. Some Indians cried out in great distress,¹ and all appeared greatly concerned. After we had prayed and exhorted them to seek the Lord with constancy, and hired an English woman to keep a kind of *school* among them, we came away about one o'clock, and

38 THE LIFE OF

¹ It was in a place near Kent, in the western borders of Connecticut, where there is a number of Indians.

came to Judea, about fifteen or sixteen miles. There God was pleased to visit my soul with much comfort. Blessed be the Lord for all things I meet with.

It appears that the next two days he had much comfort, and had his heart much engaged in religion.

Lord's day, Aug. 13. —Felt much comfort and devotedness to God this day. At night, it was refreshing to get alone with God, and *pour out my soul*. O who can conceive of the sweetness of communion with the blessed God, but those that have experience of it! Glory to God for ever, that I may taste heaven below.

Mon., Aug. 16. —Had some comfort in secret prayer in the morning. Felt sweetly sundry times in prayer this day; but was much perplexed in the evening with vain conversation.

Tues., Aug. 17. —Exceedingly depressed in spirit, it cuts and wounds my heart to think how much *self-exaltation, spiritual pride, and warmth of temper*, I have *formerly* had intermingled with my endeavours to promote God's work; and sometimes I long to lie down at the feet of opposers, and confess what a poor imperfect creature I have been and still am. O the Lord forgive me, and make me for the future "wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove!" Afterwards enjoyed considerable comfort and delight of soul.

Wed., Aug. 18. —Spent most of this day in prayer and reading. I see so much of my own extreme vileness, that I feel ashamed and guilty before God and man; I look to myself like the vilest fellow in the land, I wonder that God stirs up his people to be so kind to me.

Thurs., Aug. 19. —This day, being about to go from Mr. Bellamy's at Bethlehem, where I had resided some time, prayed with him and two or three other Christian friends, and gave ourselves to God with all our hearts, to be his for ever. Eternity looked very near to me, while I was praying. If I never should see these Christians again in this world, it seemed but a few moments before I should meet them in another world. Parted with them sweetly.

Fri., Aug. 20. —I appeared so vile to myself, that I hardly dared to think of being seen, especially on account of spiritual pride. However, to-night I enjoyed a sweet hour alone with God (at Ripton): I was lifted above the frowns and flatteries of this lower world, had a sweet relish of heavenly joys, and

DAVID BRAINERD. 39

my soul did, as it were, get into the eternal world and really taste of heaven. I had a sweet season of intercession for dear friends in Christ, and God helped me to cry fervently for Zion. Blessed be God for this season.

Sat., Aug. 21. —Was much perplexed in the morning. Towards noon enjoyed more of God in secret, was enabled to see that it was best to throw myself into the hands of God, to be disposed of according to his pleasure, and rejoiced in such thoughts. In the afternoon rode to New Haven; was much confused all the way. Just at night, underwent such a dreadful

conflict as I have scarce ever felt. I saw myself exceeding vile and unworthy —so that I was guilty, and ashamed that anybody should bestow any favour on me, or show me any respect.

Lord's day, Aug. 22. —In the morning, continued still in perplexity. In the evening, enjoyed that comfort that seemed to me sufficient to overbalance all my late distresses. I saw that God is the only soul-satisfying portion, and I really found satisfaction in him: my soul was much enlarged in sweet intercession for my fellow-men every where, and for many Christian friends, in particular, in distant places.

Mon., Aug. 23. —Had a sweet season in secret prayer: the Lord drew near to my soul, and filled me with peace and divine consolation. O my soul tasted the sweetness of the upper world, and was sweetly drawn out in prayer for the world, that it might come home to Christ! Had much comfort in the thoughts and hopes of the ingathering of the heathen; was greatly assisted in intercession for Christian friends.

He continued still in the same frame of mind the next day, but in a lesser degree.

Wed., Aug. 25. —In family prayer, God helped me to climb up near him, so that I scarce ever got nearer.

The next four days, he appears to have been the subject of desertion and of comfort and fervency in religion interchangeably, together with a sense of vileness and unprofitableness.

Mon., Aug. 30. —Felt something comfortably in the morning; conversed sweetly with some friends; was in a serious composed frame; prayed at a certain house with some degree of sweetness. Afterwards, at another house, prayed privately

40 THE LIFE OF

with a dear Christian friend or two, and I think I scarce ever launched so far into the eternal world as then; I got so far out on the broad ocean, that my soul with joy triumphed over all the evils on the shores of mortality. I think time, and all its gay amusements and cruel disappointments, never appeared so inconsiderable to me before: I was in a sweet frame: I saw myself nothing, and my soul reached after God with intense desire. O! I saw what I owed to God, in such a manner as I scarce ever did; I knew I had never lived a moment to him as I should do; indeed, it appeared to me I had never done any thing in Christianity; my soul longed with a vehement desire to *live to God*. In the evening, sung and prayed with a number of Christians; felt “the powers of the world to come “in my soul, in prayer. Afterwards prayed again privately with a dear Christian or two, and found the presence of God; was something humbled in my secret retirement; felt my ingratitude, because I was not wholly swallowed up in God.

He was in a sweet frame great part of the next day.

Wed., Sept. 1. —Went to Judea to the ordination of Mr. Judd. Dear Mr. Bellamy preached from Matt. xxiv. 46, “Blessed is that servant,” &c. I felt very solemnly and very sweetly most

of the time; had my thoughts much on that time when *our Lord will come*; that time refreshed my soul much, only I was afraid I should not be found *faithful*, because I have so vile a heart. My thoughts were much in eternity, where I love to dwell. Blessed be God for this solemn season. Rode home to-night with Mr. Bellamy; felt something sweetly on the road; conversed with some friends till it was very late, and then retired to rest in a comfortable frame.

Thurs., Sept. 2. —About two in the afternoon, I preached from John vi. 67, and God assisted me in some comfortable degree, but more especially in my first prayer; my soul seemed then to launch quite into the eternal world, and to be as it were separated from this lower world. Afterwards preached again from Isa. v. 4. God gave me some assistance; but I saw myself a poor worm.

On Friday, Sept. 3, he complains of having but little life in the things of God in the former part of the day, but afterwards speaks of sweetness and enlargement.

DAVID BRAINERD. 41

Sat., Sept. 4. —Much out of health, and exceedingly depressed in ray soul, and was at an awful distance from God. Towards night, spent some time in profitable thoughts on Rom. viii. 2. Near night, had a very sweet season in prayer; God enabled me to wrestle ardently for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom; pleaded earnestly for my own dear brother John, that God would make him more of a pilgrim and stranger on the earth, and fit him for singular serviceableness in the world; and my heart sweetly exulted in the Lord, in the thoughts of any distresses that might alight on him or me, in the advancement of Christ's kingdom. It was a sweet and comfortable hour unto my soul, while I was indulged freedom to plead' not only for myself but for many other souls.

Lord's day, Sept. 5. —Preached all day: was something strengthened and assisted in the afternoon, more especially in the evening: had a sense of my unspeakable shortcomings in all my duties. I found, alas! that I had never lived to God in my life.

Mon., Sept. 6. —Was informed that they only waited for an opportunity to apprehend me for preaching at New Haven lately, that so they might imprison me. This made me more solemn and serious, and to quit all hopes of the world's friendship: it brought me to a further sense of my vileness, and just desert of this and much more from the hand of God, though not from the hand of man. Retired into a convenient place in the woods, and spread the matter before God.

Tues., Sept. 7. —Had some relish of divine things in the morning. Afterwards felt more barren and melancholy. Rode to New Haven, to a friend's house at a distance from the town: that I may remain undiscovered, and yet have opportunity to do business privately with friends that come to Commencement.

Wed., Sept. 8. —Felt very sweetly when I first rose in the morning. In family prayer had some enlargement, but not much spirituality till eternity came up before me and looked near; I found some sweetness in the thoughts of bidding a dying farewell to this tiresome world.

Though sometime ago I reckoned upon seeing my dear friends at Commencement, yet being now denied the opportunity for fear of imprisonment, I felt totally resigned and as contented to spend this day alone in the woods, as I could have done if I had been allowed to go to town. Felt exceedingly weaned from the world to-day. In the afternoon discoursed something on

42 THE LIFE OF

some divine things with a dear Christian friend, whereby we were both refreshed. Then I prayed, with a sweet sense of the blessedness of communion with God: I think I scarce ever enjoyed more of God in any one prayer. O it was a blessed season indeed to my soul! I knew not that ever I saw so much of my own nothingness in my life; never wondered so that God allowed me to preach his Word; never was so astonished as now. This has been a sweet and comfortable day to my soul. Blessed be God. Prayed again with my dear friend, with something of the divine presence. I long to be wholly conformed to God and transformed into his image.

Thurs., Sept. 9. —Spent much of the day alone; enjoyed the presence of God in some comfortable degree; was visited by some dear friends, and prayed with them; wrote sundry letters to friends; felt religion in my soul while writing; enjoyed some sweet meditations on some scriptures. In the evening, went very privately into town from the place of my residence at the farms, and conversed with some dear friends; felt sweetly in singing hymns with them, and made my escape to the farms again, without being discovered by any enemies, as I knew of. Thus the Lord preserves me continually.

Fri., Sept. 10. —Longed with intense desire after God: my whole soul seemed impatient to be conformed to him, and to become “holy, as he is holy.” In the afternoon, prayed with a dear friend privately, and had the presence of God with us; our souls united together to reach after a blessed immortality, to be unclothed of the body of sin and death, and to enter the blessed world where no unclean thing enters. O, with what intense desire did our souls long for that blessed day, that we might be freed from sin, and for ever live *to* and *in* our God! In the evening, took leave of that house, but first kneeled down and prayed; the Lord was of a truth in the midst of us; it was a sweet parting season; felt in myself much sweetness and affection in the things of God. Blessed be God for every such divine gale of his Spirit, to speed me on in my way to the new Jerusalem! Felt some sweetness afterwards, and spent the evening in conversation with friends, and prayed with some life, and retired to rest very late.

The next five days, he appears for the most part to have been in an exceeding comfortable, sweet frame of mind, and to have been the subject of the like heavenly exercises as are

DAVID BRAINERD. 43

often expressed in preceding passages of his diary: such as, having his heart much engaged for God, wrestling with God in prayer with power and ardency, enjoying at times sweet calmness and composure of mind, giving himself up to God to be his for ever, with great complacency of mind, being wholly resigned to the will of God, that God might do with him

what he pleased, longing well to improve time, having the eternal world as it were brought nigh, longing after God and holiness, earnestly desiring a complete conformity to him, and wondering how poor souls do to exist without God.

Thurs., Sept. 16. —At night felt exceeding sweetly; enjoyed much of God in secret prayer; felt an uncommon resignation, to be and do what God pleased. Some days past, I felt *great perplexity* on account of my past conduct; *my bitterness*, and want of Christian kindness and love, has been *very distressing* to my soul; the Lord forgive me my *unchristian warmth*, and want of a spirit of meekness!

The next day, he speaks of much resignation, calmness, and peace of mind, and near views of the eternal world.

Sat., Sept. 18. —Felt some compassion for souls, and mourned I had no more. I feel much more kindness, meekness, gentleness, and love towards all mankind, than ever. I long to be at the feet of my enemies and persecutors. Enjoyed some sweetness, in feeling my soul conformed to Christ Jesus and given away to him for ever, in prayer to-day.

The next day he speaks of much dejection and discouragement, from an apprehension of his own unfitness ever to do any good in preaching, but blesses God for all dispensations of providence and grace, finding that by all God weaned him more from the world, and made him more resigned.

The next ten days, he appears to have been for the most part under great degrees of melancholy, exceedingly dejected and discouraged: speaks of his being ready to give up all for gone respecting the cause of Christ, and exceedingly longing to die; yet had some sweet seasons and intervals of comfort, and special assistance and enlargement in the duties of religion, and in performing public services, and considerable success in them.

Thurs., Sept. 30. —Still very low in spirits, and did not

44 THE LIFE OF

know how to engage in any work or business, especially to *correct some disorders among Christians*; felt as though I had no power to be faithful in that regard. However, towards noon, preached from Dent. viii. 2, and was enabled with freedom to reprove some things in Christians' conduct, that I thought very unsuitable and irregular; insisted near two hours on this subject.

Through this, and the two following weeks, he passed through a variety of exercises: he was frequently dejected, and felt inward distresses, and sometimes sunk into the depths of melancholy; at which turns, he was not exercised about the state of his soul with regard to the favour of God and his interest in Christ, but about his own sinful infirmities and unfitness for God's service. His mind appears sometimes extremely depressed and sunk with a sense of inexpressible vileness. But, in the mean time, he speaks of many seasons of comfort and spiritual refreshment, wherein his heart was encouraged and strengthened in God, and

sweetly resigned to his will, and of some seasons of very high degrees of spiritual consolation, and of his great longings after holiness and conformity to God, of his great fear of offending God, of his heart being sweetly melted in religious duties, of his longing for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and of his having at some times much assistance in preaching, and of remarkable effects on the auditory.

Lord's day, Oct. 17. —Had a considerable sense of my helplessness and inability; saw that I must be dependent on God for all I want; and especially when I went to the place of public worship, I found I could not speak a word for (rod without his special help and assistance: I went into the assembly trembling, as I frequently do, under a sense of my insufficiency to do any thing in the cause of God, as I ought to do. But it pleased God to afford me much assistance, and there seemed to be a considerable effect on the hearers. In the evening, I felt a disposition to praise God for his goodness to me; in special, that he had enabled me in some measure to be faithful; and my soul rejoiced to think that I had thus performed the work of one day more, and was one day nearer my eternal and (I trust) my heavenly home. O that I might be "faithful to the death, fulfilling as an hireling my day," till the shades of the evening of life shall free my soul from the toils of the day! This evening, in secret prayer, I

DAVID BRAINERD. 45

felt exceeding solemn, and such longing desires after deliverance from sin and after conformity to God, as melted my heart. O I longed to be "delivered from this body of death!" I felt inward pleasing pain, that I could not be conformed to God entirely, fully, and for ever. I scarce ever preach without being first visited with inward conflicts and sore trials. Blessed be the Lord, for these trials and distresses, as they are blessed for my humbling.

Mon., Oct. 18. —In the morning felt some sweetness, but still pressed through some trials of soul. My life is a constant mixture of consolations and conflicts, and will be so till I arrive at the world of spirits.

Tues., Oct. 19. —This morning and last night, felt a sweet longing in my soul after holiness: my soul seemed so to reach and stretch towards the mark of perfect sanctity, that it was ready to break with longings.

Wed., Oct. 20. —Exceeding infirm in body, exercised with much pain, and very lifeless in divine things. Felt a little sweetness in the evening.

Thurs., Oct. 21. —Had a very deep sense of the vanity of the world, most of the day; had little more regard to it than if I had been to go into eternity the next hour. Through divine goodness, I felt very serious and solemn. O I love to live on the brink of eternity, in my views and meditations! This gives me a sweet, awful, and reverential sense and apprehension of God and divine things, when I see myself as it were *standing before the judgment-seat of Christ*.

Fri., Oct. 22. —Uncommonly weaned from the world today; my soul delighted to be a *stranger and pilgrim on the earth*; I felt a disposition in me never to have any thing to do

with this world. The character given of some of the ancient people of God, in Heb. xi. 13, was very pleasing to me “They confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth,” by their daily practice; and O that I could always do so! Spent some considerable time, in a pleasant grove, in prayer and meditation. O it is sweet to be thus weaned from friends and from myself, and dead to the present world, that so I may live wholly to and upon the blessed God! Saw myself little, low, and vile in myself. In the afternoon, preached at Bethlehem, from Deut. viii. 2, and felt sweetly both in prayer and preaching: God helped me to speak to the hearts of dear Christians. Blessed be the Lord for this season: I trust, they and I shall rejoice on this account to all eternity. Dear Mr. Bellamy came in while I

46 THE LIFE OF

was making the first prayer (being returned home from a journey), and after meeting, we walked away together and spent the evening in sweetly conversing on divine things, and praying together with sweet and tender love to each other, and returned to rest with our hearts in a serious spiritual frame.

Sat., Oct. 23. —Something perplexed and confused. Rode this day from Bethlehem to Simsbury.

Lord's day, Oct. 24. —Felt so vile and unworthy, that I scarce knew how to converse with human creatures.

Mon., Oct. 25. —[At Turkey-Hills.] In the evening enjoyed the divine presence in secret prayer; it was a sweet and comfortable season to me; my soul *longed for God, for the living God*; enjoyed a sweet solemnity of spirit, and longing desire after the recovery of the divine image in my soul. “Then shall I be satisfied, when I shall awake in God’s likeness,” and never before.

Tues., Oct. 26. —[At West-Suffield.] Underwent the most dreadful distresses, under a sense of my own unworthiness: it seemed to me I deserved rather to be driven out of the place, than to have anybody treat me with any kindness or come to hear me preach. And verily my spirits were so depressed at this time, as well as at many others, that it was impossible I should treat immortal souls with faithfulness; I could not deal closely and faithfully with them, I felt so infinitely vile in myself. O what *dust* and *ashes* I am, to think of preaching the gospel to others! Indeed I never can be faithful for one moment, but shall certainly “daub with untempered mortar,” if God do not grant me special help. In the evening I went to the meeting-house, and it looked to me near as easy for one to rise out of the grave and preach, as for me. However, God afforded me some life and power both in prayer and sermon, God was pleased to lift me up and show me that he could enable me to preach. O the wonderful goodness of God to so vile a sinner! Returned to my quarters, and enjoyed some sweetness in prayer alone, and mourned that I could not live more to God.

Wed., Oct. 27. —Spent the forenoon in prayer and meditation; was not a little concerned about preaching in the afternoon; felt exceedingly *without strength*, and very helpless indeed; went into the meeting-house ashamed to see any come to hear such an unspeakably worthless

wretch. However, God enabled me to speak with clearness, power, and pungency. But there was some noise and tumult in the

DAVID BRAINERD. 47

assembly, that I did not well like, and endeavoured to bear public testimony against, with moderation and mildness, through the current of my discourse. In the evening, was enabled to be in some measure thankful and devoted to God.

The frames and exercises of his mind, during the next four days, were mostly very similar to those of the two days past, excepting intervals of considerable degrees of divine peace and consolation.

Thurs., Nov. 4. —[At Lebanon.] Saw much of my nothingness most of this day, but felt concerned that I had no more sense of my insufficiency and unworthiness. O it is sweet *lying in the dust!* But it is distressing to feel in my soul that hell of corruption, which still remains in me. In the afternoon, had a sense of the sweetness of a strict, close, and constant devotedness to God, and my soul was comforted with the consolations of God; my soul felt a pleasing yet painful concern lest I should spend some moments *without God*. O may I always *live to God!* In the evening, was visited by some friends, and spent the time in prayer and such conversation as tended to our edification. It was a comfortable season to my soul: I felt an intense desire to spend every moment for God. God is unspeakably gracious to me continually: in times past, he has given me inexpressible sweetness in the performance of duty, frequently my soul has enjoyed much of God, but has been ready to say, “Lord, it is good to be here,” and so to indulge sloth, while I have lived on the sweetness of my feelings. But of late, God has been pleased to keep my soul *hungry* almost continually, so that I have been filled with a kind of a pleasing pain. When I really enjoy God, I feel my desires of him the more insatiable, and my thirstings after holiness the more unquenchable, and the Lord will not allow me to feel as though I were fully supplied and satisfied, but keeps me still reaching forward; and I feel barren and empty, as though I could not live without more of God in me; I feel ashamed and guilty *before* God. O! I see “the law is spiritual, but I am carnal.” I do not, I cannot live to God. O for holiness! O for more of God in my soul! O this pleasing pain! It makes my soul press after God: the language of it is, “Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake in God’s likeness” (Ps. xvii. 15), but never, never before: and consequently I am engaged to “press towards the mark,” day by day.

48 THE LIFE OF

O that I may feel this continual hunger, and not be retarded but rather animated by every cluster from Canaan, to reach forward in the narrow way, for the full enjoyment and possession of the heavenly inheritance! O that I may never loiter in my heavenly journey!

These insatiable desires after God and holiness continued the next two days, with a great sense of his own exceeding unworthiness and the nothingness of the things of this world.

Lord's day, Nov. 7. —[At Millington.] It seemed as if such an unholy wretch as I never could arrive at that blessedness —to be “holy, as God is holy.” At noon, I longed for sanctification and conformity to God. Oh, that is THE ALL, THE ALL! The Lord help me to *press after God* for ever.

Mon., Nov. 8. —Towards night, enjoyed much sweetness in secret prayer, so that my soul longed for an arrival in the *heavenly country*, the blessed paradise of God. Through divine goodness, I have scarce seen the day for two months, but *death* has looked so pleasant to me at one time or other of the day, that I could have rejoiced the *present* should be my *last*, notwithstanding my pressing inward trials and conflicts: and I trust the Lord will finally make me a *conqueror*, and *more than so*, that I shall be able ‘to use that triumphant language, “O death, where is thy sting I” and, “O grave, where is thy victory!”

Within the next ten days, the following things are expressed: longing and wrestling to be holy, and to live to God; a desire that every single thought might be for God; feeling guilty that his thoughts were no more swallowed up in God; sweet solemnity and calmness of mind; submission and resignation to God; great weanedness from the world; abasement in the dust; grief at some vain conversation that was observed; sweetness from time to time in secret prayer, and in conversing and praying with Christian friends. And every day he appears to have been greatly engaged in the great business of religion and living to God, without interruption.

Fri., Nov. 19. —[At New Haven.] Received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Pemberton of New York, desiring me speedily to go down thither, and consult about the Indian affairs in those parts, and to meet certain gentlemen there that were intrusted with those affairs. My mind was instantly seized

DAVID BRAINERD. 49

with concern, so I retired with two or three Christian friends and prayed, and indeed it was a sweet time with me; I was enabled to leave myself and all my concerns with God; and taking leave of friends, I rode to Ripton, and was comforted in an opportunity to see and converse with dear Mr. Mills.

In the next four days, he was sometimes oppressed with the weight of that great affair, about which Mr. Pemberton had written to him; but was enabled from time to time to “cast his burden on the Lord,” and to commit himself and all his concerns to him; and he continued still in a sense of the excellency of holiness, and longings after it, and earnest desires for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom in the world; and had from time to time sweet comfort in meditation and prayer.

Wed., Nov. 24 —Came to New York; felt still much concerned about the importance of my business; put up many earnest requests to God for his help and direction; was confused with the noise and tumult of the city; enjoyed but little time alone with God, but my soul longed after him.

Thurs., Nov. 25. —Spent much time in prayer and supplication. Was examined by some gentlemen of my Christian experiences, and my acquaintance with divinity, and some other studies, in order to my improvement in that important affair of gospelizing the heathen.¹ Was made sensible of my great ignorance and unfitness for public service: I had the most abasing thoughts of myself, I think, that ever I had: I thought myself the worst wretch that ever lived: it hurt me, and pained my very heart, that anybody should show me any respect. Alas, methought, how sadly they are deceived in me! how miserably would they be disappointed, if they knew my inside! Oh, my heart! And in this depressed condition, I was forced to go and preach to a considerable assembly, before some grave and learned ministers; but felt such a pressure from a sense of my vileness, ignorance, and unfitness to appear in public, that I was almost overcome with it; my soul was grieved for the congregation, that they should sit there to hear such a dead dog as I preach; I

50 THE LIFE OF

thought myself infinitely indebted to the people, and longed that God would reward them with the rewards of his grace. I spent much of the evening alone.

¹ These gentlemen that examined Mr. Brainerd, were the correspondents in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, of the honourable society in Scotland for propagating Christian knowledge, to whom was committed the management of their affairs in those parts, and who were now met at New York.

PART IV.

FROM THE TIME OF HIS APPOINTMENT AS A MISSIONARY TO HIS FIRST ENTRANCE ON HIS MISSION AMONG THE INDIANS AT KAUNAUMEEK.

Fri., Nov. 26. —Had still a sense of my great vileness, and endeavoured as much as I could to keep alone. O what a nothing, what dust and ashes am I! Enjoyed some peace and comfort in spreading my complaints before the God of all grace.

Sat., Nov. 27. —Committed my soul to God with some degree of comfort; left New York about nine in the morning; came away with a distressing sense still of my unspeakable unworthiness. Surely I may well love all my brethren, for none of them all is so vile as I; whatever they do outwardly, yet it seems to me none is conscious of so much guilt before God. O my leanness, my barrenness, my carnality, and past bitterness, and want of a gospel temper! These things oppress my soul. Rode from New York, thirty miles, to White Plains, and most of the way continued lifting up my heart to God for mercy and purifying grace, and spent the evening much dejected in spirit.

The next three days he continued in this frame, in a great sense of his own vileness, with an evident mixture of melancholy, in no small degree; but had some intervals of comfort, and God's sensible presence with him.

Wed., Dec. 1. —My soul breathed after God, in sweet spiritual and longing desires of conformity to him; my soul was brought to rest itself and all on his rich grace, and felt strength and encouragement to do or suffer any thing that divine providence should allot me. Rode about twenty miles from Stratfield to Newton.

Within the space of the next nine days, he went a journey

DAVID BRAINERD. 51

from Newton to Haddam, his native town; and after staying there some days, returned again into the western part of Connecticut, and came to Southbury.

Sat., Dec. 11. —Conversed with a dear friend, to whom I had thought of giving a liberal education, and being at the whole charge of it, that he might be fitted for the gospel ministry.¹ I acquainted him with my thoughts in that matter, and so left him to consider of it,

¹ Mr. Brainerd having now undertaken the business of a missionary to the Indians, and expecting in a little time to leave his native country, to go among the savages into the far distant wilderness, and spend the remainder of his life among them, and having some estate left him by his father, and thinking he should have no occasion for it among them (though afterwards, as he told me, he found himself mistaken), he set himself to think which way he might spend it most to the glory of God; and no way presenting itself to his thoughts, wherein he could do more good with it, than by being at the charge of educating some young person for the ministry, that appeared to be of good abilities and well-disposed, he pitched upon this person here spoken of to this end, who accordingly was soon put to learning, and Mr. Brainerd continued to be at the charge of his education from year

till I should see him again. Then I rode to Bethlehem, and so came to Mr. Bellamy's lodgings; spent the evening with him in sweet conversation and prayer; we recommended the important concern before mentioned (of sending my friend to college) unto the God of all grace. Blessed be the Lord for this evening's opportunity together.

Lord's day, Dec. 12. —I felt in the morning as if I had, little or no power either to pray or preach, and felt a distressing need of divine help. I went to meeting trembling; but it pleased God to assist me in prayer and sermon; I think my soul scarce ever penetrated so far into the immaterial world, in any one prayer that ever I made, nor were my devotions ever so much refined, and free from gross conceptions and imaginations framed from beholding material objects. I preached with some sweetness, from Matt. vi. 33, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God," &c.; and in the afternoon from Rom. xv. 30, "And now I beseech you, brethren," &c. There was much affection in the assembly. This has been a sweet Sabbath to me, and blessed be God, I have reason to think that my religion is become more refined and spiritual, by means of my late inward conflicts. Amen. May I always be willing that God should use his own methods with me!

52 THE LIFE OF

Mon., Dec. 13. —Joined in prayer with Mr. Bellamy, and found sweetness and composure in parting with him, who went a journey. Enjoyed some sweetness through the day, and just at night rode down to Woodbury.

Tues., Dec. 14. —Some perplexity hung on my mind; was distressed last night and this morning for the interest of Zion, especially on account of the *false appearances of religion*, that do but rather breed confusion, especially in some places. I cried to God for help, to enable me to bear testimony against those things, which, instead of promoting, do but hinder the progress of vital piety. In the afternoon, rode down to Southbury, and conversed again with my friend about the important affair of his following the work of the ministry, and he appeared much inclined to devote himself to that work, if God should succeed his attempts to qualify himself for so great a work. In the evening I preached from 1 Thess. iv. 8, and endeavoured, though with tenderness, to undermine false religion. The Lord gave me some assistance; but, however, I seemed so vile, I was ashamed to be seen when I came out of the meeting-house.

Wed., Dec. 15 —Enjoyed something of God to-day, both in secret and social prayer; but was sensible of much barrenness and defect in duty, as well as my inability to help myself for the time to come, or to perform the work and business I have to do. Afterwards felt much of the sweetness of religion and the tenderness of the gospel temper, was far from bitterness, and found a dear love to all mankind, and was afraid of scarcely any thing so much as lest some motion of anger or resentment should, some time or other, creep into my heart. Had some comforting, soul-refreshing discourse with some dear friends, just as we took our leave of each other, and supposed it might be likely we should not meet again till we came to the

to year, so long as he (Mr. Brainerd) lived, which was till this young man was carried through his third year in college.

eternal world.¹ But I doubt not, through grace, but that some of us shall have a happy meeting there, and bless God for this season, as well as for many others. Amen.

Thurs., Dec. 16. —Rode down to Derby; had some sweet thoughts on the road; my thoughts were very clear, especially

DAVID BRAINERD. 53

on the essence of our salvation by Christ, from those words, “Thou shall call his name Jesus.”

Fri., Dec. 17. —Spent much time in sweet conversation on spiritual things with dear Mr. Humphreys. Rode to Ripton; spent some time in prayer with dear Christian friends.

Sat., Dec. 18. —Spent much time in prayer in the woods; seemed raised above the things of the world; my soul was strong in the Lord of hosts; but was sensible of great barrenness.

Lord's day, Dec. 19. —At the sacrament of the Lord's Supper seemed strong in the Lord, and the world, with all its frowns and flatteries, in a great measure disappeared, so that my soul had nothing to do with them, and I felt a disposition to be wholly and for ever the Lord's. In the evening, enjoyed something the divine presence; had a humbling sense of my vileness, barrenness, and sinfulness. O, it wounded me to think of the misimprovement of time! “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Mon., Dec. 20. —Spent this day in prayer, reading, and writing; and enjoyed some assistance, especially in correcting some thoughts on a certain subject; but had” a mournful sense of my barrenness.

Tues., Dec. 21. —Had a sense of my insufficiency for any public work and business, as well as to live to God. I rode over to Derby, and preached there: it pleased God to give me very sweet assistance and enlargement, and to enable me to speak with a soft and tender power and energy. We had afterwards a comfortable evening in singing and prayer; God enabled me to pray with as much spirituality and sweetness as I have done for some time; my mind seemed to be unclothed of sense and imagination, and was in a measure let into the immaterial world of spirits. This day and evening was, I trust, through infinite goodness, made very profitable to a number of us, to advance our souls in holiness and conformity to God; the glory be to him for ever. Amen. How blessed it is to grow more and more like God!

Wed., Dec. 22. —Enjoyed some assistance in preaching at Ripton; but my soul mourned within me for my barrenness.

¹ It had been determined by the commissioners, who employed Mr. Brainerd as a missionary, that he should go, as soon as might be conveniently, to the Indians living near the Forks of Delaware river in Pennsylvania, and the Indians on Susquehannah river; and this being far off, where he would be exposed to many hardships and dangers, was the occasion of his taking leave of his friends in this manner.

Thurs., Dec. 23. —Enjoyed, I trust, something of God this morning in secret. O how divinely sweet is it to come into the secret of his presence, and abide in his pavilion! Took an affectionate leave of friends, not expecting to see them again for a very considerable time, if ever in this world. Rode with Mr. Humphreys to his house at Derby; spent the

54 THE LIFE OF

time in sweet conversation; my soul was refreshed and sweetly melted with divine things. Oh that I was always consecrated to God! Near night, I rode to New Haven, and there enjoyed some sweetness in prayer and conversation, with some dear Christian friends. My mind was sweetly serious and composed; but alas! I too much lost the sense of divine things.

He continued much in the same frame of mind, and in like exercises, the two following days.

Lord's day, Dec. 26. —Felt much sweetness and tenderness in prayer, especially my whole soul seemed to love my worst enemies, and was enabled to pray for those that are strangers and enemies to God with a great degree of softness and pathetic fervour. In the evening rode from New Haven to Branford, after I had kneeled down and prayed with a number of dear Christian friends in a very retired place in the woods, and so parted.

Mon., Dec. 27. —Enjoyed a precious season indeed; had a sweet melting sense of divine things, of the pure spirituality of the religion of Christ Jesus. In the evening I preached from Matt. vi. 33, with much freedom, and sweet power and pungency; the presence of God attended our meeting. O the sweetness, the tenderness I felt in my soul! if ever I felt the temper of Christ, I had some sense of it now. Blessed be my God, I have seldom enjoyed a more comfortable and profitable day than this. O that I could spend all my time for God!

Tues., Dec. 28. —Rode from Branford to Haddam. In the morning, my clearness and sweetness in divine things continued, but afterwards my spiritual life sensibly declined.

The next twelve days, he was for the most part extremely dejected, discouraged, and distressed, and was evidently very much under the power of melancholy; and there are from day to day most bitter complaints of exceeding vileness, ignorance, corruption, an amazing load of guilt, unworthiness to creep on God's earth, everlasting uselessness, fitness for nothing, &c.; and sometimes expressions even of horror at the thoughts of ever preaching again. But yet in this time of great dejection, he speaks of several intervals of divine help and comfort.

The next three days, which were spent at Hebron and the

DAVID BRAINERD. 55

Crank (a parish in Lebanon), he had relief, and enjoyed considerable comfort.

Fri., Jan. 14, 1742-3. —My spiritual conflicts to-day were unspeakably dreadful, heavier than the mountains and overflowing floods. I seemed inclosed, as it were, in hell itself: I was

deprived of all sense of God, even of the being of a God: and that was my misery. I had no awful apprehensions of God as angry. This was distress, the nearest akin to the damned's torments, that I ever endured. Their torment, I am sure, will consist much in a privation of God, and consequently of all good. This taught me the absolute dependence of a creature upon God the Creator, for every crumb of happiness it enjoys. Oh! I feel that if there is no God, though I might live for ever here, and enjoy not only this but all other worlds, I should be ten thousand times more miserable than a toad. My soul was in such anguish I could not eat, but felt, as I supposed a poor wretch would that is just going to the place of execution. I was almost swallowed up with anguish, when I saw people gathering together to hear me preach. However, I went in that distress to the house of God, and found not much relief in the first prayer; it seemed as if God would let loose the people upon me to destroy me; nor were the thoughts of death distressing to me, like my own vileness. But afterwards in my discourse from Deut. viii. 2, God was pleased to give me some freedom and enlargement, some power and spirituality, and I spent the evening something comfortably.

The next two days, his comfort continues, and he seems to enjoy an almost continual sweetness of soul in the duties and exercises of religion and Christian conversation. On Monday was a return of the gloom he had been under the Friday before. He rode to Coventry this day, and the latter part of the day had more freedom. On Tuesday he rode to Canterbury, and continued more comfortable.

Wed., Jan. 19. —[At Canterbury.] In the afternoon preached the lecture at the meeting-house: felt some tenderness, and something of the gospel-temper: exhorted the people to love one another, and not to set up their own frames as a standard to try all their brethren by; but was much pressed, most of the day, with a sense of my own badness, inward impurity, and unspeakable corruption. Spent the 3vening in loving Christian conversation.

56 THE LIFE OF

Thurs., Jan. 20. —Rode to my brother's house between Norwich and Lebanon, and preached in the evening to a number of people: enjoyed neither freedom nor spirituality, but saw myself exceeding unworthy.

Fri., Jan. 21. —Had great inward conflicts; enjoyed but little comfort. Went to see Mr. Williams of Lebanon, spent several hours with him, and was greatly delighted with his serious, deliberate, and impartial way of discourse about religion.

The next day, he was much dejected.

Lord's day., Jan. 23. —Scarce ever felt myself so unfit to exist as now: I saw I was not worthy of a place among the Indians, where I am going, if God permit: I thought I should be ashamed to look them in the face, and much more to have any respect shown me there. Indeed I felt myself banished from the earth, as if all places were too good for such a wretch as I: I thought I should be ashamed to go among the very savages of Africa; I appeared to myself a creature fit for nothing, neither heaven nor earth. None knows, but those that feel it,

what the soul endures that is sensibly shut out from the presence of God: alas! it is more bitter than death.

On Monday, he rode to Stoningtown, Mr. Fish's parish. On Tuesday he expresses considerable degrees of spiritual comfort and refreshment.

Wed., Jan. 26. —Preached to a pretty large assembly at Mr. Fish's meeting-house: insisted on humility, and steadfastness in keeping God's commands, and that through humility we should prefer one another in love, and not make our own frames the rule by which we judge others. I felt sweetly calm, and full of brotherly love, and never more free from party-spirit. I hope some good will follow, that Christians will be freed from false joy, and party-zeal, and censuring one another.

On Thursday, after considerable time spent in prayer and Christian conversation, he rode to New London.

Fri., Jan. 28. —Here I found some fallen into some extravagances, too much carried away with a false zeal and bit-

DAVID BRAINERD. 57

terness. Oh, the want of a gospel-temper is greatly to be lamented! Spent the evening in conversing with some, about some points of conduct in both ministers and private Christians; but did not agree with them. God had not *taught them with briars and thorns* to be of a kind disposition toward mankind.

On Saturday, he rode to East Haddam, and spent the three following days there; and in that space of time he speaks of his feeling weanedness from the world, a sense of the nearness of eternity, special assistance in praying for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, times of spiritual comfort, &c.

Wed., Feb. 2. —Preached my farewell sermon, last night, at the house of an aged man who had been unable to attend on the public worship for some time; and this morning spent the time in prayer, almost wherever I went; and, having taken leave of friends, I set out on my journey towards the Indians; though, by the way, I was to spend some time at East Hampton on Long Island, by the leave of the commissioners who employed me in the Indian affair;¹ and being accompanied by a messenger from East Hampton, we travelled to Lyme. On the road I felt an uncommon pressure of mind; I seemed to struggle hard for some pleasure in something here below, and seemed loath to give up all for gone; but then saw myself evidently throwing myself into all hardships and distresses in my present undertaking. I thought it would be less difficult to lie down in the grave, but yet I chose to go, rather than stay. Came to Lyme that night.

¹ The reason why the commissioners or correspondents did not order Mr. Brainerd to go immediately to the Indians, and enter on his business as a missionary to them, was, that the winter was not judged to be a convenient season for him first to go out into the wilderness, and enter on the difficulties and hardships he must there be exposed to.

He waited the next two days for a passage over the Sound, and spent much of the time in inward conflicts and dejection, but had some comfort.

On Saturday he crossed the Sound, landed at Oyster-Ponds on Long Island, and travelled thence to East Hampton. And the seven following days he spent there, for the most part, under extreme dejection and gloominess of mind,

58 THE LIFE OF

with great complaints of darkness, ignorance, &c. Yet his heart appears to have been constantly engaged in the great business of religion, much concerned for the interest of religion in East Hampton, and praying and labouring much for it.

Sat., Feb. 12. —Enjoyed a little more comfort, was enabled to meditate with some composure of mind, and especially in the evening, found my soul more refreshed in prayer, than at any time of late; my soul seemed to “take hold of God’s strength,” and was comforted with his consolations. O how sweet are some glimpses of divine glory! how strengthening and quickening!

Lord’s day, Feb. 13. —At noon, under a great degree of discouragement, knew not how it was possible for me to preach in the afternoon, was ready to give up all for gone, but God was pleased to assist me in some measure. In the evening, my heart was sweetly drawn out after God, and devoted to him.

The next day, he had comfort and dejection intermingled.

Tues., Feb. 15. —Early in the day I felt some comfort; afterwards I walked into a neighbouring grove, and felt more as a stranger on earth, I think, than ever before; dead to any of the enjoyments of the world, as if I had been dead in a natural sense. In the evening had divine sweetness in secret duty; God was then my portion, and my soul rose above those deep waters, into which I have sunk so low of late. My soul then cried for Zion, and had sweetness in so doing.

This sweet frame continued the next morning; but afterwards his inward distress returned.

Thurs., Feb. 17. —In the morning, found myself something comfortable, and rested on God in some measure. Preached this day at a little village belonging to East Hampton, and God was pleased to give me his gracious presence and assistance, so that I spake with freedom, boldness, and some power. In the evening, spent some time with a dear Christian friend; felt sweetly serious, as on the brink of eternity; my soul enjoyed sweetness in lively apprehensions of standing before the glorious God; prayed with my dear friend with sweetness, and discoursed with utmost solemnity. And truly it

was a little emblem of heaven itself. I find my soul is more refined and weaned from a dependence on my frames and spiritual feelings.

Fri., Feb. 18. —Felt something sweetly most of the day, and found access to the throne of grace. Blessed be the Lord for any intervals of heavenly delight and composure, while I am engaged in the field of battle. O that I might be serious, solemn, and always vigilant, while in an evil world! Had some opportunity alone to-day, and found some freedom in study. O, I long to *live to God!*

Sat., Feb. 19. —Was exceeding infirm to-day, greatly troubled with pain in my head and dizziness, scarce able to sit up. However, enjoyed something of God in prayer, and performed some necessary studies. I exceedingly long to die, and yet, through divine goodness, have felt very willing to live, for two or three days past.

Lord's day, Feb. 20. —Was something perplexed on account of my carelessness; I thought I could not be suitably concerned about the important work of the day, and so was restless with my easiness. Was exceeding infirm again today; but the Lord strengthened me, both in the outward and inward man, so that I preached with some life and spirituality, especially in the afternoon, wherein I was enabled to speak closely against selfish religion, that loves Christ for his benefits, but not for himself.

During the next fortnight it appears that he, for the most part, enjoyed much spiritual peace and comfort. In his diary for this space of time, are expressed such things as these mourning over indwelling sin and unprofitableness; deadness to the world; longing after God, and to live to his glory; heart-melting desires after his eternal home; fixed reliance on God for his help; experience of much divine assistance both in the private and public exercises of religion; inward strength and courage in the service of God; very frequent refreshment, consolation, and divine sweetness in meditation, prayer, preaching, and Christian conversation. And it appears by his account, that this space of time was filled up with great diligence and earnestness in serving God, in study, prayer, meditation, preaching, and private instructing and counselling.

Mar. 7. —This morning, when I arose, I found my heart go forth after God in longing desires of conformity to

60 THE LIFE OF

him, and in secret prayer found myself sweetly quickened and drawn out in praises to God for all he had done to and for me, and for all my inward trials and distresses of late; my heart ascribed glory, glory, glory to the blessed God! and bid welcome all inward distress again, if God saw meet to exercise me with it; time appeared but an inch long, and eternity at hand; and I thought I could with patience and cheerfulness bear any thing for the cause of God for I saw that a moment would bring me to a world of peace and blessedness and my soul, by the strength of the Lord, rose far above this lower world, and all the vain amusements, and frightful disappointments of it. Afterwards was visited by some friends, but lost some

sweetness by the means. After that, had some sweet meditation on Gen. v. 24, “And Enoch walked with God,” &c. This was a comfortable day to my soul.

The next day, he seems to have continued in a considerable degree of sweetness and fervency in religion.

Wed., Mar. 9. —Endeavoured to commit myself and all my concerns to God. Rode sixteen miles to Mantauck,¹ and had some inward sweetness on the road, but something of flatness and deadness after I came there and had seen the Indians. I withdrew, and endeavoured to pray, but found myself awfully deserted and left, and had an afflicting sense of my vileness and meanness. However, I went and preached from Isaiah liii. 10. Had some assistance, and, I trust, something of the divine presence was among us. In the evening again, I prayed and exhorted among them, after having had a season alone, wherein I was so pressed with the blackness of my nature, that I thought it was not fit for me to speak so much as to Indians.

The next day, he returned to East Hampton; was exceeding infirm in body through the remaining part of this week; but speaks of assistance and enlargement in study and religious exercises, and of inward sweetness and breathing after God.

Lord’s day., Mar. 13. —At noon, I thought it impossible for me to preach, by reason of bodily weakness and inward

DAVID BRAINERD. 61

deadness; and in the first prayer, was so weak that I could hardly stand; but in sermon, God strengthened me, so that I spake near an hour and a half with sweet freedom, clearness, and some tender power, from Gen. v. 24, “And Enoch walked with God.” I was sweetly assisted to insist on a close *walk with God*, and to leave this as my parting advice to God’s people here, that *they should walk with God*. May the God of all grace succeed my poor labours in this place!

Mon., Mar. 14. —In the morning was very busy in preparation for my journey, and was almost continually engaged in ejaculatory prayer. About ten, took leave of the dear people of East Hampton; my heart grieved and mourned, and rejoiced at the same time; rode nearly fifty miles to a part of Brook-Haven, and lodged there, and had refreshing conversation with a Christian friend.

In two days more he reached New York, but complains of much desertion and deadness on the road. He stayed one day in New York, and on Friday went to Mr. Dickinson’s at Elisabeth-Town. His complaints are the same as on the two preceding days.

Sat., Mar. 19. —Was bitterly distressed under a sense of my ignorance, darkness, and unworthiness; got alone, and poured out my complaint to God in the bitterness of my soul. In the afternoon, rode to Newark, and had some sweetness in conversation with Mr. Burr, and in praying together. O blessed be God for ever and ever, for any enlivening and quickening.

¹ Mantauck is the eastern cape or end of Long Island, inhabited chiefly by Indians.

Lord's day, Mar. 20. —Preached in the forenoon. God gave me some assistance and sweetness, and enabled me to speak with real tenderness, love, and impartiality. In the evening, preached again, and, of a truth, God was pleased to assist a poor worm. Blessed be God, I was enabled to speak with life, power, and passionate desire of the edification of God's people, and with some power to sinners. In the evening, I felt something spiritual and watchful, lest my heart should by any means be drawn away from God. O when shall I come to that blessed world, where every power of my soul will be incessantly and eternally wound up, in heavenly employments and enjoyments, to the highest degree!

On Monday he went to Woodbridge, where he speaks of

62 THE LIFE OF

his being with a number of ministers;¹ and the day following of his travelling part of the way towards New York, and lodging at a tavern. On Wednesday he came to New York. On Thursday, he rode near fifty miles, from New York to North Castle. On Friday, went to Danbury. On Saturday, to New Millford. On the Sabbath, he rode five or six miles to a place near Kent in Connecticut, called Scaticoke, where dwell a number of Indians,² and preached to them. On Monday, being detained by the rain, he tarried at Kent. On Tuesday, he rode from Kent to Salisbury. Wednesday, he went to Sheffield. Thursday, March 31, he went to Mr. Sergeant's at Stockbridge. He was dejected and very disconsolate, through the main of this journey from New Jersey to Stockbridge, and especially on the last day his mind was overwhelmed with an exceeding gloominess and melancholy.

¹ These ministers were the *Correspondents*, who now met at Woodbridge, and gave Mr. Brainerd new directions; and instead of sending him to the Indians at the Forks of Delaware, as before intended, they ordered him to go to a number of Indians, at Kaunaumeeck, a place in the province of New York, in the woods between Stockbridge and Albany. This alteration was occasioned by two things, viz. 1. Information that the correspondents had received of some contention now subsisting between the white people and Indians at Delaware, concerning their lands, which they supposed would be a hindrance at present to their entertainment of a missionary, and to his success among them; and, 2. Some intimations they had received from Mr. Sergeant, missionary to the Indians at Stockbridge, concerning the Indians at Kaunaumeeck, and the hopeful prospect of success that a missionary might have among them.

² These were the same Indians that Mr. Brainerd mentions in his diary, on August 12, the preceding year.

PART V.

FROM HIS FIRST BEGINNING TO INSTRUCT THE INDIANS AT KAUNAUMEEK, TO HIS ORDINATION.

Fri., Ap. 1, 1743. —I rode to KaunaumEEK, near twenty miles from Stockbridge, where the Indians live with whom I am concerned, and there lodged on a little heap of straw: was greatly exercised with inward trials and distresses all day, and in the evening my heart was sunk, and I seemed to have no God to go to. O that God would help me!

DAVID BRAINERD. 63

The next five days, he was for the most part in a dejected, depressed state of mind, and sometimes extremely so. He speaks of God's "waves and billows rolling over his soul;" and of his being ready sometimes to say, "Surely his mercy is clean gone for ever, and he will be favourable no more; "and says, the anguish he endured was nameless and inconceivable: but at the same time speaks thus concerning his distresses, "What God designs by all my distresses I know not; but this I know, I deserve them all, and thousands more." He gives an account of the Indians kindly receiving him, and being seriously attentive to his instructions.

Thurs., Ap. 7. —Appeared to myself exceeding ignorant, weak, helpless, and unworthy, and altogether unequal to my work. It seemed to me I should never do any service, or have any success among the Indians. My soul was weary of my life; I longed for death, beyond measure. When I thought of any godly soul departed, my soul was ready to envy him his privilege, thinking, "O when will my turn come! must it be years first!" But I know that those ardent desires, at this and other times, rose partly for want of resignation to God under all miseries, and were but impatience. Towards night, I had (I think) the exercise of faith in prayer, and some assistance in writing. O that God would keep me near him!

Fri., Ap. 8. —Was exceedingly pressed under a sense of my *pride, selfishness, bitterness, and party-spirit*, in times past, while I attempted to promote the cause of God; its vile nature and dreadful consequences appeared in such odious colours to me, that my very heart was pained; I saw how poor souls stumbled over it into everlasting destruction, that as constrained to make that prayer in the bitterness of my soul, "O Lord, deliver me from blood-guiltiness." I saw my desert of hell on this account. My soul was full of inward anguish and shame before God, that I had spent so much time in conversation tending only to promote a *party-spirit*. O I saw I had not suitably prized mortification, self-denial, resignation under all adversities, meekness, love, candour, and holiness of heart and life; and this day was almost wholly spent in such bitter and soul-afflicting reflections on my past frames and conduct. Of late, I have thought much of having the kingdom of Christ advanced in the world, but now I saw I had enough to do within myself. The Lord be merciful to me a sinner, and wash my soul!

64 THE LIFE OF

Sat., Ap. 9. —Remained much in the same state as yesterday, excepting that the sense of my vileness was not so quick and acute.

Lord's day, Ap. 10. —Rose early in the morning and walked out, and spent considerable time in the woods, in prayer and meditation. Preached to the Indians, both forenoon and afternoon. They behaved soberly in general: two or three in particular appeared under some religious concern, with whom I discoursed privately, and one told me, "her heart had cried ever since she heard me preach first."

The next day, he complains of much desertion.

Tues., Ap. 12. —Was greatly oppressed with grief and shame, reflecting on my past conduct, my *bitterness* and *party-zeal*. I was ashamed to think that such a wretch as I had ever preached. Longed to be excused from that work. And when my soul was not in anguish and keen distress, I felt senseless "as a beast before God," and felt a kind of guilty amusement with the least trifles; which still maintained [within me] a kind of stifled horror of conscience, so that I could not rest any more than a condemned malefactor.

Wed., Ap. 13. —My heart was overwhelmed within me: I verily thought I was the meanest, vilest, most helpless, guilty, ignorant, benighted creature living. And yet I knew what God had done for my soul, at the same time: though sometimes I was assaulted with damping doubts and fears, whether it was possible for such a wretch as I to be in a state of grace.

Thurs., Ap. 14. —Remained much in the same state as yesterday.

Fri., Ap. 15. —In the forenoon, very disconsolate. In the afternoon, preached to my people, and was a little encouraged in some hopes God might bestow mercy on their souls. Felt something resigned to God under all dispensations of his providence.

Sat., Ap. 16. —Still in the depths of distress. In the afternoon, preached to my people, but was more discouraged with them than before; reared that nothing would ever be done for them to any happy effect. I retired and poured out my soul to God for mercy, but without any sensible relief. Soon after came an Irishman and a Dutchman, with a design, as they said, to hear me preach the next day; but none can tell how I felt to hear their profane talk.

DAVID BRAINERD. 65

O I longed that some dear Christian knew my distress. I got into a kind of hovel, and there groaned out my complaint to God; and withal felt more sensible gratitude and thankfulness to God that he had made me to differ from these men, as I knew through grace he had.

Lord's day, Ap. 17. —In the morning was again distressed as soon as I waked, hearing much talk about the world and the things of it. Though I perceived the men were in some measure afraid of me, and I discoursed something about sanctifying the Sabbath —if possible, to solemnize their minds —yet when they were at a little distance, they again talked freely about secular affairs. Oh, I thought what a *hell* it would be, to live with such men to eternity!

The Lord gave me some assistance all day in preaching, and some resignation and a small degree of comfort in prayer at night.

He continued in this disconsolate frame the next day.

Tues., Ap. 19. —In the morning, enjoyed some sweet repose and rest in God, felt some strength and confidence in God, and my soul was in some measure refreshed and comforted. Spent most of the day in writing, and had some exercise of grace sensible and comfortable; my soul seemed lifted above the *deep waters*, wherein it has been so long almost drowned; felt some spiritual longings and breathings of soul after God; found myself engaged for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in my own soul, more than in others, more than in the heathen world.

Wed., Ap. 20. —Set apart this day for fasting and prayer, to bow my soul before God for the bestowment of divine grace; especially that all my spiritual afflictions and inward distresses might be sanctified to my soul. Endeavoured also to remember the goodness of God to me in the year past, this day being my birth-day. Having obtained help of God, I have hitherto lived, and am now arrived at the age of twenty-five years. My soul was pained, to think of my barrenness and deadness, that I have lived so little to the glory of the eternal God. I spent the day in the woods alone, and there poured out my complaint to God. O that God would enable me to live to his glory for the future!

Thurs., Ap. 21. —Spent the forenoon in reading and prayer, and found myself something engaged, but still much depressed in spirit under a sense of my vileness and unfitness for any public service. In the afternoon, I visited my

66 THE LIFE OF

people and prayed and conversed with some about their souls' concerns, and afterwards found some ardour of soul in secret prayer. O that I might grow up into the likeness of God.

Fri., Ap. 22. —Spent the day in study, reading, and prayer, and felt a little relieved of my burden, that has been so heavy of late; but still in some measure oppressed; had a sense of barrenness. O my leanness testifies against me! my very soul abhors itself for its unlikeness to God, its inactivity and sluggishness. When I have done all, alas, what an unprofitable servant am I! My soul groans, to see the hours of the day roll away, because I do not fill them in spirituality and heavenly-mindedness. And yet I long they should speed their pace, to hasten me to my eternal home, where I may fill up all my moments, through eternity, for God and his glory.

On Saturday and Lord's day, his melancholy again prevailed, he cried out of his ignorance, stupidity, and senselessness, while yet he seems to have spent the time with utmost diligence, in study, in prayer, and in instructing and counselling the Indians. On Monday, he sunk into the deepest melancholy, so that he supposed he never spent a day in such distress in his life; not in fears of hell (which, he says, he had no pressing fear of), but a distressing sense of his own vileness, &c. On Tuesday, he expresses some relief. Wednesday he kept as a day of

fasting and prayer, but in great distress. The next three days, his melancholy continued, but in a lesser degree, and with intervals of comfort.¹

Lord's day, May 1. —Was at Stockbridge to-day. In the forenoon had some relief and assistance, though not so much as usual. In the afternoon felt poorly in body and soul; while I was preaching, seemed to be rehearsing idle tales, without the least life, fervour, sense, or comfort, and especially afterwards, at the sacrament, my soul was filled with confusion, and the utmost anguish that ever I endured, under the feeling of my inexpressible vileness and meanness. It was a most bitter and distressing season to me, by reason of the view I had of my own heart, and the secret abominations that lurk there; I thought the eyes of all in the house were upon me, and I dared not look any one in the face; for it

DAVID BRAINERD. 67

verily seemed as if they saw the vileness of my heart, and all the sins I had ever been guilty of. And if I had been banished from the presence of all mankind, never to be seen any more, or so much as thought of, still I should have been distressed with shame; and I should have been ashamed to see the most barbarous people on earth, because I was viler, and seemingly more brutishly ignorant than they. "I am made to possess the sins of my youth."

The remaining days of this week were spent, for the most part, in inward distress and gloominess. The next Sabbath, he had encouragement, assistance, and comfort; but on Monday sunk again.

Tues., May 10. —Was in the same state, as to my mind, that I have been in for some time — extremely pressed with a sense of guilt, pollution, blindness: "The iniquity of my heels have compassed me about; the sins of my youth have been set in order before me; they have gone over my head, as an heavy burden, too heavy for me to bear." Almost all the actions of my life past seem to be covered over with sin and guilt; and those of them that I performed in the most conscientious manner, now fill me with shame and confusion, that I cannot hold up my face. O! the *pride, selfishness, hypocrisy, ignorance, bitterness, party-zeal, and the want of love, candour, meekness, and gentleness*, that have attended my attempts to promote religion and virtue; and this when I have reason to hope I had real assistance from above, and some sweet intercourse with Heaven! But, alas, what corrupt mixtures attended my best duties!

The next seven days, his gloom and distress continued for the most part; but he had some turns of relief and spiritual comfort. He gives an account of his spending part of this time in hard labour, to build himself a little *cottage* to live in amongst the Indians, in which he might be by himself; having (it seems) hitherto lived with a poor Scotchman, as he observes in the letter just now referred to; and afterwards, before his own house was habitable, lived in a wigwam among the Indians.

Wed., May 18. —My circumstances are such that I have no comfort of any kind, but what I have in God. I live in the most lonesome wilderness, have but one single person to

¹ On the last of these days he wrote the *first letter* added at the end of the Memoir.

converse with, that can speak English.¹ Most of the talk I hear, is either Highland-Scotch or Indian. I have no fellow-Christian to whom I might unbosom myself and lay open my spiritual sorrows, and with whom I might take sweet counsel in conversation about heavenly things, and join in social prayer. I live poorly with regard to the comforts of life, most of my diet consists of boiled corn, hasty-pudding, &c. I lodge on a bundle of straw, and my labour is hard and extremely difficult; and I have little appearance of success to comfort me. The Indians' affairs are very difficult, having no land to live on, but what the Dutch people lay claim to, and threaten to drive them off from; they have no regard to the souls of the poor Indians; and, by what I can learn, they hate me, because I come to preach to them. But that which makes all my difficulties grievous to be borne, is, that "God hides his face from me."

Thurs., May 19. —Spent most of this day in close studies, but was sometimes so distressed that I could think of nothing but my spiritual blindness, ignorance, pride, and misery. O I have reason to make that prayer, "Lord, forgive my sins of youth, and former trespasses! "

Fri., May 20. —Was much perplexed, some part of the day: but towards night, had some comfortable meditations on Isaiah xl. 1, and enjoyed some sweetness in prayer. Afterwards my soul rose so far above the *deep waters*, that I dared to *rejoice in God*; I saw there was sufficient matter of consolation in the blessed God.

The next nine days his burdens were for the most part alleviated, but with variety, at some times having considerable consolation, and at other times more depressed. The next day, Monday, May 30, he set out on a journey to New Jersey, to consult the commissioners that employed him about the affairs of his mission.² Performed his journey thither in four days, and arrived at Mr. Burr's in Newark on Thursday. In great part of his journey, he was in the depths of

DAVID BRAINERD. 69

melancholy, under like distresses with those already mentioned. On Friday he rode to Elizabeth Town, and on 'Saturday to New York, and from thence on his way homewards as far as White Plains, where he spent the Sabbath, and had considerable degrees of divine consolation and assistance in public services. On Monday he rode about sixty miles to New Haven. There he attempted a reconciliation with the authority of the *college*; and spent this week in visiting: his friends in those parts, and in his journey homewards, till Saturday, in a pretty comfortable frame of mind. On Saturday, in his way from Stockbridge to Kaunaumee, he was lost in the woods, and lay all night in the open air; but happily found

¹ This person was Mr. Brainerd's interpreter, who was an ingenious young Indian belonging to Stockbridge, by name John Wauwaumpequunnaunt, who had been instructed in the Christian religion by Mr. Sergeant, and had lived with the Rev. Mr. Williams of Long Meadow, and had been further instructed by him, at the charge of Mr. Hollis of London, and understood both English and Indian very well, and wrote a good hand.

² His business with the commissioners now was, to obtain orders from them to set up a school among the Indians at Kaunaumee, and that his interpreter might be appointed the schoolmaster, which was accordingly done.

his way in the morning, and came to his Indians on Lord's day, June 12, and had greater assistance in preaching among them than ever before, since his first coming among them.

From this time forward he was the subject of various frames and exercises of mind; but it seems, in the general, to have been with him much after the same manner as it had been hitherto from his first coming to Kaunaumee, till he got into his own house (a little hut, that he made chiefly with his own hands, with long and hard labour), which was near seven weeks from this time. Great part of this space of time he was dejected and depressed with melancholy, and sometimes very extremely, his melancholy operating in like manner as has been related of times past. How it was with him in those dark seasons, he himself further describes in his diary for July 2, in the following manner: —“My soul is and has for a long time been in a piteous condition, wading through a series of sorrows of various kinds. I have been so crushed down sometimes with a sense of my meanness and infinite unworthiness, that I have been ashamed that any, even the meanest of my fellow-creature?, should so much as spend a thought about me, and have wished sometimes while I have travelled among the thick brakes, to drop, as one of them, into everlasting oblivion. In this case, sometimes, I have almost resolved never again to see any of my acquaintances, and really thought I could not do it and hold up my face; and have longed for the remotest region, for a retreat from all my friends, that I might not be seen or heard of any more. Sometimes the consideration of my ignorance has been a means of my great distress and anxiety. And especially my soul has been in anguish with fear, shame, and

70 THE LIFE OF

guilt, that ever I had preached, or had any thought that way. Sometimes my soul has been in distress on feeling some particular corruptions rise and swell like a mighty torrent, with present violence, having, at the same time, ten thousand former sins and follies presented to view, in all their blackness and aggravations; and these attended with such external circumstances as mine at present are —destitute of most of the conveniences of life, and I may say, of all the pleasures of it; without a friend to communicate any of my sorrows to, and sometimes without any place of retirement, where I may unburden my soul before God, which has greatly contributed to my distress. Of late, more especially, my great difficulty has been a sort of carelessness, a kind of regardless temper of mind, whence I have been disposed to indolence and trifling; and this temper of mind has constantly been attended with guilt and shame, so that sometimes I have been in a kind of horror, to find myself so unlike the blessed God, and have thought I grew worse under all my trials; and nothing has cut and wounded my soul more than this. O if I am one of God's chosen, as I trust through infinite grace I am, I find of a truth that *the righteous are scarcely saved.*”

It is apparent, that one main occasion of that distressing gloominess of mind which he was so much exercised with at Kaunaumee, was reflection on his past errors and misguided zeal at college, in the beginning of the late religious commotions in the land. And therefore he repeated his endeavours this year for reconciliation with the governors of the college, whom he had in that time offended. Although he had been at New Haven in June this year, and had attempted a reconciliation, as has been mentioned already; yet, in the beginning of July, he made another journey thither and renewed his attempt, but still in vain.

Although he was much dejected great part of that space of time that I am now speaking of, yet there were many intermissions of his melancholy, and some seasons of comfort, sweet tranquillity and resignation of mind, and frequent special assistance in public services, that he speaks of in his diary. The manner of his relief from his sorrow, once in particular, is worthy to be mentioned in his own words, in his diary for July 25, which are as follows: —“Had little or no resolution for a life of holiness; was ready almost to renounce my hopes of living to God. And oh, how dark it looked, to think of being unholy for ever! This I could not

DAVID BRAINERD. 71

endure. The cry of my soul was that (Ps. lxxv. 3.) ‘*Iniquities prevail against me;*’ but was in some measure relieved by a comfortable meditation on God’s eternity, that he never had a beginning, &c. Whence I was led to admire his greatness and power, &c. in such a manner that I stood still, and praised the Lord for his own glories and perfections; though I was (and if I should for ever be) an unholy creature, my soul was comforted to apprehend an eternal, infinite, powerful, holy God.”

Sat., July 30. —Just at night, moved into *my own house*, and lodged there that night; found it much better spending the time alone in my own house, than in the *wigwam* where I was before.

Lord’s day, July 31. —Felt more comfortably than some days past. Blessed be the Lord that has now given me a place of retirement. O that I might *find* God in it, and that he would dwell with me for ever!

Mon., Aug. 1. —Was still busy in further labours on my house. Felt a little of the sweetness of religion, and thought it was worth the while to *follow after God* through a thousand snares, deserts, and death itself. O that I might always *follow after holiness*, that I may be fully conformed to God! Had some degree of sweetness in secret prayer, though I had much sorrow.

Tues., Aug. 2. —Was still labouring to make myself more comfortable with regard to my house and lodging. Laboured under spiritual anxiety; it seemed to me I deserved to be kicked out of the world; yet found some comfort in “committing my cause to God. It is good for me to be afflicted,” that I may die wholly to this world, and all that is in it.

Wed., Aug. 3. —Spent most of the day in writing. Enjoyed some sense of religion. Through divine goodness I am now uninterruptedly alone and find my retirement comfortable. I have enjoyed more sense of divine things within a few days last past, than for some time before. I longed after holiness, humility, and meekness, O that God would enable me to “pass the time of my sojourning here in his fear,” and always to *live to him!*

Thurs., Aug. 4. —Was enabled to pray much through the whole day, and through divine goodness found some intenseness of soul in the duty, as I used to do, and some ability to persevere in my supplications; had some apprehensions of

divine things that were engaging, and that gave me some courage and resolution. It is good I find to *persevere in attempts* to pray, if I cannot *pray with perseverance*, i.e. continue long in my addresses to the divine Being. I have generally found, that the more I do in secret prayer, the more I have delighted to do, and have enjoyed more of a spirit of prayer; and frequently have found the contrary when, with journeying or otherwise, I have been much deprived of retirement. A seasonable steady performance of secret duties in their proper hours, and a careful improvement of all time, filling up every hour with some profitable labour, either of heart, head, or hands, are excellent means of spiritual peace and boldness before God. “Christ” indeed “is our peace, and by him we have boldness of access to God;” but a *good conscience void of offence*, is an excellent preparation for an approach into the divine presence. There is difference between *self-confidence* and a *self-righteous pleasing ourselves* (with our own duties, attainments, and spiritual enjoyments), which godly souls sometimes are guilty of, and that holy *confidence* arising from the testimony of a good conscience, which good Hezekiah had, when he says, “Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart.” “Then,” says the holy psalmist, “shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.” Filling up our time *with* and *for* God, is the way to rise up and lie down in peace.

The next eight days, he continued for the most part in a very comfortable frame, having his mind fixed and sweetly engaged in religion, and more than once blesses God that he had given him a little *cottage*, where he might live alone and enjoy a happy retirement, free from noise and disturbance, and could at any hour of the day lay aside all studies, and spend time in lifting up his soul to God for spiritual blessings.

Sat., .Aug. 13. —Was enabled in secret prayer to raise my soul to God with desire and delight. It was indeed a blessed season to my soul? I found the comfort of being a Christian; “I counted the sufferings of the present life not worthy to be compared with the glory” of divine enjoyments even in this world. All my past sorrows seem kindly to disappear, and I “remembered no more the sorrow for joy.” “O how kindly, and with what a filial tenderness, the soul hangs on

DAVID BRAINERD. 73

and confides in the Rock of ages, at such a season —that he will “never leave it, nor forsake it,” that he will cause “all things to work together for its good! “&c. I longed that others should know how good a God the Lord is. My soul was full of tenderness and love, even to the most inveterate of my enemies: I longed they should share in the same mercy. I loved and longed that God should do just as he pleased with me and every thing else. I felt exceeding serious, calm, and peaceful, and encouraged to press after holiness as long as I live, whatever difficulties and trials may be in my way. May the Lord always help me so to do! Amen and Amen.

Lord's day, Aug. 14. —I had much more freedom in public than in private. God enabled me to speak with some feeling sense of divine things; but perceived no considerable effect.

Mon., Aug. 15. —Spent most of the day in labour to procure something to keep my horse on in the winter. Enjoyed not much sweetness in the morning; was very weak in body, through the day, and thought this frail body would soon drop into the dust; had saline very realizing apprehensions of a speedy entrance into another world. And in this weak state of body, was not a little distressed for want of suitable food. Had no bread, nor could I get any. I am forced to go or send ten or fifteen miles for all the bread I eat, and sometimes it is mouldy and sour before I eat it, if I get any considerable quantity; and then again I have none for some days together, for want of an opportunity to send for it, and cannot find my horse in the woods to go myself. And this was my case now, but through divine goodness I had some Indian mealy of which I made little cakes, and fried them. Yet felt contented with my circumstances, and sweetly resigned to God. In prayer I enjoyed great freedom, and blessed God as much for my present circumstances, as if I had been a king; and thought I found a disposition to be contented in any circumstances. Blessed be God!

The rest of this week he was exceeding weak in body and much exercised with pain, and yet obliged from day to day to labour hard to procure fodder for his horse, excepting some part of the time he was so very ill that he was neither able to work nor study; but speaks of longings after holiness and perfect conformity to God, complains of enjoying but little of God, yet says, *that little* was better to him than.

74 THE LIFE OF

all the world besides. In his diary for Saturday he says he was something melancholy and sorrowful in mind, and adds, I never feel comfortably but when I find my soul going forth after God; if I cannot be holy, I must necessarily be miserable for ever.

Lord's day, Aug. 21. —Was much straitened in the forenoon exercise; my thoughts seemed to be all scattered to the ends of the earth. At noon, I fell down before the Lord, and groaned under my vileness, barrenness, deadness, and felt as if I was guilty of soul-murder, in speaking to immortal souls in such a manner as I had then done. In the afternoon, God was pleased to give me some assistance, and I was enabled to set before my hearers the nature and necessity of true repentance, &c. Afterwards had some small degree of thankfulness. Was very ill and full of pain in the evening; and my soul mourned that I had spent so much time to so little profit.

Mon., Aug. 22. —Spent most of the day in study; and found my bodily strength in a measure restored. Had some intense and passionate breathings of soul after holiness, and very clear manifestations of my utter inability to procure, or work it in myself: it is wholly owing to the power of God. O with what tenderness the love and desire of holiness fills the soul! I wanted to wing out of myself to God, or rather to get a conformity to him; but, alas! I cannot add to my stature in grace one cubit. However, my soul can never leave striving for it, or at least groaning that it cannot strive for it, and obtain more purity of heart. At night, I spent some time in instructing my poor people. O that God would pity their souls!

Tues., Aug. 23. —Studied in the forenoon and enjoyed some freedom. In the afternoon, laboured abroad; endeavoured to pray much; but found not much sweetness or intenseness of mind. Towards night was very weary, and tired of this world of sorrow; the thoughts of death and immortality appeared very desirable, and even refreshed my soul. Those lines turned in my mind with pleasure —

“Come death, shake hands; I’ll kiss thy bands;
‘Tis happiness for me to die.
What! dost thou think that I will shrink?
I’ll go to immortality.”

In evening prayer, God was pleased to draw near my soul,

DAVID BRAINERD. 75

though very sinful and unworthy: was enabled to wrestle with God, and to persevere in my requests for grace. I poured out my soul for all the world, friends and enemies. My soul was concerned, not so much for souls as such, but rather for Christ’s kingdom, that it might appear in the world, that God might be known to be God in the whole earth. And O my soul abhorred the very thought of a *party* in religion! Let the truth of God appear wherever it is, and God have the glory for ever. Amen. This was indeed a comfortable season; I thought I had some small taste of, and real relish for, the enjoyments and employments of the upper world. O that my soul was more attempered to it!

Wed., Aug. 24. —Spent some time in the morning in study and prayer. Afterwards was engaged in some necessary business abroad. Towards night found a little time for some particular studies. I thought if God should say, “Cease making any provision for this life, for you shall in a few days go out of time into eternity,” my soul would leap for joy. O that I may both “desire to be dissolved, to be with Christ,” and likewise “wait patiently all the days of my appointed time till my change come! “But, alas! I am very unfit for the business and blessedness of heaven. O for more holiness!

Thurs., Aug. 25. —Part of the day engaged in studies, and part in labour abroad. I find it is impossible to enjoy peace and tranquillity of mind without a careful improvement of time. This is really an imitation of God and Christ Jesus: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,” says our Lord. But still, if we would be like God, we must see that we fill up our time for him. I daily long to dwell in perfect light and love. In the meantime, my soul mourns that I make so little progress in grace, and preparation for the world of blessedness; I see and know that I am a very barren tree in God’s vineyard, and that he might justly say, “Cut it down.” O that God would make me more lively and vigorous in grace, for his own glory! Amen.

The next two days he was much engaged in some necessary labours, in which he extremely spent himself. He seems, these days, to have had a great sense of the vanity of the world, and continued longings after holiness, and more fervency of spirit in the service of God.

Lord's day, Aug. 28. —Was much perplexed with some

76 THE LIFE OF

irreligious Dutchmen. All their discourse turned upon the things of the world; which was no small exercise to my mind. O what a *hell* it would be to spend an eternity with such men! Well might David say, "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved." But, adored be God, *heaven* is a place "into which no unclean thing enters." O I long for the holiness of that world! Lord, prepare me therefor.

The next day he set out on a journey to New York. Was something dejected the first two days of his journey, but yet seems to have enjoyed some degrees of the sensible presence of God.

Wed., Aug. 31. —Rode down to Bethlehem, was in a sweet, serious, and, I hope, Christian frame, when I came there; eternal things engrossed all my thoughts, and I longed to be in the world of spirits. O how happy is it, to have all our thoughts swallowed up in that world; to feel one's self a serious considerate stranger in this world, diligently seeking a road through it —the best, the sure road to the heavenly Jerusalem!

Thurs., Sept. 1. —Rode to Danbury. Was more dull and dejected in spirit than yesterday. Indeed I always feel comfortably, when God realizes death and the things of another world to my mind; whenever my mind is taken off from the things of this world and set on God, my soul is then at *rest*.

He went forward on his journey, and came to New York on the next Monday. After tarrying there two or three days he set out from the city towards New Haven, intending to be there at the [college] commencement, and on Friday came to Horse Neck. In the meantime he complains much of dulness and want of fervour in religion, but yet from time to time speaks of his enjoying spiritual warmth and sweetness in conversation with Christian friends, assistance in public services, &c.

Sat., Sept. 10. —Rode six miles to Stanwich, and preached to a considerable assembly of people. Had some assistance and freedom, especially towards the close. Endeavoured much afterwards in private conversation to establish holiness, humility, meekness, &c., as the offence to true religion, and to moderate some noisy sort of persons that appeared to me to be acted [moved] by unseen spiritual pride. Alas, what

DAVID BRAINERD. 77

extremes men incline to run into! Returned to Horse Neck, and felt some seriousness and sweet solemnity in the evening.

Lord's day, Sept. 11. —In the afternoon preached from Tit. iii. 8. I think God never helped me more in pointing out true religion, and in detecting clearly, and tenderly discountenancing false appearances of religion, wild-fire party zeal, spiritual pride, &c., as well as a confident

dogmatical spirit, and its spring, viz. ignorance of the heart. In the evening took much pains, in private conversation, to suppress some confusions that I perceived were amongst that people.

Mon., Sept. 12. —Rode to Mr. Mills at Ripton. Had some perplexing hours, but was some part of the day very comfortable. It is “through great trials,” I see, “that we must enter the gates of paradise.” If my soul could but be holy, that God might not be dishonoured, methinks I could bear sorrows.

Tues., Sept. 13. —Rode to New Haven. Was sometimes dejected; not in the sweetest frame. Lodged at _____. Had some profitable Christian conversation, &c. I find, though my inward trials are given, and a life of solitude gives them greater advantage to settle and penetrate to the very inmost recesses of the soul, yet it is better to be alone, than encumbered with noise and tumult. I find it very difficult maintaining any sense of divine things, while removing from place to place, diverted with new objects, and filled with care and business. A settled steady business is best adapted to a life of strict religion.

Wed., Sept. 14. —This day I ought to have taken *my degree*,¹ but God sees fit to deny it me. And though I was greatly afraid of being overwhelmed with perplexity and confusion, when I should see my class-mates take theirs, yet in the very season of it, God enabled me with calmness and resignation to say, “The will of the Lord be done.” Indeed, through divine goodness, I have scarcely felt my mind so calm, sedate, and comfortable for some time. I have long feared this season, and expected my humility, meekness, patience, and resignation would be much tried;² but found

78 THE LIFE OF

much more pleasure and divine comfort than I expected. Felt spiritually serious, tender and affectionate, in private prayer with a dear Christian friend to-day.

Thurs., Sept. 15. —Had some satisfaction in hearing the minister’s discourse, &c. It is always a comfort to me to hear religious and spiritual discourse. O that ministers and people were more spiritual and devoted to God! Towards night, with the advice of Christian friends, I offered the following reflections in writing to the rector and trustees of the college (which are for substance the same that I had freely offered to the rector before, and entreated him to accept); and this I did, that if possible I might cut off all occasion of stumbling and offence from those that seek occasion. What I offered is as follows:

“Whereas I have said before several persons, concerning Mr. Whittelsey. one of the tutors of Yale College, that I did not believe he had any more grace than the chair I then leaned upon, I humbly confess, that herein I have sinned against God, and acted contrary to the

¹ This being commencement day.

² is trial was the greater, in that, had it not been for the displeasure of the governors of the college, he would not only on that day have shared with his class-mates in the public honours which they then received, but would on that occasion have appeared at the head of that class; which, if he had been with them, would have been the most numerous of any that ever had been graduated at that college.

rules of his word, and have injured Mr. Whittelsey. I had no right to make thus free with his character, and had no just reason to say as I did concerning him. My fault herein was the more aggravated, in that I said this concerning one that was so much my superior, and one that I was obliged to treat with special respect and honour, by reason of the relation I stood in to him in the college. Such a manner of behaviour, I confess, did not become a Christian; it was taking too much upon me, and did not savour of that humble respect that I ought to have expressed towards Mr. Whittelsey. I have long since been convinced of the falseness of those apprehensions by which I then justified such a conduct. I have often reflected on this act with grief—I hope on account of the sin of it; and am willing to lie, and be abased before God and man for it; and humbly ask the forgiveness of the governors of the college, and of the whole society, but of Mr. Whittelsey in particular. And whereas I have been accused by one person of saying concerning the reverend rector of Yale College, that I wondered he did not expect to drop down dead for fining the scholars that followed Mr. Tennent to Milford, I seriously profess, that I do not remember my saying any thing to this purpose. But if I did, which I am not certain I did not, I utterly condemn it, and detest all such kind of behaviour, and especially in an undergraduate towards the rector. And I now appear to judge and condemn myself for

DAVID BRAINERD. 79

going once to the separate meeting in New Haven, a little before I was expelled, though the rector had refused to give me leave. For this I humbly ask the rector's forgiveness. And whether the governors of the college shall ever see cause to remove the academical censure I lie under, or no, or to admit me to the privileges I desire, yet I am willing to appear, if they think fit, openly to own, and to humble myself for those things I have herein confessed."

God has made me willing to do any thing that I can do consistent with truth, for the sake of peace, and that I might not be a stumbling block and offence to others. For this reason I can cheerfully forego and give up what I verily believe, after the most mature and impartial search, is my right in some instances. God has given me that disposition, that if this were the case, that a man has done me an hundred injuries, and I (though ever so much provoked to it) have done him one, I feel disposed and heartily willing humbly to confess my fault to him, and on my knees to ask forgiveness of him, though at the same time he should justify himself in all the injuries he has done me, and should only make use of my humble confession to blacken my character the more, and represent me as the only person guilty, &c.; yea, though he should as it were insult me, and say, "he knew all this before, and that I was making work for repentance," &c. Though what I said concerning Mr. Whittelsey was only spoken in private to a friend or two, and being partly overheard, was related to the rector, and by him extorted from my friends; yet, seeing it was divulged and made public, I was willing to confess my fault therein publicly. But I trust God will plead my cause.¹

¹ I was witness to the very Christian spirit Mr. Brainerd showed at that time, being then at New Haven, and being one that he saw fit to consult on that occasion. (This was the first time that ever I had opportunity of personal acquaintance with him.) There truly appeared in him a great degree of calmness and humility, without the least appearance of rising of spirit for any ill-treatment he supposed he had suffered, or the least backwardness to abase himself before them who he thought had wronged him. What he did was without any

The next day he went to Derby, then to Southbury, where he spent the Sabbath, and speaks of some spiritual comfort, but complains much of unfixedness, and wanderings of mind in religion.

80 THE LIFE OF

Mon., Sept. 19. —In the afternoon rode to Bethlehem, and there preached. Had some measure of assistance, both in prayer and preaching. I felt serious, kind and tender towards all mankind, and longed that holiness might flourish more on earth.

Tues., Sept. 20. —Had thoughts of going forward on my journey to my Indians, but towards night was taken with a hard pain in my teeth, and shivering cold, and could not possibly recover a comfortable degree of warmth the whole night following. I continued very full of pain all night, and in the morning had a very hard fever, and pains almost all over my whole body. I had a sense of the divine goodness in appointing this to be the place of my sickness, viz. among my friends that were very kind to me. I should probably have perished, if I had first got home to my own house in the wilderness, where I have none to converse with but the poor rude ignorant Indians. Here I saw was mercy in the midst of affliction. I continued thus, mostly confined to my bed, till Friday night, very full of pain most of the time, but through divine goodness not afraid of death. Then the extreme folly of those appeared to me, who put off their turning to God till a sickbed. Surely this is not a time proper to prepare for eternity. On Friday evening my pains went off something suddenly, and I was exceeding weak, and almost fainted; but was very comfortable the night following. These words (Ps. cxviii. 17) I frequently revolved in my mind, and thought we were to prize the continuation of life only on this account, that we may “show forth God’s goodness and works of grace.”

From this time he gradually recovered, and on the next Tuesday was so well as to be able to go forward on his journey homeward; but was till the Tuesday following before he reached Kaunaumeeek. He seems, great part of this time, to have had a very deep and lively sense of the vanity and

DAVID BRAINERD. 81

emptiness of all things here below, and of the reality, nearness, and vast importance of eternal things.

objection or appearance of reluctance, even, in private to his friends, that he freely opened himself to. Earnest application was made on his behalf to the authority of the college, that he might have his degree then given him; and particularly by the Reverend Mr. Burr of Newark, one of the correspondents of the honourable society in Scotland, he being sent from New Jersey to New Haven, by the rest of the commissioners, for that end, and many arguments were used, but without success. Indeed the governors of the college were so far satisfied with the reflections Mr. Brainerd had made on himself, that they appeared willing to admit him again into college; but not to give him his degree, till he should have remained there at least a twelvemonth, which being contrary to what the correspondents, to whom he was now engaged, had declared to be their mind, he did not consent to it. He desired his degree, as he thought it would tend to his being more extensively useful, but still when he was denied it, he manifested no disappointment or resentment.

Tues., Oct. 4. —This day rode home to my own house and people. The poor Indians appeared very glad of my return. Found my house and all things in safety. I presently fell on my knees, and blessed God for my safe return after a long and tedious journey, and a season of sickness in several places where I had been, and after I had been sick myself. God has renewed his kindness to me in preserving me one journey more. I have taken many considerable journeys since this time last year, and yet God has never suffered one of my bones to be broken, or any distressing calamity to befall me, excepting the ill turn I had in my last journey, though I have been often exposed to cold and hunger in the wilderness where the comforts of life were not to be had, have frequently been lost in the woods, and sometimes obliged to ride much of the night, and once lay out in the woods all night. Blessed be God that has preserved me!

In his diary for the next eleven days are great complaints of distance from God, spiritual pride, corruption, and exceeding vileness. He once says his heart was so pressed with a sense of his pollution, that he could scarcely have the face and impudence (as it then appeared to him) to desire that God should not damn him for ever. And at another time, he says he had so little sense of God, or apprehension and relish of his glory and excellency, that it made him more disposed to kindness and tenderness towards those who are blind and ignorant of God and things divine and heavenly.

Lord's day, Oct. 16. —In the evening God was pleased to give me a feeling sense of my own unworthiness, but through divine goodness such as tended to draw rather than drive me from God: it filled me with solemnity. I retired alone (having at this time a friend with me), and poured out my soul to God with much freedom and yet in anguish —to find myself so unspeakably sinful and unworthy before a holy God. Was now much resigned under God's dispensations towards me, though my trials had been very great. But thought whether I could be resigned, if God should let the French Indians come upon me, and deprive me of my life, or carry me away captive (though I knew of no special reason then to propose this trial to myself, more than any other), and my

82 THE LIFE OF

soul seemed so far to rest and acquiesce in God, that the sting and terror of these things seemed in a great measure gone. Presently after I came to the Indians, whom I was teaching to sing psalm-tunes that evening, I received the following letter from Stockbridge, by a messenger sent on the Sabbath on purpose, which made it appear of greater importance:

“Sir, —Just now we received advices from Col. Stoddard, that there is the utmost danger of a rupture with France. He has received the same from his excellency our governor, ordering him to give notice to all the exposed places, that they may secure themselves the best they can against any sudden invasion. We thought best to send directly to Kaunaumuck, that you may take the prudentest measures for your safety that dwell there. —I am, Sir,” &c.

I thought, upon reading the contents, it came in a good season, for my heart seemed something fixed on God, and therefore I was not much surprised: but this news only made me more serious, and taught me that I must not please myself with any of the comforts of life

which I had been preparing for my support. Blessed be God, that gave me any intenseness and fervency this evening!

Mon., Oct. 17. —Had some rising hopes sometimes, that “God would arise and have mercy on Zion speedily.” My heart is Indeed refreshed when I have any prevailing hopes of Zion’s prosperity. O that I may see the glorious day when Zion shall become the joy of the whole earth! Truly there is nothing that I greatly value in this lower world.

On Tuesday he rode to Stockbridge; complains of being much diverted, and having but little life. On Wednesday he expresses some solemn sense of divine things, and a longing to be always doing for God with a godly frame of spirit.

Thurs., Oct. 20. —Had but little sense of divine things this day. Alas, that so much of my precious time is spent with so little of God! Those are tedious days, wherein I have no spirituality.

Fri., Oct. 21. —Returned home to Kaunaumeeek: was glad to get alone in my little cottage, and to cry to that God who seeth in secret, and is present in a wilderness.

Sat., Oct. 22. —Had but little sensible communion with God. This world is a dark, cloudy mansion. Oh, when will

DAVID BRAINEPD. 83

the Sun of righteousness shine on my soul without cessation or intermission!

Lord’s day, Oct. 23. —In the morning, had a little dawn of comfort arising from hopes of seeing glorious days in the Church of God: was enabled to pray for such a glorious day with some courage and strength of hope. In the forenoon, treated on the glories of heaven, &c. In the afternoon, on the miseries of hell, and the danger of going there. Had some freedom and warmth both parts of the day, and my people were very attentive. In the evening, two or three came to me under concern for their souls, to whom I was enabled to discourse closely, and with some earnestness and desire. O that God would be merciful to their poor souls!

He seems, through the whole of this week, to have been greatly engaged to fill up every inch of time in the service of God, and to have been most diligently employed in study, prayer, and instructing the Indians; and from time to time expresses longings of soul after God, and the advancement of his kingdom, and spiritual comfort and refreshment.

Lord’s day, Oct. 30. —In the morning enjoyed some fixedness of soul in prayer, which was indeed sweet and desirable; was enabled to leave myself with God, and to acquiesce in him. At noon, my soul was refreshed with reading Rev. iii., more especially the eleventh and twelfth verses. O my soul longed for that blessed day, when I should “dwell in the temple of God,” and “go no more out” of his immediate presence.

Mon., Oct. 31. —Rode to Kinderhook, about fifteen miles from my place. While riding, I felt some divine sweetness in the thoughts of being “a pillar in the temple of God” in the upper world, and being no more deprived of his blessed presence, and the sense of *his favour*, which is “better than life.” My soul was so lifted up to God, that I could pour out my desires to him for more grace and further degrees of sanctification, with abundant freedom. O I longed to be more abundantly prepared for that blessedness with which I was then in some measure refreshed. Returned home in the evening, but took an extremely bad cold by riding in the night.

Tues., Nov. 1. —Was very much disordered in body, and sometimes full of pain in my face and teeth; was not able to study much, and had not much spiritual comfort. Alas!

84 THE LIFE OF

when God is withdrawn, all is gone! Had some sweet thoughts, which I could not but write down, on the *design, nature, and end of Christianity*.

Wed., Nov. 2. —Was still more indisposed in body, and in much pain, most of the day; had not much comfort; was scarcely able to study at all, and still entirely alone in the wilderness. But, blessed be the Lord, I am not exposed in the open air: I have a house, and many of the comforts of life to support me. I have learned in a measure, that all good things, relating both to time and eternity, come from God. In the evening had some degree of quickening in prayer: I think God gave me some sense of his presence.

Thurs., Nov. 3. —Spent this day in secret fasting and prayer, from morning till night. Early in the morning, had (I think) some small degree of assistance in prayer. Afterwards, read the story of Elijah the prophet, 1 Kings xvii., xviii., and xix., and also 2 Kings ii. and iv. My soul was much moved, observing the faith, zeal, and power of that holy man, how he wrestled with God in prayer, &c. My soul then cried with Elisha, “Where is the Lord God of Elijah! “Oh, I longed for more faith! My soul breathed after God, and pleaded with him, that a “double portion of that Spirit” which was given to Elijah might “rest on me.” And that which was divinely refreshing and strengthening to my soul was —I saw that God is the same that he was in the days of Elijah. Was enabled to wrestle with God by prayer, in a more affectionate, fervent, humble, intense, and importunate manner, than I have for many months past. Nothing seemed too hard for God to perform, nothing too great for me to hope for from him. I had for many months entirely lost all hopes of being made instrumental of doing any special service for God in the world; it has appeared entirely impossible, that one so black and vile should be thus improved for God. But at this time God was pleased to revive this hope. Afterwards read the third chapter of Exodus, and on to the twentieth, and saw more of the *glory* and *majesty* of God discovered in those chapters, than ever I had seen before; frequently in the mean time falling on my knees, and crying to God for the faith of Moses, and for a manifestation of the *divine glory*. Especially the third and fourth, and part of the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters, were unspeakably sweet to my soul: my soul blessed God, that he had shown himself so gracious to his servants of old. The fifteenth chapter seemed to be the very language which my

soul uttered to God in the season of my first spiritual comfort, when I had just got through the *Red Sea* by a way that I had no expectation of. O how my soul then *rejoiced in God*! And now those things came fresh and lively to my mind; now my soul blessed God afresh, that he had opened that unthought-of way to deliver me from the fear of the Egyptians, when I almost despaired of life. Afterwards read the story of Abraham's pilgrimage in the land of Canaan: my soul was melted on observing his *faith* — how he leaned on God, how he *communed* with God, and what a *stranger* he was here in the world. After that, read the story of Joseph's sufferings, and God's goodness to him: blessed God for these examples of faith and patience. My soul was ardent in prayer, was enabled to wrestle ardently for myself, for Christian friends, and for the Church of God. And felt more desire to see the power of God in the conversion of souls, than I have done for a long season. Blessed be God for this season of fasting and prayer! May his goodness always abide with me, and draw my soul to him!

Thurs., Nov. 4. —Rode to Kinderhook; went quite to Hudson's River, about twenty miles from my house, performed some business, and returned home in the evening to my own house. I had rather ride hard and fatigue myself, to get home, than to spend the evening and night amongst those that have no regard for God.

The next two days he was very ill, and full of pain, probably through his riding in the night after a fatiguing day's journey on Thursday, but yet seems to have been diligent in business.

Mon., Nov. 7. —This morning the Lord afforded me some special assistance in prayer; my mind was solemn, fixed, affectionate, and ardent in desires after holiness, and felt full of tenderness and love, and my affections seemed to be dissolved into kindness and softness. In the evening enjoyed the same comfortable assistance in prayer as in the morning: my soul longed after God, and cried to him with a filial freedom, reverence, and boldness. O that I might be entirely consecrated and devoted to God!

The next two days he complains of bodily illness and pain, but much more of spiritual barrenness and unprofitableness.

86 THE LIFE OF

Thurs., Nov. 10. —Spent this day in fasting and prayer alone. In the morning, was very dull and lifeless, was something melancholy and discouraged. But after some time reading 2 Kings xix., my soul was moved and affected, especially reading verse 14 and onward. I saw there was no other way for the afflicted children of God to take, but to go to God with all their sorrows. Hezekiah in his great distress went and spread his complaint before the Lord. I was then enabled to see the mighty power of God, and my extreme need of that power; was enabled to cry to God affectionately and ardently for his divine power and grace to be exercised towards me. Afterwards read the story of David's trials, and observed the course he took under them, how he strengthened his hands in God whereby my soul was carried out after God, enabled to cry to him and rely upon him, and felt *strong in the Lord*. Was afterwards refreshed, observing the blessed temper that was wrought in David by his trials:

all bitterness, and desire of revenge, seemed wholly taken away, so that he mourned for the death of his enemies; 2 Sam. i. 17., and iv. 9, to the end. Was enabled to bless God that he had given me something of this divine temper, that my soul freely *forgives*, and heartily *loves my enemies*. .

It appears by his diary for the remaining part of this week, and for the two following weeks, that great part of the time he was very ill and full of pain, and yet obliged through his circumstances, in this ill state of body, to be at great fatigues, in labour in travelling day and night, and to expose himself in stormy and severe seasons. He from time to time, within this space, speaks of outgoings of soul after God, his heart strengthened in God, seasons of divine sweetness and comfort, his heart affected with gratitude for mercies, &c. And yet there are many complaints of lifelessness, weakness of grace, distance from God, and great unprofitableness. But still there appears a constant care from day to day not to lose time, but to improve it all for God.

Lord's day, Nov. 27. —In the evening, was greatly affected in reading an account of the very joyful death of a pious gentleman, which seemed to invigorate my soul in God's ways: I felt courageously engaged to pursue a life of holiness and self-denial as long as I live, and poured out my soul to God for his help and assistance in order thereto.

DAVID BRAINERD. 87

Eternity then seemed near, and my soul rejoiced and longed to meet it. O, I trust that will be a blessed day that finishes my toil here!

Mon., Nov. 28. —In the evening, was obliged to spend time in company and conversation that was unprofitable. Nothing lies heavier upon me, than the misimprovement of time.

Tues., Nov. 29. —Began to study the Indian tongue, with Mr. Sergeant at Stockbridge.¹ Was perplexed for want of more retirement. I love to live alone in my own little cottage, where I can spend much time in prayer, &c.

Wed., Nov. 30. —Pursued my study of Indian, but was very weak and disordered in body, and was troubled in mind at the barrenness of the day, that I had done so little for God. I had some enlargement in prayer at night. Oh, a barn or stable, hedge, or any other place, is truly desirable, if God is there! Sometimes, of late, my hopes of Zion's prosperity are more raised than they were in the summer past. My soul seems to confide in God, that he will yet "show forth his salvation" to his people, and make Zion "the joy of the whole earth. O how excellent is the loving-kindness of the Lord! "My soul sometimes inwardly exults at the lively thoughts of what God has already done for his church, and what "mine eyes have seen of the salvation of God." It is sweet to hear nothing but spiritual discourse from God's

¹ The commissioners that employed him had directed him to spend much time this winter with Mr. Sergeant, to learn the language of the Indians; which necessitated him very often to ride, backwards and forwards, twenty miles through the uninhabited woods between Stockbridge and Kaunaumeeek, and many times exposed him to extreme hardship in the severe seasons of the winter.

children, and sinners “inquiring the way to Zion,” saying, “What shall we do?” &c. O that I may see more of this blessed work!

Thurs., Dec. 1. —Both morning and evening, I enjoyed some intenseness of soul in prayer, and longed for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom in the world. My soul seems, of late, to *wait on God* for his blessing on Zion. O that religion might powerfully revive!

Fri., Dec. 2. —Enjoyed not so much health of body or fervour of mind as yesterday. If the chariot-wheels move with ease and speed at any time for a short space, yet by and by they drive heavily again. “that I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away” from sin and corruption, and be *at rest in God!*

88 THE LIFE OF

Sat., Dec. 3. —Rode home to my house and people. Suffered much with the extreme cold. I trust I shall ere long arrive safe at my journey’s end, where my toils shall cease.

Lord’s day, Dec. 4. —Had but little sense of divine and heavenly things. My soul mourns over my barrenness. O how sad is spiritual deadness!

Mon., Dec. 5. —Rode to Stockbridge. Was almost outdone with the extreme cold. Had some refreshing meditations by the way, but was barren, wandering, and lifeless, much of the day. Thus my days roll away, with but little done for God; and this is my burden.

Tues., Dec. 6. —Was perplexed to see the vanity and levity of professed Christians. Spent the evening with a Christian friend, that was able in some measure to sympathize with me in my spiritual conflicts. Was a little refreshed to find one with whom I could converse of *inward trials*, &c.

Wed., Dec. 7. —Spent the evening in perplexity, with a kind of guilty indolence. When I have no heart or resolution for God and the duties incumbent on me, I feel guilty of negligence and misimprovement of time. Certainly I ought to be engaged in my work and business, to the utmost extent of my strength and ability.

Thurs., Dec. 8. —My mind was much distracted with different affections. Seemed to be at an amazing distance from God; and looking round in the world to see if there was not some happiness to be derived from it —God, and some certain objects in the world, seemed each to invite my heart and affections, and my soul seemed to be distracted between them. I have not been so much beset with the world for a long time, and that with relation to some particular objects which I thought myself most dead to. But even while I was desiring to please myself with any thing below, guilt, sorrow, and perplexity attended the first motions of desire. Indeed, I cannot see the appearance of pleasure and happiness in the world, as I used to do: and blessed be God for any habitual deadness to the world! I found no peace or deliverance from this distraction and perplexity of mind, till I found access to the throne of grace; and as soon as I had any sense of God and things divine, the-allurements of the world vanished, and

my heart was determined for God. But my soul mourned over my folly, that I should desire any pleasure but only in God. God forgive my spiritual idolatry!

The next thirteen days, he appears to have been continu-

DAVID BRAINERD. 89

ally in deep concern about the improvement of precious time, and there are many expressions of grief that he improved time no better —such as, “Oh, what misery do I feel, when my thoughts rove after vanity! I should be happy if always engaged for God! O wretched man that I am! “&c. Speaks of his being pained with a sense of his barrenness, perplexed with his wanderings, longing for deliverance from the being of sin —mourning that time passed away —and so little was done for God, &c. On Tuesday, December 20, he speaks of his being visited at Kaunaumee by some under spiritual concern.

Thurs., Dec. 22. —Spent this day alone in fasting and prayer, and reading in God’s Word the exercises and deliverances of God’s children. Had, I trust, some exercise of faith, and realizing apprehension of divine power, grace, and holiness, and also of the unchangeableness of God, that he is the same as he was when he delivered his saints of old out of great tribulation. My soul was sundry times in prayer enlarged for God’s church and people. O that Zion might become the “joy of the whole earth!” It is better to wait upon God with patience, than to put confidence in any thing in this lower world. “My soul, wait thou on the Lord; for from him comes thy salvation.”

Fri. Dec. 23. —Felt a little more courage and resolution in religion, than at some other times.

Sat., Dec. 24. —Had some assistance and longing desires after sanctification, in prayer this day; especially in the evening was sensible of my own weakness and spiritual impotency; saw plainly I should fall into sin, if God, of his abundant mercy, did not “uphold my soul and withhold me from evil.” O that God would “uphold me by his free Spirit, and save me from the hour of temptation!”

Lord’s day, Dec. 25. —Prayed much in the morning, with a feeling sense of my own spiritual weakness and insufficiency for any duty. God gave me some assistance in preaching to the Indians, and especially in the afternoon, when I was enabled to speak with uncommon plainness, ‘freedom, and earnestness. Blessed be God for any assistance granted to one so unworthy! Afterwards felt some thankfulness, but still sensible of barrenness. Spent some time in the evening with one or two persons under spiritual concern, and exhorting others to their duty, &c.

Mon. Dec. 26. —Rode down to Stockbridge. Was very

much fatigued with my journey, wherein I underwent great hardship; was much exposed, and very wet by falling into a river. Spent the day and evening without much sense of divine and heavenly things, but felt guilty, grieved, and perplexed with wandering, careless thoughts.

Tues., Dec. 27. —Had a small degree of warmth in secret prayer in the evening; but, alas! had but little spiritual life, and consequently but little comfort. O the pressure of a *body of death!*¹

Wed., Dec. 28. —Rode about six miles to the ordination of Mr. Hopkins. In the season of the solemnity, was somewhat affected with a sense of the greatness and importance of the work of a minister of Christ. Afterwards was grieved to see the vanity of the multitude. In the evening, spent a little time with some Christian friends with some degree of satisfaction, but most of the time had rather have been alone.

Thurs., Dec. 29. —Spent the day mainly in conversing with friends, yet enjoyed little satisfaction, because I could find but few disposed to converse of divine and heavenly things. Alas, what are things of this world, to afford satisfaction to the soul! Near night, returned to Stockbridge; in secret blessed God for retirement, and that I be not always exposed to the company and conversation of the world. O that I could live “in the secret of God’s presence!”

Fri., Dec. 30. —Was in a solemn, devout frame in the evening. Wondered that earth, with all its charms, should ever allure me in the least degree. O that I could always realize the being and holiness of God!

Sat., Dec. 31. —Rode from Stockbridge home to my house. The air was clear and calm, but as cold as ever I felt it in the world, or near. I was in great danger of perishing by the extremity of the season. Was enabled to meditate much on the road.

Lord’s day, Jan. 1, 1743-4. —In the morning, had some small degree of assistance in prayer. Saw myself so vile and unworthy, that I could not look my people in the face when I came to preach. O my meanness, folly, ignorance, and inward pollution! In the evening, had a little assistance in prayer, so that the duty was delightful rather than burdensome. Reflected on the goodness of God to me in the past year, &c. Of a truth, God has been kind and gracious to me, though he has caused me to pass through many sorrows; he has provided for me bountifully, so that I have been

DAVID BRAINERD. 91

enabled, in about fifteen months past, to bestow to charitable uses about an *hundred pounds* New England money, that I can now remember.² Blessed be the Lord, that has so far used me as his steward, to distribute a *portion of his goods!* May I always remember that all I have

¹ This day he wrote the *second letter* added at the end of this history.

² Which was, I suppose, to the value of about *one hundred and eighty five pounds* in our bills of the old tenor as they now pass. By this, as well as many other things, it is manifest, that his frequent melancholy did not arise from the consideration of any disadvantage he was laid under to get a living in the world, by his expulsion from the college.

comes from God! Blessed be the Lord, that has carried me through all the toils, fatigues, and hardships of the year past, as well as the spiritual sorrows and conflicts that have attended it! O that I could begin this year *with God*, and spend the whole of it to *his glory*, either in life or death!

Mon., Jan. 2. —Had some affecting sense of my own impotency and spiritual weakness. It is nothing but “the power of God that keeps me from all manner of wickedness. I see *I am nothing*, and can do nothing without help from above. Oh, for divine grace! In the evening, had some ardour of soul in prayer, and longing desires to have God for my guide and safeguard at all times.¹

Tues., Jan. 3. —Was employed much of the day in writing, and spent some time in other necessary employment. But my time passes away so swiftly, that I am astonished when I reflect on it, and see how little I do in it. My state of solitude does not make the hours hang heavy upon my hands. O what reason of thankfulness have I on account of this retirement! I find that I do not, and it seems I cannot, lead a *Christian* life when I am abroad, and cannot spend time in devotion, Christian conversation, and serious meditation, as I should do. Those weeks that I am obliged now to be from home, in order to learn the Indian tongue, are mostly spent in perplexity and barrenness, without much sweet relish of divine things; and I feel myself a stranger at the throne of grace, for want of more frequent and continued retirement. When I return home, and give myself to meditation, prayer, and fasting, a new scene opens to my mind, and my soul longs for mortification, self-denial, humility, and divorcement from all the things of the world. This evening, my heart was somewhat warm and fervent in prayer and meditation, so that I was loth to indulge sleep. Continued in those duties till about midnight.

92 THE LIFE OF

Wed., Jan. 4. —Was in a resigned and mortified temper of mind much of the day. Time appeared a *moment*, like a *vapour*, and all its enjoyments as *empty bubbles*, and fleeting blasts of wind.

Thurs., Jan. 5. —Had a humbling and pressing sense of my unworthiness. My sense of the badness of my own heart filled my soul with bitterness and anguish, which was ready to sink, as under the weight of a heavy burden: and thus spent the evening till late. Was somewhat intense and ardent in prayer.

Fri., Jan. 6. —Feeling and considering my extreme weakness and want of grace, the pollution of my soul and danger of temptations on every side, I set apart this day for fasting and prayer, neither eating nor drinking from evening to evening, beseeching God to have mercy on me; and my soul intensely longed that the dreadful spots and stains of sin might be washed away from it. Saw something of the power and all-sufficiency of God. My soul seemed to rest on his power and grace, longed for resignation to his will, and mortification to all things here below. My mind was greatly fixed on divine things; my resolutions for a life of mortification, continual watchfulness, self-denial, seriousness, and devotion to God, were

¹ This day he wrote the *third letter*, published at the end of this account of his life.

strong and fixed; my desires ardent and intense; my conscience tender, and afraid of every appearance of evil; my soul grieved with the reflection on past levity, and want of resolution for God. I solemnly renewed my dedication of myself to God, and longed for grace to enable me always to keep covenant with him. Time appeared very short, eternity near, and a great name, either in or after life, together with all earthly pleasures and profits, but an empty bubble, a deluding dream.

Sat., Jan. 7. —Spent this day in seriousness, with steadfast resolutions for God and a life of mortification. Studied closely, till I felt my bodily strength fail. Felt some degree of resignation to God, with an acquiescence in his dispensations. Was grieved that I could do so little for God before my bodily strength failed. In the evening, though tired, yet was enabled to continue instant in prayer for some time. Spent the time in reading, meditation, and prayer, till the evening was far spent: was grieved to think that I could not *watch unto prayer* the whole night. But, blessed be God, heaven is a place of continual and incessant devotion, though earth is dull.

The six days following, he continued in the same happy

DAVID BRAINERD. 93

frame of mind, enjoyed the same composure, calmness, resignation, ardent desire, and sweet fervency of spirit, in a high degree, every day, not one excepted. Thursday, this week, he kept as a day of secret fasting and prayer.

Sat., Jan. 14. —This morning, enjoyed a most solemn season in prayer: my soul seemed enlarged and assisted to pour out itself to God for grace, and for every blessing I wanted, for myself, my dear Christian friends, and for the Church of God, and was so enabled to *see Him who is invisible*, that my soul *rested upon him*, for the performance of every thing I asked agreeable to his will. It was then my happiness to “continue instant in prayer,” and was enabled to continue in it for near an hour. My soul was then “strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” Longed exceedingly for angelic holiness and purity, and to have all my thoughts at all times, employed in divine and heavenly things. O how blessed is an heavenly temper! O how unspeakably blessed it is to feel a measure of that rectitude in which we were at first created! Felt the same divine assistance in prayer sundry times in the day. My soul confided in God for myself, and for his Zion; trusted in divine power and grace, that he would do glorious things in his church on earth, for his own glory.

The next day he speaks of some glimpses he had of the divine glories, and of his being enabled to maintain his resolutions in some measure, but complains that he could not draw near to God, seems to be filled with trembling fears lest he should return to a life of vanity, to please himself with some of the enjoyments of this lower world, and speaks of his being much troubled, and feeling guilty, that he should address immortal souls with no more ardency and desire of their salvation. On Monday, he rode down to Stockbridge, was distressed with extreme cold, but notwithstanding, his mind was in a devout and solemn frame in his journey. The next four days, he was very ill, probably by his suffering from the cold in his journey, yet he says he spent the time in a more solemn manner than he feared. On

Friday evening, he rode down and visited Mr. Hopkins, and on Saturday rode eighteen miles to Solsbury, where kept Sabbath, and enjoyed considerable degrees of God's gracious presence, assistance in duty, and divine comfort and refreshment, longing to give himself wholly to God, to be his for ever.

04 THE LIFE OF

Mon., Jan. 23. —I think I never felt more resigned to God, nor so much dead to the world, in every respect, as now; was dead to all desires of reputation and greatness, either in life, or after death; all I longed for, was to be holy, humble, crucified to the world, &c,

Tues., Jan. 24. —Near noon, rode over to Canaan. In the evening, was unexpectedly visited by a considerable number of people, with whom I was enabled to converse profitably of divine things: took pains to describe the difference between a regular and irregular *self-love* —the one consisting with a supreme love to God, but the other not; the former uniting God's glory and the soul's happiness, that they become one common interest, but the latter disjoining and separating God's glory and the man's happiness, seeking the latter with a neglect of the former. Illustrated this by that genuine love that is found between the sexes, which is diverse from that which is wrought up towards a person only by rational arguments, or hope of self-interest. Love is a pleasing passion, it affords pleasure to the mind where it is; but yet true genuine love is not, nor can be, placed upon any object with the design of pleasing *itself* with the feeling of it in a man's own breast.

On Wednesday he rode to Sheffield, the next day to Stockbridge, and on Saturday, home to Kaunaumee, though the season was cold and stormy, which journey was followed with illness and pain. It appears by his diary, that he spent the time, while riding, in profitable meditations, and in lifting up his heart to God; and he speaks of assistance, comfort, and refreshment, but still complains of barrenness, &c. His diary for the next five days is full of the most heavy, bitter complaints, and he expresses himself as full of shame and self-loathing for his lifeless temper of mind and sluggishness of spirit, and as being in perplexity and extremity, and appearing to himself unspeakably vile and guilty before God, on account of some inward workings of corruption he found in his heart, &c.

Thurs., Feb. 2. —Spent this day in fasting and prayer, seeking the presence and assistance of God, that he would enable me to overcome all my corruptions and spiritual enemies.

Fri., Feb. 3. —Enjoyed more freedom and comfort than of late; was intensely engaged in meditation upon the different

DAVID BRAINERD. 95

whispers of the various powers and affections of a pious mind, exercised with a great variety of dispensations; and could not but write, as well as meditate, on so entertaining a subject.¹ I hope the Lord gave me some true sense of divine things this day; but alas, how great and

¹ I find what he wrote on this head among his papers that were left in my hand, and it is published at the end of this account of his life.

pressing are the remains of indwelling corruption! I am now more sensible than ever, that God alone is “the author and finisher of our faith,” *i.e.* that the whole and every part of sanctification, and every good word, work, or thought, that is found in me, is the effect of his power and grace that “without him I can do nothing,” in the strictest sense, and that “he works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure,” and from no other motive. O how amazing it is that people can talk so much about men’s power and goodness, when, if God did not hold us back every moment, we should be devils incarnate! This my bitter experience for several days last past has abundantly taught me concerning myself.

Sat., Feb. 4. —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.

Lord’s day, Feb. 5. —Was enabled in some measure to rest and confide in God, and to prize his presence, and some glimpses of the light of his countenance, above my necessary food. Thought myself, after the season of weakness, temptation, and desertion I endured the last week, to be somewhat like Samson when his locks began to grow again. Was enabled to preach to my people with more life and warmth than I have for some weeks past.

Mon., Feb. 6. —This morning, my soul again was strengthened in God, and found some sweet repose in him in prayer, longing especially for the complete mortification of sensuality and pride, and for resignation to God’s dispensations, at all times, as through grace I felt it at this time. I did not desire deliverance from any difficulty that attends my circumstances, unless God was willing. O how comfortable is this temper! Spent most of the day in reading God’s word, in writing, and prayer. Enjoyed repeated and frequent comfort and intenseness of soul in prayer through the day. In

96 THE LIFE OF

the evening, spent some hours in private conversation with my people, and afterwards felt some warmth in secret prayer.

Tues., Feb. 7. —Was much engaged in some sweet meditations on the powers and affections of the godly soul in their pursuit of their beloved object; wrote something of the native language of spiritual sensation, in its soft and tender whispers, declaring, that it now “feels and tastes that the Lord is gracious,” that he is the supreme good, the only soul-satisfying happiness, that he is a complete, sufficient, and almighty portion: saying,

“Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides this blessed portion. O I feel it is heaven to please him, and to be just what he would have me to be! O that my soul were holy, as he is holy! O that it were pure, even as Christ is pure; and perfect, as my Father in heaven is perfect! These, I feel, are the sweetest commands in God’s book, comprising all others. And shall I break them! must I break them! am I under a necessity of it as long as I live in the world! O my soul, wo, wo is me that I am a sinner,

because I now necessarily grieve and offend this blessed God, who is infinite in goodness and grace! O methinks, if he would punish me for my sins, it would not wound my heart so deep to offend him: but though I sin continually, yet he continually repeats his kindness to me! Oh, methinks I could bear any suffering, but how can I bear to grieve and dishonour this blessed God! How shall I yield ten thousand times more honour to him? What shall I do to glorify and worship this best of beings? O that I could consecrate myself, soul and body, to his service for ever! O that I could give up myself to him, so as never more to attempt to be my own, or to have any will or affections that are not perfectly conformed to him! But alas, alas! I find I cannot be thus entirely devoted to God—I cannot live and not sin. O ye angels, do ye glorify him incessantly, and if possible, prostrate yourselves lower before the blessed King of Heaven? I long to bear a part with you, and, if it were possible, to help you. Oh, when we have done all that we can, to all eternity, we shall not be able to offer the tenthousandth part of the homage that the glorious God deserves! “

Felt something spiritual, devout, resigned, and mortified to the world, much of the day, and especially towards and in the evening. Blessed be God, that he enables me to love him for himself I

DAVID BRAINERD. 97

Wed., Feb. 8. —Was in a comfortable frame of soul most of the day, though sensible of and restless under spiritual barrenness. I find that both mind and body are quickly tired with intenseness and fervour in the things of God. O that I could be as incessant as angels in devotion and spiritual fervour!

Thurs., Feb. 9. —Observed this day as a day of fasting and prayer, intreating God to bestow upon me his blessing and grace; especially to enable me to live a life of mortification to the world, as well as of resignation and patience. Enjoyed some realizing sense of divine power and goodness in prayer several times; and was enabled to roll the burden of myself and friends, and of Zion, upon the goodness and grace of God; but in general, was more dry and barren than I have usually been of late upon such occasions.

Fri., Feb. 10. —Was exceedingly oppressed most of the day with shame, grief, and fear, under a sense of my past folly, as well as present barrenness and coldness. When God sets before me my past misconduct, especially any instances of *misguided zeal*, it sinks my soul into shame and confusion makes me afraid of a shaking leaf. My fear is such as the prophet Jeremiah complains of. (Jer. xx. 10.) I have no confidence to hold up my face, even before my fellow worms, but only when my soul confides in God, and I find the sweet temper of Christ, the spirit of humility, solemnity, mortification, and resignation, alive in my soul. But, in the evening, was unexpectedly refreshed in *pouring out my complaint to God*; my shame and fear was turned into a sweet composure and acquiescence in God.

Sat., Feb. 11. —Felt much as yesterday; enjoyed but little sensible communion with God.

Lord's day, Feb. 12. —My soul seemed to confide in God, and to repose itself on him; and had outgoings of soul after God in prayer. Enjoyed some divine assistance in the forenoon in

preaching; but in the afternoon, was more perplexed with shame, &c. Afterwards found some relief in prayer; loved —as a feeble, afflicted, despised creature —to cast myself on a God of infinite grace and goodness, hoping for no happiness but from him.

Mon., Feb. 13. —Was calm and sedate in morning devotions, and my soul seemed to rely on God. Rode to Stockbridge, and enjoyed some comfortable meditations by the way; had a more refreshing taste and relish of heavenly blessedness, than I have enjoyed for many months past. I have

98 THE LIFE OF

many times, of late, felt as ardent desires of holiness as ever, but not so much sense of the sweetness and unspeakable pleasure of the enjoyments and employments of heaven. My soul longed to leave earth, and bear a part with angels in their celestial employments. My soul said, “Lord, it is good to be here:” and it appeared to me better to die, than to lose the relish of these heavenly delights.

A sense of divine things seemed to continue with him, in a lesser degree, through the next day. On Wednesday, he was, by some discourse that he heard, cast into a melancholy gloom, that operated much in the same manner as his melancholy had formerly done when he came first to Kaunaumee; the effects of which seemed to continue in some degree the six following days.

Wed., Feb. 22. —In the morning, had as clear a sense of the exceeding pollution of my nature, as ever I remember to have had in my life. I then appeared to myself inexpressibly loathsome and defiled; sins of childhood, of early youth, and such follies as I had not thought of for years together (as I remember), came now fresh to my view, as if committed but yesterday, and appeared in the most odious colours; they appeared more in number than the hairs of my head, yea, they “went over my head as an heavy burden.” In the evening, the hand of faith seemed to be strengthened in God; my soul seemed to rest and acquiesce in him; was supported under my burdens, reading the 125th psalm; found that it was sweet and comfortable to lean on God.

Thurs., Feb. 23. —Was frequent in prayer, and enjoyed some assistance. “There is a God in heaven,” that overrules all things for the best, and this is the comfort of my soul. “I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of God in the land of the living,” notwithstanding present sorrows. In the evening, enjoyed some freedom in prayer, for myself, friends, and the church of God.

Fri., Feb. 24. —Was exceeding restless and perplexed under a sense of the misimprovement of time, mourned to see time pass away, felt in the greatest hurry, seemed to have every thing to do, yet could do nothing, but only grieve and groan under my ignorance, unprofitableness, meanness, the foolishness of my actions and thoughts, the pride and bitterness of my past frames (at some times at least), all which at this time appeared to me in lively colours and filled me with

shame. I could not compose my mind to any profitable studies, by reason of this pressure. And the reason, I judge, why I am not allowed to study a great part of my time, is, because I am endeavouring to lay in such a stock of knowledge, as shall be a self-sufficiency. I know it to be my indispensable duty to study, and qualify myself in the best manner I can for public service; but this is my misery, I naturally study and prepare, that I may “consume it upon my lusts” of pride and self-confidence.

He continued in much the same frame of uneasiness at the misimprovement of time, and pressure of spirit under a sense of vileness, unprofitableness, &c., for the next six days, excepting some intervals of calmness and composure, in resignation to, and confidence in God.

Fri., March 2. —Was most of the day employed in writing on a divine subject. Was frequent in prayer, and enjoyed some small degree of assistance. But in the evening, God was pleased to grant me a divine sweetness in prayer, especially in the duty of intercession. I think I never felt so much kindness and love to those who I have reason to think are my enemies — (though at that time I found such a disposition to think the best of all, that I scarce knew how to think that any such thing as enmity and hatred lodged in any soul; it seemed as if all the world must needs be friends) —and never prayed with more freedom and delight, for myself, or dearest friend, than I did now for my enemies.

Sat., March 3. —In the morning spent (I believe) an hour in prayer, with great intenseness and freedom, and with the most soft and tender affection towards mankind. I longed that those who I have reason to think owe me ill-will, might be eternally happy; it seemed refreshing to think of meeting them in heaven, how much soever they had injured me on earth; had no disposition to insist upon any confession from them, in order to reconciliation and the exercise of love and kindness to them. O it is an emblem of heaven itself, to love all the world with a love of kindness, forgiveness, and benevolence; to feel our souls sedate, mild, and meek; to be void of all evil surmisings and suspicions, and scarce able to think evil of any man upon any occasion; to find our hearts simple, open, and free, to those that look upon us with a different eye! Prayer was so sweet an exercise to me, that I knew not how to cease, lest I should lose the spirit of

100 THE LIFE OF

prayer. Felt no disposition to eat or drink, for the sake of the pleasure of it, but only to support my nature and fit me for divine service. Could not be content without a very particular mention of a great number of dear friends at the throne of grace, as also the particular circumstances of many, so far as they were known.

Lord’s day, [Mar.] 4. —In the morning, enjoyed the same intenseness in prayer as yesterday morning, though not in so great a degree; felt the same spirit of love, universal benevolence, forgiveness, humility, resignation, mortification to the world, and composure of mind, as then. “My soul rested in God,” and I found I wanted no other refuge or friend. While my soul

thus trusts in God, all things seem to be at peace with me, even the stones of the earth; but when I cannot apprehend and confide in God, all things appear with a different aspect.

Through the next four days, he complains of barrenness, want of holy confidence in God, stupidity, wanderings of mind, &c., and speaks of oppression of mind under a sense of exceeding meanness, past follies as well as present workings of corruption. On Friday, he seems to have been restored to a considerable degree of the same excellent frame that he enjoyed the Saturday before.

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 'e 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.

DAVID BRAINERD. 101

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, OL' 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 every body that ever had seen any thing amiss in my past conduct, especially in my *religious zeal*. Was afterwards much perplexed, so that I could not sleep quietly.

Lord's day, March 11. —My soul was in some measure *strengthened in God*, in morning devotion, so that I was released from trembling fear and distress. Preached to my people from the parable of the sower, Matt, xiii., and enjoyed some assistance, both parts of the day; had some freedom, affection, and fervency, in addressing my poor people; longed that God

should take hold of their hearts, and make them spiritually alive. And indeed I had so much to say to them, that I knew not how to leave off speaking.¹

Mon., March 12. —In the morning, was in a devout, tender, and loving frame of mind, and was enabled to cry to God, I hope, with a child-like spirit, with importunity, and resignation, and composure of mind. My spirit was full of quietness and love to mankind, and longed that peace should reign on the earth; was grieved at the very thoughts of a *fiery, angry, and intemperate zeal* in religion; mourned over past follies in that regard; and my soul confided in God for strength and grace sufficient for my future work and trials.

102 THE LIFE OF

Spent the day mainly in hard labour, making preparation for my intended journey.

Tues., March 13. —Felt my soul going forth after God sometimes, but not with such ardency as I longed for. In the evening, was enabled to continue *instant in prayer* for some considerable time together, and especially had respect to the journey I designed to enter upon, with the leave of divine providence, on the morrow. Enjoyed some freedom and fervency, intreating that the divine presence might attend me in *every place* where my business might lead me; and had a particular reference to the trials and temptations that I apprehended I might be more eminently exposed to in particular places. Was strengthened and comforted, although I was before very weary. Truly the *joy of the Lord is strength and life*.

Wed., March 14. —Enjoyed some intenseness of soul in prayer, repeating my petitions for God's presence in every place where I expected to be in my journey. Besought the Lord that I might not be too much pleased and amused with dear friends and acquaintances, in one place and another. Near ten, set out on my journey, and near night came to Stockbridge.

Thurs., March 15. —Rode down to Sheffield. Here I met a messenger from East Hampton on Long Island, who, by the unanimous vote of that large town, was sent to invite me thither, in order to settle with that people, where I had been before frequently invited. Seemed more at a loss what was my duty than before; when I heard of the great difficulties of that place, I was much concerned and grieved, and felt some desires to comply with their request, but knew not what to do: endeavoured to commit the case to God.

The next two days, he went no further than Salisbury, being much hindered by the rain. When he came there, he was much indisposed. He speaks of comfortable and profitable conversation with Christian friends, on these days.

Lord's day, March 18. —[At Salisbury.] Was exceeding weak and faint, so that I could scarce walk, but God was pleased to afford me much freedom, clearness, and fervency, in

¹ This was the last Sabbath that ever he performed public service at Kaunaumeeek, and these the last sermons that ever he preached there. It appears by his diary, that while he continued with these Indians, he took great pains with them, and did it with much discretion; but the particular manner how, has been omitted for brevity's sake.

preaching: I have not had the like assistance in preaching to sinners for many months past. Here another messenger met me, and informed me of the vote of another congrega-

DAVID BRAINERD. 103

tion to give me an invitation to come among them upon probation for settlement.¹ Was something exercised in mind with a weight and burden of care. O that God would “send forth faithful labourers into his harvest! “

After this, he went forward on his journey toward New York, and New Jersey, in which he proceeded slowly, performing his journey under great degrees of bodily indisposition. However, he preached several times by the way, being urged by friends, in which he had considerable assistance. He speaks of comfort in conversation with Christian friends, from time to time, and of various things in the exercises and frames of his heart, that show much of a divine influence on his mind in this journey; but yet complains of *the thing that he feared*, viz., a decline of his spiritual life, or vivacity in religion, by means of his constant removal from place to place, and want of retirement, and complains bitterly of his unworthiness, deadness, &c. He came to New York on Wednesday, March 28, and to Elizabeth Town on the Saturday following, where, it seems, he waited till the commissioners came together.

Thurs., Ap. 5. —Was again much exercised with weakness, and with pain in my head. Attended on the commissioners in their meeting.² Resolved to go on still with the Indian affair, if divine providence permitted; although I had before felt some inclination to go to East Hampton, where I was solicited to go.³

¹ This congregation was that at Millington, near Haddam. They were very earnestly desirous of his coming among them.

² The Indians at Kaunaumeeke being but few in number, and Mr. Brainerd having now been labouring among them about a year, and having prevailed upon them to be willing to leave Kaunaumeeke and remove to Stockbridge, to live constantly under Mr. Sergeant's ministry, he thought he might now do more service for Christ among the Indians elsewhere, and therefore went this journey to New Jersey to lay the matter before the commissioners, who met at Elizabeth Town, on this occasion, and determined that he should forthwith leave Kaunaumeeke, and go to the Delaware Indians.

³ By the invitations Mr. Brainerd had lately received, it appears that it was not from necessity, or for want of opportunities to settle in the ministry amongst the English, notwithstanding the disgrace he had been laid under at college, that he was determined to forsake all the outward comforts to be enjoyed in the English settlements, to go and spend his life among the brutish *savages*, and endure the difficulties and self-denials of an Indian *mission*. He had, just as he was leaving Kaunaumeeke, an earnest invitation to a settlement at East Hampton on Long Island, the fairest, pleasantest town on the whole island, and one of its largest and most wealthy parishes. The people there were unanimous in their desires to have him for their pastor, and for a long time continued in an earnest pursuit of what they desired, and were hardly brought to relinquish their endeavours and give up their hopes of obtaining him besides the invitation he had to Millington, which was near his native town, and in the midst of his Mends. Nor did Mr. Brainerd choose the business of a missionary to the Indians, rather than accept of those invitations, because he was unacquainted with the difficulties and sufferings which attended such a service: for he had had experience of these difficulties in summer and winter, having spent about a twelvemonth in a lonely desert among these savages, where he had gone through extreme hardships, and been the subject of a train of outward and inward sorrows, which were now fresh in his mind. Notwithstanding all these things, he chose still to go on with this business, and that although the place he was now going to was at a much greater distance from most of his friends, acquaintances, and from his native land.

After this he continued two or three days in the Jerseys,

104 THE LIFE OF

very ill; and then returned to New York, and from thence into New England, and went to his native town Haddam, where he arrived on Saturday, April 14. And he continues still his bitter complaints of want of retirement. While he was in New York, he writes thus: “O, it is not the pleasures of the *world* can comfort me! If *God* deny his presence, what are the pleasures of the *city* to me? One hour of sweet retirement where *God is*, is better than the whole world.” And he continues to cry out of his ignorance, meanness, and unworthiness. However, he speaks of some seasons of special assistance and divine sweetness. He spent some days among his friends at East Hampton and Millington.

Tues., Ap. 17. —Rode to Millington again, and felt perplexed when I set out; was feeble in body and weak in faith. I was going to preach a lecture, and feared I should never have assistance enough to get through. But contriving to ride alone, at a distance from the company that was going, I spent the time in lifting up my heart “to God; had not gone far before my soul was abundantly strengthened with those words, “If God be for us, who can be against us? “I went on, confiding in God, and fearing nothing so much as self-confidence. In this frame I went to the house of God, and enjoyed some assistance. Afterwards felt the spirit of love and meekness in conversation with some friends. Then rode home to my brother’s; and in the evening, singing hymns with friends, my soul seemed to melt; and in prayer afterwards, enjoyed the exercise of *faith*, and was enabled to be *fervent in spirit*: found more of God’s presence, than

DAVID BRAINERD. 105

I have done any time in my late wearisome journey. Eternity appeared very near, my nature was very weak, and seemed ready to be dissolved, the sun declining, and the shadows of the evening drawing on apace. O I longed to fill up the remaining moments all for God! Though my body was so feeble and wearied with preaching, and much private conversation, yet I wanted to sit up all night to do something for God. To God, the giver of these refreshments, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Wed., Ap. 18. —Was very weak, and enjoyed but little spiritual comfort. Was exercised with one cavilling against *original sin*. May the Lord open his eyes to see the fountain of sin in *himself*!

After this, he visited several ministers in Connecticut, and then travelled towards Kaunaumuck, and came to Mr. Sergeant’s at Stockbridge, Thursday, April 26. He performed this journey in a very weak state of body. The things he speaks of in the mean time, appertaining to the frames and exercises of his mind, are at some times deadness and a being void of spiritual comfort, at other times resting in God, spiritual sweetness in conversation, engagedness in meditation, on the road, assistance in preaching, rejoicing to think that so much more of his work was done, and he so much nearer to the eternal world. And he once and again speaks of a sense of great ignorance, spiritual pollution, &c.

Fri. and Sat., Ap. 27 and 28. —Spent some time in visiting friends, and discoursing with my people (who were now moved down from their own place to Mr. Sergeant's), and found them very glad to see me returned. Was exercised in my mind with a sense of my own unworthiness.

Lord's day, Ap. 29. —Preached for Mr. Sergeant, both parts of the day, from Rev. xiv. 4. Enjoyed some freedom in preaching, though not much spirituality. In the evening, my heart was in some measure lifted up in thankfulness to God for any assistance.

Mon., Ap. 30. —Rode to Kaunaumee, but was extremely ill; did not enjoy the comfort I hoped for in my own house.

Tues., May 1. —Having received new orders to go to a number of Indians on Delaware river in Pennsylvania, and my people here being mostly removed to Mr. Sergeant's, I this day took all my clothes, books, &c., and disposed of them, and set out for Delaware river, but made it my way to re-

106 THE LIFE OF

turn to Mr. Serjeant's, which I did this day, just at night. Rode several hours in the rain through the howling wilderness, although I was so disordered in body, that little or nothing but blood came from me.

He continued at Stockbridge the next day, and on Thursday rode a little way, to Sheffield, under a great degree of illness, but with encouragement and cheerfulness of mind under his fatigues. On Friday he rode to Salisbury, and continued there till after the Sabbath. He speaks of his soul's being, some part of this time, refreshed in conversation with some Christian friends, about their heavenly home and their journey thither. At other times, he speaks of himself as exceedingly perplexed with barrenness and deadness, and has this exclamation, "O that time should pass with so little done for God!" On Monday he rode to Sharon, and speaks of himself as distressed at the consideration of the misimprovement of time.

Tues., May 8. —Set out from Sharon in Connecticut, travelled about forty-five miles to a place called the *Fish-kit*,¹ and lodged there. Spent much of my time, while riding, in prayer, that God would go with me to Delaware. My heart sometimes was ready to sink with the thoughts of my work, and going alone in the wilderness, I knew not where: but still it was comfortable to think that others of God's children had "wandered about in caves and dens of the earth," and that Abraham, when he was called to go forth, "went out, not knowing whither he went." O that I might follow after God!

The next day, he went forward on his journey, crossed Hudson's river, and went to Goshen in the Highlands, and so travelled across the woods, from Hudson's river to Delaware, about an hundred miles, through a desolate and hideous country, above New Jersey, where were very few settlements, in which journey he suffered much fatigue and hardship. He visited some

¹ A place so called in New York government, near Hudson's river, on the west side of the river.

Indians in the way,¹ and discoursed with them concerning Christianity. Was considerably melancholy and disconsolate, being alone in a strange wilderness. On Satur-

DAVID BRAINERD. 107

day, he came to a settlement of Irish and Dutch people, about twelve miles above the Forks of Delaware.

Lord's day, May 13. —Rose early; felt very poorly after my long journey, and after being wet and fatigued. Was very melancholy; have scarce ever seen such a gloomy morning in my life; there appeared to be no Sabbath; the children were all at play; I a stranger in the wilderness, and knew not where to go, and all circumstances seemed to conspire to render my affairs dark and discouraging. Was disappointed respecting an *interpreter*, and heard that the Indians were much scattered, &c. O I mourned after the presence of God, and seemed like a creature banished from his sight! Yet he was pleased to support my sinking soul amidst all my sorrow, so that I never entertained any thought of quitting my business among the poor Indians, but was comforted to think, that death would ere long set me free from these distresses. Rode about three or four miles to the Irish people, where I found some that appeared sober and concerned about religion. My heart then began to be a little encouraged; went and preached, first to the Irish, and then to the Indians; and in the evening, was a little comforted; my soul seemed to rest on God, and take courage. O that the Lord would be my support and comforter in an evil world!

Mon., May 14. —Was very busy in some necessary studies. Felt myself very loose from all the world; all appeared “vanity and vexation of spirit.” Seemed something lonesome and disconsolate, as if I was banished from all mankind, and bereaved of all that is called pleasurable in the world: but appeared to myself so vile and unworthy, it seemed fitter for me to be here than any where.

Tues., May 15. —Still much engaged in my studies, and enjoyed more health than I have for some time past; but was something dejected in spirit with a sense of my meanness; seemed as if I could never do any thing at all to any good purpose by reason of ignorance and folly. O that a sense of these things might work more habitual humility in my soul!

He continued much in the same frame the next day.

Thurs., May 17. —Was this day greatly distressed with a sense of my vileness; appeared to myself too bad to walk on God's earth, or to be treated with kindness by any of his

108 THE LIFE OF

creatures. God was pleased to let me see my inward pollution and corruption, to such a degree, that I almost despaired of being made holy: “O! wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death! “In the afternoon, met with the Indians, according to

¹ See Mr. Brainerd's “Narrative,” in a letter to Mr. Peraberton, at the end of his ordination-sermon. Pages 32, 33.

appointment, and preached to them. And while riding to them, my soul seemed to confide in God, and afterwards had some relief and enlargement of soul in prayer, and some assistance in the duty of intercession; vital piety and holiness appeared sweet to me, and I longed for the perfection of it.

Fri., May 18. —Felt again something of the sweet spirit of religion, and my soul seemed to confide in God, that he would never leave me. But oftentimes saw myself so mean a creature, that I knew not how to think of preaching. O that I could always live *to*, and *upon* God!

Sat., May 19. —Was, some part of the time, greatly oppressed with the weight and burden of my work; it seemed impossible for me ever to go through with the business I had undertaken. Towards night, was very calm and comfortable, and I think my soul trusted in God for help.

Lord's day, May 20. —Preached twice to the poor Indians, and enjoyed some freedom in speaking, while I attempted to remove their prejudices against Christianity. My soul longed for assistance from above, all the while; for I saw I had no strength sufficient for that work. Afterwards, preached to the Irish people; was much assisted in the first prayer, and something in sermon. Several persons seemed much concerned for their souls, with whom I discoursed afterwards with much freedom and some power. Blessed be God for any assistance afforded to an unworthy worm! O that I could live to him!

Through the rest of this week, he was sometimes ready to sink with a sense of his unworthiness and unfitness for the work of the ministry, and sometimes encouraged and lifted above his fears and sorrows, and was enabled confidently to rely on God; and especially on Saturday, towards night, he enjoyed calmness and composure, and assistance in prayer to God. He rejoiced (as he says), “that God remains unchangeably powerful and faithful, a sure and sufficient portion, and the dwelling-place of his children in all generations.”

Lord's day, May 27. —Visited my Indians in the morn-

DAVID BRAINERD. 109

ing, and attended upon a funeral among them; was affected to see their *heathenish practices*. O that they might be “turned from darkness to light!” Afterwards got a considerable number of them together, and preached to them, and observed them very attentive. After this, preached to the white people from Heb. ii. 3. Was enabled to speak with some freedom and power; several people seemed much concerned for their souls, especially one who had been educated a Roman Catholic. Blessed be the Lord for any help!

Mon., May 28. —Set out from the Indians above the Forks of Delaware, on a journey towards Newark in New Jersey, according to my orders. Rode through the wilderness; was much fatigued with the heat; lodged at a place called Black River; was exceedingly tired and worn out.

On Tuesday he came to Newark. The next day he went to Elizabeth Town, on Tuesday he went to New York, and on Friday returned to Elizabeth Town. These days were spent in

some perplexity of mind. He continued at Elizabeth Town till Friday in the week following. Was enlivened, refreshed, and strengthened on the Sabbath at the Lord's table. The ensuing days of the week were spent chiefly in studies preparatory to his ordination, and on some of them he seemed to have much of God's gracious presence, and of the sweet influences of his Spirit, but was in a very weak state of body. On Saturday, he rode to Newark.

Lord's day, June 10. —[At Newark.] In the morning, was much concerned how I should perform the work of the day, and trembled at the thought of being left to myself. Enjoyed very considerable assistance in all parts of the public service. Had an opportunity again to attend on the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and through divine goodness was refreshed in it; my soul was full of love and tenderness towards the children of God, and towards all men; felt a certain sweetness of disposition towards every creature. At night, I enjoyed more spirituality and sweet desire of holiness, than I have felt for some time; was afraid of every thought and every motion, lest thereby my heart should be drawn away from God. O that I might never leave the blessed God! "Lord, in thy presence is fulness of joy." O the blessedness of living to God!

Mon., June 11. —This day the presbytery met together at Newark, in order to my ordination. Was very weak and

110 THE LIFE OF

disordered in body, yet endeavoured to repose my confidence in God. Spent most of the day alone, especially the forenoon. At three in the afternoon, preached my probation sermon, from Acts xxvi. 17, 18, being a text given me for that end. Felt not well, either in body or mind; however, God carried me through comfortably. Afterwards passed an examination before the presbytery. Was much tired, and my mind burdened with the greatness of that charge I was in the most solemn manner about to take upon me. My mind was so pressed with the weight of the work incumbent upon me, that I could not sleep this night, though very weary and in great need of rest.

Tues., June 12. —Was this morning further examined respecting my experimental acquaintance with Christianity.¹ At ten o'clock, my ordination was attended, the sermon being preached by the Rev. Mr. Pemberton. At this time I was affected with a sense of the important trust committed to me, yet was composed and solemn, without distraction, and I hope I then (as many times before) gave myself up to God, to be for him and not for another. O that I might always be engaged in the service of God, and duly remember the solemn charge I have received in the presence of God, angels, and men! Amen. May I be assisted of God for this purpose! Towards night, rode to Elizabeth Town.

¹ Mr. Pemberton, in a letter to the Honourable Society in Scotland that employed Mr. Brainerd, which he wrote concerning him (published in Scotland, in the "Christian Monthly History)," writes thus, "We can with pleasure say, that Mr. Brainerd passed through his ordination trials, to the universal approbation of the presbytery, and appeared uncommonly qualified for the work of the ministry. He seems to be armed with a great deal of self-denial, and animated with a noble zeal to propagate the gospel among those barbarous nations, who have long dwelt in the darkness of heathenism."

PART VI

FROM HIS ORDINATION, TILL HE FIRST BEGAN TO PREACH TO THE INDIANS AT CROSWEKSUNG, AMONG "WHOM HE HAD HIS MOST REMARKABLE SUCCESS.

Wed., June 13. —Spent some considerable time in writing an account of the Indian affairs to go to Scotland: spent

DAVID BRAINERD. 111

some time in conversation with friends; but enjoyed not much sweetness and satisfaction.

Thurs., June 14. —Received some particular kindness from friends, and wondered that God should open the hearts of any to treat me with kindness: saw myself to be unworthy of any favour from God or any of my fellow-men. Was much exercised with pain in my head; however, determined to set out on my journey towards Delaware in the afternoon; but in the afternoon my pain increased exceedingly, so that I was obliged to betake myself to bed; and the night following was greatly distressed with pain and sickness; was sometimes almost bereaved of the exercise of reason by the extremity of pain. Continued much distressed till Saturday, when I was something relieved by an emetic, but was unable to walk abroad till the Monday following, in the afternoon, and still remained very feeble. I often admired the goodness of God, that he did not suffer me to proceed on my journey from this place where I was so tenderly used, and to be sick by the way among strangers. God is very gracious to me, both in health and sickness, and intermingles much mercy with all my afflictions and toils. Enjoyed some sweetness in things divine, in the midst of my pain and weakness. O that I could praise the Lord!

On Tuesday, June 19, he set out on his journey home, and in three days reached his place, near the Forks of Delaware. Performed the journey under much weakness of body, but had comfort in his soul, from day to day, and both his weakness of body, and consolation of mind, continued through the week.

Lord's day, June 24. —Extremely feeble; scarce able to walk; however, visited my Indians, and took much pains to instruct them; laboured with some that were much disaffected to Christianity. My mind was much burdened with the weight and difficulty of my work. My whole dependence and hope of success seemed to be on God, who alone, I saw, could make them willing to receive instruction. My heart was much engaged in prayer, sending up silent requests to God, even while I was speaking to them. O that I could always go in the strength of the Lord!

Mon., June 25. —Was something better in health than of late; was able to spend a considerable part of the day in prayer and close studies. Had more freedom and fervency

in prayer than usual of late; especially longed for the presence of God in my work, and that the poor heathen might be converted; and in evening-prayer my faith and hope in God were much raised. To an eye of reason every thing that respects the conversion of the heathen is as dark as midnight, and yet I cannot but hope in God for the accomplishment of something glorious among them. My soul longed much for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom on earth. Was very fearful lest I should admit some vain thought, and so lose the sense I then had of divine things. O for an abiding heavenly temper!

Tues. June 26. —In the morning, my desires seemed to rise and ascend up freely to God. Was busy most of the day in translating prayers into the language of the Delaware Indians; met with great difficulty, by reason that my interpreter was altogether unacquainted with the business. But though I was much discouraged with the extreme difficulty of that work, yet God supported me, and especially in the evening gave me sweet refreshment; in prayer my soul was enlarged and my faith drawn into sensible exercise; was enabled to cry to God for my poor Indians; and though the work of their conversion appeared “impossible with man, yet with God” I saw “all things were possible.” My faith was much strengthened, by observing the wonderful assistance God afforded his servants Nehemiah and Ezra, in reforming his people and re-establishing his ancient church. I was much assisted in prayer for dear Christian friends, and for others that I apprehended to be Christians, but was more especially concerned for the poor heathen, and those of my own charge; was enabled to be instant in prayer for them, and hoped that God would bow the heavens and come down for their salvation. It seemed to me there could be no impediment sufficient to obstruct that glorious work, seeing the living God, as I strongly hoped, was engaged for it. I continued in a solemn frame, lifting up my heart to God for assistance and grace, that I might be more mortified to this present world, that my whole soul might be taken up continually in concern for the advancement of Christ's kingdom: longed that God would purge me more, that I might be as a chosen vessel to bear his name among the heathens. Continued in this frame till I dropped asleep.

Wed., June 27. —Felt something of the same solemn concern and spirit of prayer that I enjoyed last night, soon after I rose in the morning. In the afternoon, rode several miles

DAVID BRAINERD. 113

to see if I could procure any lands for the poor Indians, that they might live together, and be under better advantages for instruction. While I was riding, had a deep sense of the greatness and difficulty of my work, and my soul seemed to rely wholly upon God for success, in the diligent and faithful use of means. Saw with greatest certainty that *the arm of the Lord* must be *revealed* for the help of these poor heathen, if ever they were delivered from the bondage of the powers of darkness. Spent most of the time, while riding, in lifting up my heart for grace and assistance.

Thurs., June 28. —Spent the morning in reading several parts of the Holy Scripture, and in fervent prayer for my Indians, that God would set up his kingdom among them, and bring them into his church. About nine, I withdrew to my usual place of retirement in the woods, and there again enjoyed some assistance in prayer. My great concern was for the conversion

of the heathen to God, and the Lord helped me to plead with him for it. Towards noon, rode up to the Indians, in order to preach to them, and while going, my heart went up to God in prayer for them; could freely tell God, he knew that the cause was not mine, which I was engaged in, but it was his own cause, and it would be for his own glory to convert the poor Indians; and, blessed be God, I felt no desire of their conversion that I might receive honour from the world, as being the instrument of it. Had some freedom in speaking to the Indians.

The next day he speaks of some serious concern for the kingdom of the blessed Redeemer, but complains much of barrenness, wanderings, inactivity, &c.

Sat., June 30. —My soul was much solemnized in reading God's Word, especially the ninth chapter of Daniel. I saw how God had called out his servants to prayer, and made them wrestle with him, when he designed to bestow any great mercy on his church. And, alas! I was ashamed of myself to think of my dulness and inactivity, when there seemed to be so much to do for the upbuilding of Zion. O how does Zion lay waste! I longed that the Church of God might be enlarged; was enabled to pray, I think, in faith; my soul seemed sensibly to confide in God, and was enabled to wrestle with him. Afterwards walked abroad to a place of sweet retirement, and enjoyed some assistance in prayer again; had a sense of my great need of divine help, and felt my soul

114 THE LIFE OF

sensibly depend on God. Blessed be God, this has been a comfortable week to me.

Lord's day, July 1. —In the morning was perplexed with wandering, vain thoughts; was much grieved, judged and condemned myself before God. And O how miserable did I feel, because' I could not live to God! At ten, rode away with a heavy heart to preach to my Indians. Upon the road I attempted to lift up my heart to God, but was infested with an unsettled, wandering frame of mind, and was exceeding restless and perplexed, and filled with shame and confusion before God. I seemed to myself to be "more brutish than any man," and thought none deserved to be "cast out of God's presence" so much as I. If I attempted to lift up my heart to God (as I frequently did by the way), on a sudden, before I was aware, my thoughts were wandering "to the ends of the earth," and my soul was filled with surprise and anxiety to find it thus. Thus, also, after I came to the Indians, my mind was confused, and I felt nothing sensibly of that sweet reliance on God that my soul has been comforted within days past. Spent the forenoon in this posture of mind, and preached to the Indians without any heart. In the afternoon, I felt still barren when I began to preach; and after about half an hour, I seemed to myself to know nothing and to have nothing to say to the Indians; but soon after, I found in myself a spirit of love and warmth and power to address the poor Indians, and God helped me to plead with them, to "turn from all the vanities of the heathen to the living God," and I am persuaded the Lord touched their consciences, for I never saw such attention raised in them before. And when I came away from them, I spent the whole time while I was riding to my lodgings, three miles distant, in prayer and praise to God. And after I had rode more than two miles, it came into my mind to dedicate myself to God again, which I did with great solemnity and unspeakable satisfaction, especially gave up myself to him renewedly in the work of the ministry. And this I did by

divine grace, I hope, without any exception or reserve, not in the least shrinking back from any difficulties that might attend this great and blessed work. I seemed to be most free, cheerful, and full in this dedication of myself. My whole soul cried, "Lord, to thee I dedicate myself; accept of me, and let me be thine for ever. Lord, I desire nothing else, I desire nothing more. O come, come, Lord, accept a poor worm. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon*

DAVID BRAINERD. 115

earth that I desire besides thee." After this, was enabled to praise God with my whole soul, that he had enabled me to devote and consecrate all my powers to him in this solemn manner. My heart rejoiced in my particular work as a missionary, rejoiced in my necessity of self-denial in many respects, and still continued to give up myself to God, and implore mercy of him; praying incessantly, every moment, with sweet fervency. My nature being very weak of late, and much spent, was now considerably overcome; my fingers grew very feeble and somewhat numb, so that I could scarcely stretch them out straight; and when I lighted from my horse, could hardly walk, my joints seemed all to be loosed. But I felt abundant *strength in the inner man*. Preached to the white people; God helped me much, especially in prayer. Sundry of my poor Indians were so moved as to come to meeting also, and one appeared much concerned.

Mon., July 2. —Had some relish of the divine comforts of yesterday, but could not get that warmth and exercise of faith that I desired. Had sometimes a distressing sense of my past follies, and present ignorance and barrenness; and especially in the afternoon was sunk down under a load of sin and guilt, in that I had lived so little to God after his abundant goodness to me yesterday. In the evening, though very weak, was enabled to pray with fervency, and to continue instant in prayer, near an hour. My soul mourned over the power of its corruption, and longed exceedingly to be *washed and purged as with hyssop*. Was enabled to pray for my dear absent friends, Christ's ministers, and his church, and enjoyed much freedom and fervency, but not so much comfort, by reason of guilt and shame before God, Judged and condemned myself for the follies of the day.

Tues., July 3. —Was still very weak. This morning was enabled to pray under a feeling sense of my need of help from God, and, I trust, had some faith in exercise; and, blessed be God, was enabled to plead with God a considerable time. Truly God is good to me. But my soul mourned, and was grieved at my sinfulness and barrenness, and longed to be more engaged for God. Near nine, withdrew again for prayer, and, through divine goodness, had the blessed spirit of prayer; my soul loved the duty, and longed for God in it. O it is sweet to be *the Lord's*, to be sensibly devoted to him! What a blessed portion is God! How glorious, how lovely in himself! O my soul longed to improve time wholly for

116 THE LIFE OF

God! Spent most of the day in translating prayers into Indian. In the evening, was enabled again to wrestle with God in prayer with fervency. Was enabled to maintain a self-diffident

and watchful frame of spirit in the evening, and was jealous and afraid lest I should admit carelessness and self-confidence.

The next day he seems to have had special assistance and fervency most of the day, but in a less degree than the preceding day. Thursday was spent in great bodily weakness, yet seems to have been spent in continual and exceeding painfulness in religion, in great bitterness of spirit, by reason of his vileness and corruption; thus he says, “I thought there was not one creature living so vile as I. O my inward pollution! O my guilt and shame before God! I know not what to do. O I longed ardently to be cleansed and washed from the stains of inward pollution! O to be made like God, or rather to be made fit for God to own! “

Fri., July 6. —Awoke-this morning in the fear of God; soon called to mind my sadness in the evening past, and spent my first waking minutes in prayer for sanctification, that my soul might be washed from its exceeding pollution and defilement. After I arose, I spent some time in reading God’s Word and prayer. I cried to God under a sense of my great indigency. I am, of late, most of all concerned for ministerial qualifications, and the conversion of the heathen. Last year I longed to be prepared for a world of glory, and speedily to depart out of this world; but of late all my concern almost is for the conversion of the heathen, and for that end I long to live. But, blessed be God, I have less desire to live for any of the pleasures of the world than ever I had; I long and love to be a pilgrim, and want grace to imitate the life, labours, and sufferings of Paul among the heathen. And when I long for holiness now, it is not so much for myself, as formerly, but rather that thereby I may become an “able minister of the New Testament,” especially to the heathen. Spent about two hours this morning in reading and prayer by turns, and was in a watchful, tender frame, afraid of every thing that might cool my affections, and draw away my heart from God. Was something strengthened in my studies, but near night was very weak and weary.

Sat., July 7. —Was very much disordered this morning, and my vigour all spent and exhausted; but was affected and

DAVID BRAINERD. 117

refreshed in reading the sweet story of Elijah’s translation, and enjoyed some affection and fervency in prayer; longed much for ministerial gifts and graces, that I might do something in the cause of God. Afterwards was refreshed and invigorated, while reading Mr. Joseph Alleine’s first case of conscience, &c., and enabled then to pray with some ardour of soul, and was afraid of carelessness and self-confidence, and longed for holiness.

Lord’s day, July 8. —Was ill last night, not able to rest quietly. Had some small degree of assistance in preaching to the Indians, and afterwards was enabled to preach to the white people with some power, especially in the close of my discourse, from Jer. iii. 23. The Lord also assisted me in some measure in the first prayer, blessed be his name. Near night, though very weary, was enabled to read God’s Word with some sweet relish of it, and to pray with affection, fervency, and (I trust) faith; my soul was more sensibly dependent on God than usual. Was watchful, tender, and jealous of my own heart, lest I should admit carelessness and vain thoughts, and grieve the blessed Spirit, so that he should withdraw his sweet, kind,

and tender influences. Longed to “depart and be with Christ,” more than at any time of late. My soul was exceedingly united to the saints of ancient times, as well as those now living, especially my soul melted for the society of Elijah and Elisha. Was enabled to cry to God with a child-like spirit, and to continue instant in prayer for some time. Was much enlarged in the sweet duty of intercession, was enabled to remember great numbers of dear friends, and precious souls, as well as Christ’s ministers. Continued in this frame, afraid of every idle thought, till I dropped asleep.

Mon., July 9. —Was under much illness of body most of the day, and not able to sit up the whole day. Towards night, felt a little better. Then spent some time in reading God’s Word and prayer; enjoyed some degree of fervency and affection; was enabled to plead with God for his cause and kingdom, and, through divine goodness, it was apparent to me, that it was his cause I pleaded for, and not my own; and was enabled to make this an argument with God to answer my requests.

Tues., July 10. —Was very ill and full of pain, and very dull and spiritless. In the evening, had an affecting sense of my ignorance, and of my need of God at all times, to do every thing for me, and my soul was humbled before God.

118 THE LIFE OF

Wed., July 11. Was still exercised with illness and pain. Had some degree of affection and warmth in prayer and reading God’s Word; longed for Abraham’s faith and fellowship with God; and felt some resolution to spend all my time for God, and to exert myself with more fervency in his service; but found my body weak and feeble. In the afternoon, though very ill, was enabled to spend some considerable time in prayer”; spent indeed most of the day in that exercise; and my soul was diffident, watchful, and tender, lest I should offend my blessed Friend in thought or behaviour. I am persuaded my soul confided in and leaned upon the blessed God. O, what need did I see myself to stand in of God at all times, to assist me and lead me! Found a great want of strength and vigour, both in the outward and inner man.

The exercises and experiences that he speaks of in the next nine days, are very similar to those of the preceding days of this and the foregoing week —a sense of his own weakness, ignorance, unprofitableness, and vileness, loathing and abhorring himself, self-diffidence, sense of the greatness of his work, and his great need of divine help, and the extreme danger of self-confidence, longing for holiness and humility, and to be fitted for his work, and to live to God, and longing for the conversion of the Indians, and these things to a very great degree.

Sat., July 21. —This morning, was greatly oppressed with guilt and shame, from a sense of inward vileness and pollution. About nine, withdrew to the woods for prayer, but had not much comfort; I appeared to myself the vilest, meanest creature upon earth, and could scarcely live with myself; so mean and vile I appeared, that I thought I should never be able to hold up my face in heaven, if God of his infinite grace should bring me thither. Towards night, my burden respecting my work among the Indians began to increase much, and was aggravated by hearing sundry things that looked very discouraging, in particular that they intended to meet together the next day for an idolatrous feast and dance. Then I began to be

in anguish; I thought I must in conscience go and endeavour to break them up, and knew not how to attempt such a thing. However, I withdrew for prayer, hoping for strength from above. And in prayer I was exceedingly enlarged, and my soul was as much drawn out

DAVID BRAINERD. 119

as ever I remember it to have been in my life, or near. I was in such anguish, and pleaded with so much earnestness and importunity, that when I rose from my knees I felt extremely weak and overcome, I could scarcely walk straight, my joints were loosed, the sweat ran down my face and body, and nature seemed as if it would dissolve. So far as I could judge, I was wholly free from selfish ends in my fervent supplications for the poor Indians. I knew they were met together to worship devils and not God, and this made me cry earnestly, that God would now appear, and help me in my attempts to break up this idolatrous meeting. My soul pleaded long, and I thought God would hear, and would go with me to vindicate his own cause; I seemed to confide in God for his presence and assistance. And thus I spent the evening, praying incessantly for divine assistance, and that I might not be self-dependent, but still have my whole dependence upon God. What I passed through was remarkable, and indeed inexpressible. All things here below vanished, and there appeared to be nothing of any considerable importance to me, but holiness of heart and life, and the conversion of the heathen to God. All my cares, fears, and desires, which might be said to be of a worldly nature, disappeared, and were in my esteem of little more importance than a puff of wind. I exceedingly longed that God would get to himself a name among the heathen, and I appealed to him with the greatest freedom, that he knew I “preferred him above my chief joy.” Indeed, I had no notion of joy from this world, I cared not where or how I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls to Christ. I continued in this frame all the evening and night. While I was asleep, I dreamed of these things, and when I waked (as I frequently did), the first thing I thought of was this great work of pleading for God against Satan.

Lord’s day, July 22. —When I waked, my soul was burdened with what seemed to be before me; I cried to God before I could get out of my bed, and as soon as I was dressed, I withdrew into the woods, to pour out my burdened soul to God, especially for assistance in my great work (for I could scarcely think of any thing else), and enjoyed the same freedom and fervency as the last evening, and did with unspeakable freedom give up myself afresh to God, for life or death, for all hardships he should call me to among the heathen; and felt as if nothing could discourage me from this blessed work. I had a strong hope that God would “bow

120 THE LIFE OF

the heavens and come down,” and do some marvellous work among the heathen. And when I was riding to the Indians, three miles, my heart was continually going up to God for his presence and assistance, and hoping, and almost expecting, that God would make this the day of his power and grace amongst the poor Indians. When I came to them, I found them engaged in their frolic; but through divine goodness I got them to break up and attend to my preaching —yet still there appeared nothing of the special power of God among them. Preached again to them in the afternoon, and observed the Indians were more sober than

before, but still saw nothing special among them; from whence Satan took occasion to tempt and buffet me with these cursed suggestions —there is no God, or if there be, he is not able to convert the Indians, before they have more knowledge, &c. I was very weak and weary, and my soul borne down with perplexity, but was mortified to all the world, and was determined still to wait upon God for the conversion of the heathen, though the devil tempted me to the contrary.

Mon., July 23. —Retained still a deep and pressing sense of what lay with so much weight upon me yesterday, but was more calm and quiet; enjoyed freedom and composure, after the temptations of the last evening, had sweet resignation to the divine will, and desired nothing so much as the conversion of the heathen to God, and that his kingdom might come in my own heart, and the hearts of others. Rode to a settlement of Irish people, about fifteen miles south-westward; spent my time in prayer and meditation by the way. Near night, preached from Matt. v. 3. God was pleased to afford me some degree of freedom and fervency, blessed be God for my measure of assistance.

Tues., July 24. —Rode about seventeen miles westward, over a hideous mountain, to a number of Indians. Got together near thirty of them, preached to them in the evening, and lodged among them. Was weak, and felt something disconsolate, yet could have no freedom in the thought of any other circumstances or business in life; all my desire was the conversion of the heathen, and all my hope was in God. God does not suffer me to please or comfort myself with hopes of seeing friends, returning to my dear acquaintance, and enjoying worldly comforts.

The next day he preached to these Indians again, and then returned to the Irish settlement, and there preached to a

DAVID BRAINERD. 121

numerous congregation; there was a considerable appearance of awakening in the congregation. Thursday, he returned home, exceedingly fatigued and spent, still in the same frame of mortification to the world, and solicitous for the advancement of Christ's kingdom; and on this day he says thus: —“I have felt this week more of the spirit of a *pilgrim on earth* than perhaps ever before; and yet so desirous to see Zion's prosperity, that I was not so willing to leave this scene of sorrow as I used to be.” The two remaining days of the week he was very ill, and cries out of wanderings, dulness, and want of spiritual fervency and sweetness. On the Sabbath he was confined by illness, not able to go out to preach. After this, his illness increased upon him, and he continued very ill all the week;¹ and says, that “he thought he never before endured such a season of distressing weakness, and that his nature was so spent, that he could neither stand, sit, nor lie with any quiet, and that his mind was as much disordered as his body, seeming to be stupid, and without all kind of affections towards all objects, and yet perplexed to think that he lived for nothing, that precious time rolled away, and he could do nothing but trifle and speaks of it as a season wherein Satan buffeted him with some peculiar temptations.” Concerning the next five days, he writes thus: —“On Lord's day, August 5, was still very poor. But though very weak, I visited and preached to

¹ This week, on Tuesday, he wrote the *fourth letter* added at the end of this account.

the poor Indians twice, and was strengthened vastly beyond my expectations. And indeed the Lord gave me some freedom and fervency in addressing them, though I had not strength enough to stand, but was obliged to sit down the whole time. Towards night was extremely weak, faint, sick, and full of pain. And thus I have continued much in the same state that I was in last week through the most of this (it being now Friday), unable to engage in any business, frequently unable to pray in the family. I am obliged to let all my thoughts and concerns run at random, for I have neither strength to read, meditate, or pray, and this naturally perplexes my mind. I seem to myself like a man that has all his estate embarked in one small boat, unhappily going adrift down a swift torrent. The poor owner stands on the shore, and looks and laments his loss. But, alas! though my all seems to be adrift, and I stand and see it, I dare not lament; for this sinks my spirits more, and aggravates my bodily dis-

122 THE LIFE OF

orders. I am forced, therefore, to divert myself with trifles, although at the same time I am afraid, and often feel as if I was guilty of the misimprovement of time. And oftentimes my conscience is so exercised with this miserable way of spending time, that I have no peace, though I have no strength of mind or body to improve it to better purpose. O that God would pity my distressed state! “

The next three weeks after this, his illness was not so extreme: he was in some degree capable of business, both public and private (although he had some turns wherein his indisposition prevailed to a great degree); he also in this space had, for the most part, much more inward assistance and strength of mind; he often expresses great longings for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, especially by the conversion of the heathen to God; he speaks of his hope of this as all his delight and joy. He continues still to express his usual longings after holiness and living to God, and his sense of his own unworthiness; he several times speaks of his appearing to himself the vilest creature on earth, and once says, that he verily thought there were none of God's children who fell so far short of that holiness and perfection in their obedience which God requires as he. He speaks of his feeling more dead than ever to the enjoyments of the world. He sometimes mentions special assistance that he had in this space of time, in preaching to the Indians, and of appearances of religious concern among them. He speaks also of assistance in prayer for absent friends, and especially ministers and candidates for the ministry; and of much comfort he enjoyed in the company of some ministers that came to visit him.

Sat., Sept. 1. —Was so far strengthened, after a season of great weakness, that I was able to spend two or three hours in writing on a divine subject. Enjoyed some comfort and sweetness in things divine and sacred; and as my bodily strength was in some measure restored, so my soul seemed to be somewhat vigorous, and engaged in the things of God.

Lord's day, Sept. 2. —Was enabled to speak to my poor Indians with much concern and fervency, and I am persuaded God enabled me to exercise faith in him, while I was speaking to them. I perceived that some of them were afraid to hearken to and embrace *Christianity*, lest they should be enchanted and poisoned by some of the *powows*: but I was enabled to plead with them not to fear these, and confiding

in God for safety and deliverance, I bid a challenge to all these *powers of darkness* to do their worst upon me first. I told my people I was a *Christian*, and asked them why the *powows* did not bewitch and poison me. I scarcely ever felt more sensible of my own unworthiness, than in this action; I saw, that the honour of God was concerned in the affair, and I desired to be preserved, not from selfish views, but for a testimony of the divine power and goodness, and of the truth of Christianity, and that God might be glorified. Afterwards I found my soul rejoice in God for his assisting grace.

After this, he went a journey into New England, and was absent from the place of his abode, at the Forks of Delaware, about three weeks. He was in a feeble state the greater part of the time. But in the latter part of the journey, he found he gained much in health and strength. And as to the state of his mind, and his religious and spiritual exercises, it was much with him as had been before usual in journeys, excepting that the frame of his mind seemed more generally to be comfortable. But yet there are complaints of some uncomfortable seasons, want of fervency, and want of retirements, and time alone with God. In this journey, he did not forget the Indians, but once and again speaks of his longing for their conversion.

Wed., Sept. 26. —Rode home to the Forks of Delaware. What reason have I to bless God, who has preserved me in riding more than four hundred and twenty miles, and has “kept all my bones, that not one of them has been broken!” My health likewise is greatly recovered. O that I could dedicate my all to God! This is all the return I can make to him.

Thurs., Sept. 27. —Was something melancholy; had not much freedom and comfort in prayer; my soul is disconsolate when God is withdrawn.

Fri., Sept. 28. —Spent the day in prayer, reading, and writing. Felt some small degree of warmth in prayer, and some desires of the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom by the conversion of the heathen, and that God would make me a “chosen vessel, to bear his name before them;” longed for grace to enable me to be faithful.

The next day, he speaks of the same longings for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom, and the conversion of the

124 THE LIFE OF

Indians, but complains greatly of the ill effects of the diversions of his late journey, as unfixing his mind from that degree of engagedness, fervency, watchfulness, which he enjoyed before. And the like complaints are continued the next day.

Mon., Oct. 1. —Was engaged this day in making preparation for my intended journey to Susquehannah: withdrew several times to the woods for secret duties, and endeavoured to plead for the divine presence to go with me to the poor pagans, to whom I was going to

preach the gospel. Towards night rode about four miles, and met brother Byram,¹ who was come at my desire to be my companion in travel to the Indians. I rejoiced to see him, and I trust God made his conversation profitable to me. I saw him, as I thought, more dead to the world, its anxious cares and alluring objects, than I was; and this made me look within myself, and gave me a greater sense of my guilt, ingratitude, and misery.

Tues., Oct. 2. —Set out on my journey, in company with dear brother Byram, and my interpreter, and two chief Indians from the Forks of Delaware. Travelled about twenty-five miles, and lodged in one of the last houses on our road, after which there was nothing but a hideous and howling wilderness.

Wed., Oct. 3 —We went on our way into the wilderness, and found the most difficult and dangerous travelling, by far, that ever any of us had seen; we had scarce any thing else but lofty mountains, deep valleys, and hideous rocks, to make our way through. However, I felt some sweetness in divine things, part of the day, and had my mind intensely engaged in meditation on a divine subject. Near night my beast that I rode upon hung one of her legs in the rocks, and I fell down under me, but through divine goodness I was not hurt. However she broke her leg, and being in such a hideous place, and near thirty miles from any house, I saw nothing that could be done to preserve her life, and so was obliged to kill her, and to prosecute my journey on foot. This accident made me admire the divine goodness to me, that my bones were not broken, and the multitude of them filled with strong pain. Just at dark, we kindled a fire, cut up a few bushes, and made a shelter over our heads, to save us from the frost, which was very hard that night, and com-

DAVID BRAINERD. 125

mitting ourselves to God by prayer, we lay down on the ground and slept quietly.

The next day, they went forward on their journey, and at night took up their lodging in the woods in like manner.

Fri., Oct. 5. —We arrived at Susquehannah River, at a place called *Opeholhaupung*; found there twelve Indian houses. After I had saluted the king in a friendly manner, I told him my business, and that my desire was to teach them *Christianity*. After some consultation, the Indians gathered, and I preached to them. And when I had done, I asked if they would hear me again. They replied that they would consider of it, and soon after sent me word that they would immediately attend, if I would preach, which I did, with freedom, both times. When I asked them again, whether they would hear me further, they replied they would the next day. I was exceeding sensible of the impossibility of doing any thing for the poor heathen without special assistance from above, and my soul seemed to rest on God, and leave it to him to do as he pleased in that which I saw was his own cause; and indeed, through divine goodness, I had felt something of this frame most of the time while I was travelling thither, and in some measure before I set out.

¹ Minister at a place called *Rockciticus*, about forty miles from Mr. Brainerd's lodgings.

Sat., Oct. 6. —Rose early, and besought the Lord for help in my great work. Near noon, preached again to the Indians, and in the afternoon visited them from house to house, inviting them to come and hear me again the next day, and put off their hunting design, which they were just entering upon, till Monday. “This night,” I trust, “the Lord stood by me,” to encourage and strengthen my soul; I spent more than an hour in secret retirement; was enabled to “pour out my heart before God,” for the increase of grace in my soul, for ministerial endowments, for success among the poor Indians, for God’s ministers and people, and for dear friends vastly distant, &c. Blessed be God!

The next day, he complains of great want of fixedness and intenseness in religion, so that he could not keep any spiritual thought one minute without distraction, which occasioned anguish of spirit. He felt (he says) *amazingly guilty*, and *extremely miserable*; and cries out, “O my soul, what death it is, to have the affections unable to centre in God, by reason of darkness, and consequently roving after that satis-

126 THE LIFE OF

faction elsewhere that is only to be found here!” However, he preached twice to the Indians with some freedom, and power, but was afterwards damped by the *objections* they made against *Christianity*. In the evening-, in a sense of his great defects in preaching, he “intreated God not to impute to him blood-guiltiness,” but yet was at the same time enabled to *rejoice in God*.

Mon., Oct. 8. —Visited the Indians with a design to take my leave of them, supposing they would this morning go out to hunting early; but beyond my expectation and hope, they desired to hear me preach again. I gladly complied with their request, and afterwards endeavoured to answer their *objections* against Christianity. Then they went away, and we spent the rest of the afternoon in reading and prayer, intending to go homeward very early the next day. My soul was in some measure refreshed in secret prayer and meditation. Blessed be the Lord for all his goodness!

Tues., Oct. 9. —We rose about four in the morning, and commending ourselves to God by prayer and asking his special protection, we set out on our journey homewards about five, and travelled with great steadiness till past six at night, and then made us a fire and a shelter of barks and so rested. I had some clear and comfortable thoughts on a divine subject, by the way, towards night. In the night the wolves howled around us, but God preserved us.

The next day they rose early and set forward, and travelled that day till they came to an Irish settlement where Mr. Brainerd was acquainted, and lodged there. He speaks of some sweetness in divine things, and thankfulness to God for his goodness to him in this journey, that he felt in his heart in the evening, though attended with shame for his barrenness. On Thursday, he continued in the same place, and he and Mr. Byram preached there to the people.

Fri., Oct. 12. —Rode home to my lodging, where I poured out my soul to God in secret prayer, and endeavoured to bless him for his abundant goodness to me in my late journey. I

scarce ever enjoyed more health, at least, of later years, and God marvellously, and almost miraculously, supported me under the fatigues of the way, and travelling on foot. Blessed be the Lord that continually preserves me in all my ways!

DAVID BRAINERD. 127

On Saturday he went again to the Irish settlement, to spend the Sabbath there, his Indians being gone.

Lord's day, Oct. 14. —Was much confused and perplexed in my thoughts, could not pray, and was almost discouraged, thinking I should never be able to preach any more. But afterwards God was pleased to give me some relief from these confusions; still I was afraid, and even trembled before God. I went to the place of public worship, lifting up my heart to God for assistance and grace in my great work; and God was gracious to me, and helped me to plead with him for holiness, and to use the strongest arguments with him, drawn from the incarnation and sufferings of Christ for this very end, that men might be made holy. Afterwards I was much assisted in preaching. I know not that ever God helped me to preach in a more close and distinguishing manner for the trial of men's state. Through the infinite goodness of God, I felt what I spake, and God enabled me to treat on divine truth with uncommon clearness, and yet I was so sensible of my defects in preaching, that I could not be proud of my performance as at some times; and blessed be the Lord for this mercy! In the evening I longed to be entirely alone, to bless God for help in a time of extremity, and longed for great degrees of holiness, that I might show my gratitude to God.

The next morning he spent some time before sunrise in prayer, in the same sweet and grateful frame of mind that he had been in the evening before, and afterwards went to his Indians, and spent some time in teaching and exhorting them.

Tues., Oct. 16. —Felt a spirit of solemnity and watchfulness; was afraid I should not live *to* and *upon* God; longed for more intenseness and spirituality. Spent the day in writing, frequently lifting up my heart to God for more heavenly-mindedness. In the evening enjoyed sweet assistance in prayer, and thirsted and pleaded to be as holy as the blessed *angels*; longed for ministerial gifts and graces, and success in my work; was sweetly assisted in the duty of intercession, and enabled to remember and plead for numbers of dear friends, and Christ's ministers.

He seems to have had much of the same frame of mind the next two days.

123 THE LIFE OF

Fri., Oct. 19. —Felt an abasing sense of my own impurity and untidiness, and felt my soul melt and mourn that I had abused and grieved a very gracious God, who was still kind to me, notwithstanding all my unworthiness. My soul enjoyed a sweet season of bitter repentance and sorrow, that I had wronged that blessed God who, I was persuaded, was reconciled to me in his dear Son. My soul was now tender, devout, and solemn. And I was afraid of nothing but sin, and afraid of that in every action and thought.

The next four days were manifestly spent in a most constant tenderness, watchfulness, diligence, and self-diffidence. But he complains of wanderings of mind, langour of affections, &c.

Wed., Oct. 24. —Near noon rode to my people; spent some time, and prayed with them; felt the frame of a *pilgrim* on earth; longed much to leave this gloomy mansion, but yet found the exercise of patience and resignation. And as I returned home from the Indians, spent the whole time in lifting up my heart to God. In the evening, enjoyed a blessed season alone in prayer, was enabled to cry to God with a child-like spirit for the space of near an hour, enjoyed a sweet freedom in supplicating for myself, for dear friends, ministers, and some who are preparing for that work, and for the church of God, and longed to be as lively myself in God's service as the angels.

Thurs., Oct. 25. —Was busy in writing. Was very sensible of my absolute dependence on God in all respects; saw that I could do nothing in those affairs that I have sufficient natural faculties for, unless God should smile upon my attempt. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves," was a sacred text that I saw the truth of.

Fri., Oct. 26. —In the morning my soul was melted with a sense of divine goodness and mercy to such a vile, unworthy worm as I; delighted to lean upon God, and place my whole trust in him; my soul was exceedingly grieved for sin, and prized and longed after holiness; it wounded my heart deeply, yet sweetly, to think how I had abused a kind God. I longed to be perfectly holy, that I might not grieve a gracious God, who will continue to love, notwithstanding his love is abused! I longed for holiness more for this end than I did for my own happiness' sake; and yet this was my

DAVID BRAINERD. 129

greatest happiness, never more to dishonour, but always to glorify the blessed God. Afterwards, rode up to the Indians in the afternoon.

The next four days, he was exercised with much disorder and pain of body, with a degree of melancholy and gloominess of mind, bitterly complaining of deadness and unprofitableness, yet mourning and longing after God.

Wed., Oct. 31. —Was sensible of my barrenness and decays in the things of God; my soul failed when I remembered the fervency I had enjoyed at the throne of grace. O (I thought) if I could but be spiritual, warm, heavenly-minded, and affectionately breathing after God, this would be better than life to me! My soul longed exceedingly for death, to be loosed from this dulness and barrenness and made for ever active in the service of God. I seemed to live for nothing, and to do no good, and O the burden of such a life! O death, death, my kind friend, hasten and deliver me from dull mortality, and make me spiritual and vigorous to eternity.

Thurs., Nov. 1. —Had but little sweetness in divine things. But afterwards, in the evening, felt some life and longings after God; I longed to be always solemn, devout, and heavenly-

mindful, and was afraid to leave off praying lest I should again lose a sense of the sweet things of God.

Fri., Nov. 2. —Was filled with sorrow and confusion, in the morning, and could enjoy no sweet sense of divine things, nor get any relief in prayer. Saw I deserved that every one of God's creatures should be let loose upon me to be the executioners of his wrath against me, and yet therein I saw I deserved what I did not fear as my portion. About noon, rode up to the Indians, and while going could feel no desires for them, and even dreaded to say any thing to them, but God was pleased to give me some freedom and enlargement, and made the season comfortable to me. In the evening, had enlargement in prayer. But, alas! what comforts and enlargements I have felt for these many weeks past, have been only transient and short, and the greater part of my time has been filled up with deadness or struggles with deadness, and bitter conflicts with corruption. I have found myself exercised sorely with some particular things that I thought myself most of all freed from. And thus I have ever found it —when I have thought the battle was over, and

130 THE LIFE OF

the conquest gained, and so let down my watch, the enemy has risen up and done me the greatest injury.

Sat., Nov. 3. —I read the life and trials of a godly man, and was much warmed by it; I wondered at my past deadness, and was more convinced of it than ever. Was enabled to confess and bewail my sin before God, with self-abhorrence.

Lord's day, Nov. 4. —Had, I think, some exercise of faith in prayer in the morning; longed to be spiritual. Had considerable help in preaching to my poor Indians, was encouraged with them, and hoped that God designed mercy for them.

The next day he set out on a journey to New York to the meeting of the Presbytery there; and was gone from home more than a fortnight. He seemed to enter on this journey with great reluctance, fearing that the diversions of it would prove a means of cooling his religious affections, as he had found in other journeys. But yet in this journey he had some special seasons wherein he enjoyed extraordinary evidences and fruits of God's gracious presence. He was greatly fatigued and exposed in this journey by cold and storms, and when he returned from New York to New Jersey, on Friday, was taken very ill and was detained by his illness some time.

Wed., Nov. 21. —Rode from Newark to Rockciticus in the cold, and was almost overcome with it. Enjoyed some sweetness in conversation with dear Mr. Jones, while I dined with him; my soul loves the people of God, and especially the ministers of Jesus Christ, who feel the same trials that I do.

Thurs., Nov. 22. —Came on my way from Rockciticus to Delaware river. Was very much disordered with a cold and pain in my head. About six at night I lost my way in the wilderness, and wandered over rocks and mountains, down hideous steeps, through swamps,

and most dreadful and dangerous places; and the night being dark, so that few stars could be seen, I was greatly exposed, was much pinched with cold, and distressed with an extreme pain in my head, attended with sickness at my stomach, so that every step I took was distressing to me. I had little hope for several hours together, but that I must lie out in the woods all night in this distressed case. But about nine o'clock, I

DAVID ERAINERD. 131

found a house, through the abundant goodness of God, and was kindly entertained. Thus I have frequently been exposed, and sometimes lain out the whole night, but God has hitherto preserved me, and blessed be his name. Such fatigues and hardships as these serve to wean me more from the earth, and I trust will make heaven the sweeter. Formerly, when I was thus exposed to cold, rain, &c., I was ready to please myself with the thoughts of enjoying a comfortable house, a warm fire, and other outward comforts, but now these have less place in my heart (through the grace of God), and my eye is more to God for comfort. In this world I expect tribulation, and it does not now, as formerly, appear strange to me. I do not in such seasons of difficulty flatter myself that it will be better hereafter, but rather think how much worse it might be, how much greater trials others of God's children have endured, and how much greater are yet perhaps reserved for me. Blessed be God, that he makes the thoughts of my journey's end and of my dissolution a great comfort to me, under my sharpest trials, and scarce ever lets these thoughts be attended with terror or melancholy. They are attended frequently with great joy.

Fri., Nov. 23. —Visited a sick man, discoursed and prayed with him. Then visited another house where was one dead and laid out, looked on the corpse, and longed that my time might come to *depart*, that I might be *with Christ*. Then went home to my lodgings about one o'clock. Felt poorly, but was able to read most of the afternoon.

Within the space of the next twelve days, he passed under many changes in the frames and exercises of his mind. He had many seasons of the special influences of God's Spirit, animating, invigorating, and comforting him in the ways of God and duties of religion, but had some turns of great dejection and melancholy. He spent much time within this space in hard labour, with others, to make for himself a little cottage or hut, to live in by himself through the winter. Yet he frequently preached to the Indians, and speaks of special assistance he had from time to time in addressing himself to them, and of his sometimes having considerable encouragement from the attention they gave. But on Tuesday, December 4, he was sunk into great discouragement, to see them (most of them) going in company to an idolatrous *feast* and *dance*, after he had taken abundant pains with them to dissuade them from these things.

132 THE LIFE OF

Thurs., Dec. 6. —Having now a happy opportunity of being retired in a house of my own, which I have lately procured and moved into, and considering that it is now a long time since I have been able, either on account of bodily weakness, or for want of retirement, or some other difficulty, to spend any time in secret fasting and prayer considering also the greatness

of my work and the extreme difficulties that attend it, and that my poor Indians are now *worshipping devils*, notwithstanding all the pains I have taken with them, which almost overwhelms my spirit moreover, considering my extreme barrenness, spiritual deadness, and dejection of late, as also the power of some particular corruptions I set apart this day for secret prayer and fasting, to implore the blessing of God on myself, on my poor people, on my friends, and on the Church of God. At first, I felt a great backwardness to the duties of the day, on account of the seeming impossibility of performing them, but the Lord helped me to break through this difficulty. God was pleased, by the use of means, to give me some clear conviction of my sinfulness and a discovery of the *plague of my own heart*, more affecting than what I have of late had. And especially I saw my sinfulness in this, that when God had *withdrawn* himself, then, instead of living and dying in *pursuit* of him, I have been disposed to one of these two things, either (*first*) to yield an unbecoming respect to some *earthly* objects, as if happiness were to be derived from them, or (*secondly*) to be secretly *froward* and impatient, and unsuitably desirous of *death*, so that I have sometimes thought I could not bear to think my life must be lengthened out. And that which often drove me to this impatient desire of death, was a despair of doing any good in life: and I chose death, rather than a life spent for nothing. But now God made me sensible of my sin in these things, and enabled me to cry to him for *forgiveness*. Yet this was not all I wanted; for my soul appeared exceedingly polluted, my heart seemed like a nest of vipers, or a cage of unclean and hateful birds, and therefore I wanted to be purified “by the blood of sprinkling, that cleanseth from all sin.” And this I hope I was enabled to pray for in faith. I enjoyed much more intenseness, fervency, and spirituality, than I expected; God was better to me than my fears. And towards night, I felt my soul rejoice that God is unchangeably happy and glorious, that he will he glorified, whatever becomes of his creatures. I was enabled to persevere in prayer

DAVID BBATNERD. 133

till some time in the evening, at which time I saw so much need of divine help in every respect, that I knew not how to leave off, and had forgot that I needed food. This evening, I was much assisted in meditating on Isa. Hi. 3. Blessed be the Lord for any help in the past day.

Fri., Dec. 7. —Spent some time in prayer in the morning, enjoyed some freedom and affection in the duty, and had longing desires of being made “faithful to the death.” Spent a little time in writing on a divine subject, then visited the Indians, and preached to them, but under inexpressible dejection: I had no heart to speak to them, and could not do it, but as I forced myself. I knew they must hate to hear me, as having but just got home from their idolatrous feast and devil-worship. In the evening had some freedom in prayer and meditation.

Sat., Dec. 8. —Have been uncommonly free this day from dejection, and from that distressing apprehension that I could do nothing; was enabled to pray and study with some comfort, and especially was assisted in writing on a divine subject. In the evening my soul rejoiced in God, and I blessed his name for shining on my soul. O the sweet and blessed change I then felt, when God “brought me out of darkness into his marvellous light!”

Lord's day, Dec. 9. —Preached both parts of the day, at a place called *Greenwich*, in New Jersey, about ten miles from my own house. In the first discourse I had scarce any warmth or affectionate longing for souls. In the intermission-season I got alone among the bushes, and cried to God for pardon of my deadness, and was in anguish and bitterness that I could not address souls with more compassion and tender affection, judged and condemned myself for want of this divine temper, though I saw I could not get it as of myself, any more than I could make a world. In the latter exercise, blessed be the Lord, I had some fervency, both in prayer and preaching; and especially in the application of my discourse was enabled to address precious souls with affection, concern, tenderness, and importunity. The Spirit of God, I think, was there, as the effects were apparent, tears running down many cheeks.

Mon., Dec. 10. —Near noon I preached again, God gave me some assistance, and enabled me to be in some degree faithful, so that I had peace in my own soul, and a very comfortable composure, “although Israel should not be gathered.” Came away from Greenwich, and rode home j arrived just

134 THE LIFE OF

in the evening-. By the way, my soul blessed God for his goodness, and I rejoiced that so much of my work was done, and I so much nearer my blessed reward. Blessed be God for grace to be faithful.

Tues., Dec. 11. —Felt very poorly in body, being much tired and worn out the last night. Was assisted in some measure in writing on a divine subject; but was so feeble and sore in my breast, that I had not much resolution in my work. O how I long for that world “where the weary are at rest!” and yet through the goodness of God I do not now feel impatient.

Wed., Dec. 12. —Was again very weak, but somewhat assisted in secret prayer, and enabled with pleasure and sweetness to cry, “Come, Lord Jesus! come, Lord Jesus! come quickly! “My soul “longed for God, for the living God.” O how delightful it is, to pray under such sweet influences! O how much better is this than one’s *necessary food*! I had at this time no disposition to eat (though late in the morning), for earthly food appeared wholly tasteless. O how much “better is thy love than wine,” than the sweetest wine! I visited and preached to the Indians in the afternoon, but under much dejection. Found my *interpreter* under some concern for his soul, which was some comfort to me, and yet filled me with new care. I longed greatly for his conversion; lifted up my heart to God for it, while I was talking to him; came home, and poured out my soul to God for him, enjoyed some freedom in prayer, and was enabled, I think, to leave all with God.

Thurs., Dec. 13. —Endeavoured to spend the day in fasting and prayer, to implore the divine blessing, more especially on my poor people; and in particular, I sought for converting grace for my *interpreter*, and three or four more under some concern for their souls. I was much disordered in the morning when I arose, but having determined to spend the day in this manner, I attempted it. Some freedom I had in pleading for these poor concerned souls several times, and when interceding for them, I enjoyed greater freedom from wandering and distracting thoughts, than in any part of my supplications; but, in the general, was greatly

exercised with wanderings, so that in the evening it seemed as if I had need to pray for nothing so much as for the pardon of sins committed in the day past, and the vileness I then found in myself. The sins I had most sense of were pride, and wandering thoughts, whereby I mocked God. The former

DAVID BRAINERD. 135

of these cursed iniquities excited me to think of writing, or preaching, or converting heathen, or performing some other great work, that my name might live when I should be dead. My soul was in anguish, and ready to drop into despair, to find so much of that cursed temper. With this, and the other evil I laboured under, viz. wandering thoughts, I was almost overwhelmed, and even ready to give over striving after a spirit of devotion, and oftentimes sunk into a considerable degree of despondency, and thought I was “more brutish than any man.” Yet, after all my sorrows, I trust, through grace, this day and the exercises of it have been for my good, and taught me more of my corruption, and weakness without Christ, than I knew before.

Fri., Dec. 14. —Near noon, went to the Indians, but knew not what to say to them, and was ashamed to look them in the face; I felt I had no power to address their consciences, and therefore had no boldness to say any thing. Was much of the day in a great degree of despair about ever “doing or seeing any good in the land of the living.”

He continued under the same dejection the next day.

Lord's day, Dec. 16. —Was so overwhelmed with dejection, that I knew not how to live, I longed for death exceedingly, my soul was *sunk into deep waters*, and *the floods* were ready to *drown me*, I was so much oppressed, that my soul was in a kind of horror. I could not keep my thoughts fixed in prayer for the space of one minute, without fluttering and distraction. I was exceedingly ashamed that I did not live to God. I had no distressing doubt about my own state, but would have cheerfully ventured (as far as I could possibly know) into eternity. While I was going to preach to the Indians, my soul was in anguish; I was so overborne with discouragement, that I despaired of doing any good, and was driven to my wits-end, I knew nothing what to say, nor what course to take. But at last I insisted on the evidence we have of the truth of Christianity from the *miracles* of Christ, many of which I set before them, and God helped me to make a close application to those that refused to believe the truth of what I taught them; and indeed I was enabled to speak to the consciences of all in some measure. I was something encouraged, to find that God enabled me to be faithful once more. Then came and preached to another company of them, but was very weary and faint. In the even-

136 THE LIFE OF

ing, I was something refreshed, and was enabled to pray and praise God with composure and affection; had some enlargement and courage with respect to my work; was willing to live, and longed to do more for God than my weak state of body would admit of. “I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me;” and by his grace I am willing to *spend* and *be spent* in his service, when I am not thus sunk in dejection, and a kind of despair.

Mon., Dec. 17. —Was something comfortable in mind most of the day, and was enabled to pray with some freedom, cheerfulness, composure, and devotion; had also some assistance in writing on a divine subject.

Tues., Dec. 18. —Went to the Indians, and discoursed to them near an hour, without any power to come close to their hearts. But at last I felt some fervency, and God helped me to speak with warmth. My *interpreter* also was amazingly assisted, and I doubt not “the Spirit of God was upon him,” (though I had no reason to think he had any true and saving grace, but was only under conviction of his lost state), and presently upon this most of the grown persons were much affected, and the tears ran down their cheeks, and one *old man* (I suppose an hundred years old) was so affected, that he wept, and seemed convinced of the importance of what I taught them. I staid with them a considerable time, exhorting and directing them, and came away lifting up my heart to God in prayer and praise, and encouraged and exhorted my *interpreter* to “strive to enter in at the strait gate.” Came home, and spent most of the evening in prayer and thanksgiving, and found myself much enlarged and quickened. Was greatly concerned that the Lord’s work, which seemed to be begun, might be carried on with power, to the conversion of poor souls and the glory of divine grace.

Wed., Dec. 19. —Spent a great part of the day in prayer to God for the *outpouring of his Spirit* on my poor people, as also to bless his name for awakening my *interpreter* and some others, and giving us some tokens of his presence yesterday. And blessed be God, I had much freedom, five or six times in the day in prayer and praise, and felt a weighty concern upon my spirit for the salvation of those precious souls, and the enlargement of the Redeemer’s kingdom among them. My soul hoped in God for some success in my ministry, and blessed be his name for so much hope.

Thurs., Dec. 20. —Was enabled to visit the throne of

DAVID BRAINERD. 137

grace frequently, this day, and through divine goodness enjoyed much freedom and fervency, sundry times; was much assisted in crying for mercy for my poor people, and felt cheerfulness and hope in my requests for them. I spent much of the day in writing, but was enabled to intermix prayer with my studies.

Fri., Dec. 21. —Was enabled again to pray with freedom, cheerfulness, and hope. God was pleased to make the duty comfortable and pleasant to me, so that I delighted to persevere, and repeatedly to engage in it. Towards noon visited my people, and spent the whole time in the way to them in prayer, longing to “see the power of God” among them, as there appeared something of it the last Tuesday, and I found it sweet to rest and hope in God. Preached to them twice, and at two distinct places; had considerable freedom each time, and so had my *interpreter*. Several of them followed me from one place to the other; and I thought there was some divine influence discernible amongst them. In the evening, was assisted in prayer again. Blessed, blessed be the Lord!

Very much the same things are expressed concerning his inward frame, exercises, and assistances on Saturday, as on the preceding days. He observes, that this was a comfortable week to him. But then concludes, “O that I had no reason to complain of much barrenness! O that there were no vain thoughts and evil affections lodging within me! The Lord knows how I long for that world, where they rest not day nor night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty.*” On the following Sabbath, he speaks of assistance and freedom in his public work, but as having less of the sensible presence of God, than frequently in the week past; but yet says his soul was kept from sinking in discouragement. On Monday, again, he seemed to enjoy very much the same liberty and fervency, through the day, that he enjoyed through the greater part of the preceding week.¹

Tues., Dec. 25. —Enjoyed very little quiet sleep last night, by reason of bodily weakness and the closeness of my studies yesterday; yet my heart was somewhat lively in prayer and praise, I was delighted with the divine glory and happiness., and rejoiced that God was God, and that he was unchangeably possessed of glory and blessedness. Though God *held*

138 THE LIFE OF

my eyes waking, yet he helped me to improve my time profitably amidst my pains and weakness, in continued meditation on Luke xiii. 7, “Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit,” &c. My meditations were sweet, and I wanted to set before sinners their sin and danger.

He continued in a very low state, as to his bodily health, for some days; which seems to have been a great hindrance to him in his religious exercises and pursuits. But yet he expresses some degree of divine assistance, from day to day, through the remaining part of this week. He preached several times this week to his Indians, and there appeared still some concern amongst them for their souls. On Saturday, he rode to the Irish settlement, about fifteen miles from his lodgings, in order to spend the Sabbath there.

Lord’s day, Dec. 30. —Discoursed, both parts of the day, from Mark viii. 34, “Whosoever will come after me,” &c. God gave me very great freedom and clearness, and (in the afternoon especially) considerable warmth and fervency. In the evening also, had very great clearness while conversing with friends on divine things; I do not remember ever to have had more clear apprehensions of religion in my life, but found a struggle, in the evening, with spiritual pride.

On Monday, he preached again in the same place with freedom and fervency, and rode home to his lodging; and arrived in the evening, under a considerable degree of bodily illness, which continued the next two days. And he complains much of spiritual emptiness and barrenness on those days.

Thurs., Jan. 3., 1744-5. —Being sensible of the great want of divine influences, and the outpouring of God’s Spirit, I spent this day in fasting and prayer, to seek so great a mercy for myself and my poor people in particular, and for the church of God in general. In the

¹ This day he wrote the *fifth letter* added at the end of this history.

morning, was very lifeless in prayer, and could get scarce any sense of God. Near noon, enjoyed some sweet freedom to pray that the *will of God* might in every respect become *mine*; and I am persuaded, it was so, at that time, in some good degree. In the afternoon, I was exceeding weak, and could not enjoy much fervency in prayer; but felt a great degree of dejection, which, I believe, was very much owing to my bodily weakness and disorder.

DAVID BRAINERD. 139

Fri., Jan. 4. —Rode up to the Indians, near noon; spent some time there under great disorder; my soul was sunk *down into deep waters*, and I was almost overwhelmed with melancholy.

Sat., Jan. 5. —Was able to do something at writing, but was much disordered with pain in my head. At night, was distressed with a sense of my spiritual pollution, and ten thousand youthful, yea, and childish follies, that nobody but myself had any thought about; all which appeared to me now fresh, and in a lively view, as if committed yesterday, and made my soul ashamed before God, and caused me to hate myself.

Lord's day, Jan. 6. —Was still distressed with vapoury disorders. Preached to my poor Indians, but had little heart or life. Towards night, my soul was pressed under a sense of my unfaithfulness. O the joy and peace that arises from a sense of "having obtained mercy of God to be faithful! "And the misery and anguish that spring from an apprehension of the contrary!

His dejection continued the next two days, but not to so great a degree on Tuesday, when he enjoyed some freedom and fervency in preaching to the Indians.

Wed., Jan. 9. —In the morning, God was pleased to remove that gloom which has of late oppressed my mind, and gave me freedom and sweetness in prayer. I was encouraged and strengthened and enabled to plead for grace for myself, and mercy for my poor Indians, and was sweetly assisted in my intercessions with God for others. Blessed be his holy name for ever and ever Amen and amen. Those things that of late have appeared most difficult and almost impossible, now appeared not only possible but easy. My soul so much delighted to continue instant in prayer, at this blessed season, that I had no desire for my *necessary food*, even dreaded leaving off praying at all, lest I should lose this spirituality, and this blessed thankfulness to God which I then felt. I felt now quite willing to live, and undergo all trials that might remain for me in a world of sorrow; but still longed for heaven, that I might glorify God in a perfect manner. O "come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" Spent the day in reading a little, and in some diversions, which I was necessitated to take by reason of much weakness and disorder. In the evening, enjoyed some freedom and in tenseness in prayer.

140 THE LIFE OF

The three remaining days of the week, he was very low and feeble in body, but nevertheless continued constantly in the same comfortable, sweet frame of mind, as is expressed on Wednesday. On the Sabbath, this sweetness in spiritual alacrity began to abate, but still he enjoyed some degree of comfort, and had assistance in preaching to the Indians.

Mon., Jan. 14. —Spent this day under a great degree of bodily weakness and disorder, and had very little freedom, either in my studies or devotions; and in the evening, I was much dejected and melancholy. It pains and distresses me that I live so much of my time for nothing. I long to do much in a little time, and if it might be the Lord's will, to *finish my work* speedily in this tiresome world. I am sure I do not desire to live for any thing in this world, and through grace I am not afraid to look the *king of terrors* in the face: I know, I shall be afraid, if God leaves me; and therefore I think it always duty to lay in for that solemn hour. But for a very considerable time past, my soul has rejoiced to think of death in its nearest approaches, and even when I have been very weak, and seemed nearest eternity. "Not unto me, not unto me, but to God be the glory." I feel that which convinces me, that if God do not enable me to maintain a holy dependence upon him, death will easily be a terror to me; 'but at present, I must say, "I long to depart, and to be with Christ," which is best of all. When I am in a sweet resigned frame of soul, I am willing to tarry a while in a world of sorrow, I am willing to be from home as long as God sees fit it should be so; but when I want the influence of this temper, I am then apt to be impatient to be gone. O when will the day appear, that I shall be perfect in holiness, and in the enjoyment of God!

The next day was spent under a great degree of dejection and melancholy, which (as he himself says, he was persuaded) was owing partly to bodily weakness, and vapoury disorders.

Wed. and Thurs., Jan. 16 and 17. —I spent most of the time in writing on a sweet divine subject, and enjoyed some freedom and assistance. Was likewise enabled to pray more frequently and fervently than usual, and my soul, I think, rejoiced in God; especially on the evening of the last of these days; *praise* then seemed *comely*, and I delighted to

DAVID BRAINERD. 141

bless the Lord. O what reason have I to be thankful, that God ever helps me to labour and study for him! he does but *receive his own*, when I am enabled in any measure to praise him, labour for him, and live to him. O how comfortable and sweet it is, to feel the assistance of divine grace in the performance of the duties God has enjoined us! "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

The same enlargement of heart, and joyful frame of soul, continued through the next day. But on "the day following, it began to decline; which decay seems to have continued the whole of the next week; yet he enjoyed some seasons of special and sweet assistance.

Lord's day, Jan. 27. —Had the greatest degree of inward anguish that almost ever I endured; I was perfectly overwhelmed, and so confused, that after I began to discourse to the Indians, before I could finish a sentence, sometimes I forgot entirely what I was aiming at; or if, with much difficulty, I had recollected what I had before designed, still it appeared strange, and like something I had long forgotten, and had now but an imperfect remembrance of. I know it was a degree of distraction, occasioned by vapoury disorders, melancholy, spiritual desertion, and some other things that particularly pressed upon me this morning with an uncommon

weight, the principal of which respected my Indians. This distressing gloom never went off the whole day; but was so far removed, that I was enabled to speak with some freedom and concern to the Indians at two of their settlements; and I think there was some appearance of the presence of God with us, some seriousness and seeming concern among the Indians, at least a few of them. In the evening, this gloom continued still, till family prayer,¹ about nine o'clock, and almost through this, until I came near the close, when I was praying (as I usually do) for the illumination and conversion of my poor people; and then the cloud was scattered, so that I enjoyed sweetness and freedom, and conceived hopes that God designed mercy for some of them. The same I enjoyed afterwards in secret prayer, in which precious duty I had for a considerable time sweetness and

142 THE LIFE OF

freedom, and (I hope) faith, in praying for myself, my poor Indians, and dear friends and acquaintance in New England, and elsewhere, and for the dear interest of Zion in general. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits!"

He spent the rest of this week, or at least the most of it, under dejection and melancholy, which on Friday rose to an extreme height, he being then, as he himself observes, much exercised with vapoury disorders. This exceeding gloominess continued on Saturday, till the evening, when he was again relieved in family prayer; and after it, was refreshed in secret, and felt willing to live and endure hardships in the cause of God, and found his hopes of the advancement of Christ's kingdom, as also his hopes to *see the power of God* among the poor Indians, considerably raised.

Lord's day, Feb. 3. —In the morning, I was somewhat relieved of that gloom and confusion that my mind has of late been greatly exercised with, was enabled to pray with some composure and comfort. But, however, went to my Indians trembling; for my soul "remembered the wormwood and the gall" (I might almost say the *hell*) of Friday last; and I was greatly afraid I should be obliged again to drink of that *cup of trembling*, which was inconceivably more bitter than death, and made me long for the grave more, unspeakably more, than for hid treasures, yea, inconceivably more than the men of this world long for such treasures. But God was pleased to hear my cries, and to afford me great assistance; so that I felt peace in my own soul, and was satisfied, that if not one of the Indians should be profited by my preaching, but should all be damned, yet I should be accepted and rewarded as faithful; for, I am persuaded, God enabled me to be so. Had some good degree of help afterwards, at another place, and much longed for the conversion of the poor Indians. Was somewhat refreshed and comfortable towards night, and in the evening. O that my soul might praise the Lord for his goodness! Enjoyed some freedom, in the evening, in meditation on Luke xiii. 24.

¹ Though Mr. Brainerd now dwelt by himself in the forementioned little cottage, which he had built for his own use, yet that was near to a family of white people with whom he had lived before, and with whom he still attended family prayer.

In the next three days, he was the subject of much dejection; but the three remaining days of the week seem to have been spent with much composure and comfort. On the next Sabbath, he preached at Greenwich, in New

DAVID BRAINERD. 143

Jersey. In the evening, he rode eight miles to visit a sick man at the point of death, and found him speechless and senseless.

Mon., Feb. 11. —About break of day, the sick man died. I was affected at the sight. Spent the morning with the mourners. And after prayer, and some discourse with them, I returned to Greenwich, and preached again from Ps. lxxxix. 15, and the Lord gave me assistance. I felt a sweet love to souls, and to the kingdom of Christ, and longed that poor sinners might *know the joyful sound*. Several persons were much affected; and, after meeting, I was enabled to discourse, with freedom and concern, to some persons that applied to me under spiritual trouble. Left the place sweetly composed, and rode home to my house, about eight miles distant. Discoursed to friends, and inculcated divine truths upon some. In the evening, was in the most solemn frame that almost ever I remember to have experienced. I know not that ever death appeared more real to me, or that ever I saw myself in the condition of a dead corpse, laid out and dressed for a lodging in the silent grave, so evidently as at this time. And yet I felt exceeding comfortably; my mind was composed and calm, and *death* appeared *without a sting*. I think, I never felt such an universal mortification to all created objects as now. O how great and solemn a thing it appeared to die! O how it lays the greatest honour in the dust! And O how vain and trifling did the riches, honours, and pleasures of the world appear! I could not, I dare not, so much as think of any of them; for *death, death*, solemn (though not frightful) *death* appeared at the door. O I could see myself dead, and laid out, and inclosed in my coffin, and put down into the cold grave, with greatest solemnity, but without terror! I spent most of the evening in conversing with a dear Christian friend; and, blessed be God, it was a comfortable evening to us both. What are friends? What are comforts? What are sorrows? What are distresses? “The time is short: it remains, that they which weep be as though they wept not; and they which rejoice, as though they rejoiced not. For the fashion of this world passeth away. O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.” Blessed be God for the comforts of the past day.

Tues., Feb. 12. —Was exceeding weak, but in a sweet, re-

144 THE LIFE OF

signed, composed frame, most of the day. Felt my heart freely go forth after God in prayer.

Wed., Feb. 13. —Was much exercised with vapoury disorders, but still enabled to maintain solemnity, and I think spirituality.

Thurs., Feb. 14. —Spent the day in writing on a divine subject. Enjoyed health, and freedom in my work. Had a solemn sense of death, as I have indeed had every day this week, in some

measure: what I felt on Monday last has been abiding, in some considerable degree, ever since.

Fri., Feb. 15. —Was engaged in writing again almost the whole day. In the evening, was much assisted in meditating on that precious text, John vii. 37, —“Jesus stood and cried,” &c. I had then a sweet sense of the free grace of the gospel. My soul was encouraged, warmed, and quickened, and my desires drawn out after God in prayer. My soul was watchful, and afraid of losing so sweet a guest as I then entertained. I continued long in prayer and meditation, intermixing one with the other, and was unwilling to be diverted by any thing at all from so sweet an exercise. I longed to proclaim the grace I then meditated upon to the world of sinners. O how *quick* and *powerful* is the *word* of the blessed God!

The next day, he complains of great conflicts with corruption, and much discomposure of mind.

Lord's day, Feb. 17. —Preached to the *white* people (my *interpreter* being absent) in the wilderness upon the sunny side of a hill. Had a considerable assembly, consisting of people that lived (at least many of them) not less than thirty miles asunder; some of them came near twenty miles. I discoursed to them all day from John vii. 37, —“Jesus *stood and cried*, saying, If any man thirst,” &c. In the afternoon, it pleased God to grant me great freedom and fervency in my discourse; and I was enabled to imitate the example of Christ in the text, who stood and cried. I think I was scarce ever enabled to offer the free grace of God to perishing sinners, with more freedom and plainness, in my life. And afterwards, I was enabled earnestly to invite the children of God to come renewedly, and drink of this fountain of water of life, from whence they have heretofore derived unspeakable satisfaction. It was a very comfortable time to me. There were many tears in the as-

DAVID BRAINERD. 145

sembly; and I doubt not but that the Spirit of God was there, convincing poor sinners of their need of Christ. In the evening, I felt composed and comfortable, though much tired. I had some sweet sense of the excellency and glory of God, and my soul rejoiced that he was “God over all, blessed for ever;” but was too much crowded with company and conversation, and longed to be more alone with God. O that I could for ever bless God for the mercy of this day, who “answered me in the joy of my heart!”

The rest of this week seems to have been spent under a decay of this life and joy, and in distressing conflicts with corruption; but not without some seasons of refreshment and comfort.

Lord's day, Feb. 24. —In the morning, was much perplexed. My *interpreter* being absent, I knew not how to perform my work among the Indians. However, I rode to the Indians, got a Dutchman to interpret for me, though he was but poorly qualified for the business. Afterwards, I came and preached to a few white people from John vi. 67. Here the Lord seemed to unburden me in some measure, especially towards the close of my discourse. I felt freedom to open the *love of Christ* to his own dear *disciples*; when the rest of the world

forsakes him, and are *forsaken* by him, that he calls them no more, he then turns to his own, and says, “Will ye also go away?” I had a sense of the free grace of Christ to his own people, in such seasons of general apostasy, and when they themselves in some measure backslide with the world. O the free grace of Christ, that he seasonably minds his people of their danger of *backsliding*, and invites them to persevere in their adherence to himself! I saw that *backsliding* souls, who seemed to be about to *go away* with the world, might return, and welcome, to him *immediately*, without any thing to recommend them, notwithstanding all their former backslidings. And thus my discourse was suited to my own soul’s case; for, of late, I have found a great want of this sense and apprehension of divine grace; and have often been greatly distressed in my own soul, because I did not suitably apprehend this “fountain opened to purge away sin; “and so have been too much labouring for spiritual life, peace of conscience, and progressive holiness, in my own strength. But now God

146 THE LIFE OF

showed me, in some measure, *the arm* of all strength, and *the fountain* of all grace. In the evening, I felt solemn, devout, and sweet resting on free grace for assistance, acceptance, and peace of conscience.

Within the space of the next nine days, he had frequent refreshing, invigorating influences of God’s Spirit, attended with complaint of dulness, and with longings after spiritual life and holy fervency.

Wed., March 6. —Spent most of the day in preparing for a journey to New England. Spent some time in prayer, with a special reference to my intended journey. Was afraid I should forsake the *fountain of living waters*, and attempt to derive satisfaction from *broken cisterns*, my dear friends and acquaintance, with whom I might meet in my journey. I looked to God to keep me from this *vanity* in special, as well as others. Towards night, and in the evening, was visited by some friends, some of whom, I trust, were real Christians, who discovered an affectionate regard to me, and seemed grieved that I was about to leave them, especially seeing I did not expect to make any considerable stay among them, if I should live to return from New England.¹ O how kind has God been to me! How has he raised up friends in every place, where his providence has called me! Friends are a great comfort, and it is God that gives them; it is *he* makes them friendly to me. “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

The next day, he set out on his journey, and it was about five weeks before he returned. The special design of this journey, he himself declares afterwards, in his diary for March 21, where, speaking of his conversing with a certain minister in New England, he says thus, — “Contrived with him how to raise some money among Christian friends, in order to support a colleague with me in the wilderness (I having now spent two years in a very solitary manner), that we might be together, as Christ sent out his disciples two and two. And as this was the principal concern I had in view in taking this journey, so I took pains in it, and hope

¹ It seems, by what afterwards appears, he had a design to remove and live among the Indians at Susquehannah river.

God will succeed it, if for his glory.” He first went into various parts of New Jersey, and visited several minis-

DAVID BRAINERD. 147

ters there; and then went to New York, and from thence into New England, going to various parts of Connecticut, and then returned into New Jersey. He met a number of ministers at Woodbridge, “who,” he says, “met there to consult about the affairs of Christ’s kingdom, in some important articles.” He seems, for the most part, to have been free from melancholy in this journey; and many times to have had extraordinary assistance in public ministrations, and his preaching sometimes attended with very hopeful appearances of a good effect on the auditory. He also had many seasons of special comfort and spiritual refreshment, in conversation with ministers and other Christian friends, and also in meditation and prayer by himself alone.

Sat., Ap. 13. —Rode home to my own house at the Forks of Delaware, was enabled to remember the goodness of the Lord, who has now preserved me while riding full six hundred miles in this journey; has kept me that none of my bones have been broken. Blessed be the Lord, who has preserved me in this tedious journey, and returned me in safety to my own house. Verily it is God that has upheld me, and guarded my goings.

Lord’s day, Ap. 14. —Was disordered in body with the fatigues of my late journey; but was enabled, however, to preach to a considerable assembly of white people, gathered from all parts round about, with some freedom, from Ezek. xxxiii. 11, “As I live, saith the Lord God,” &c. Had much more assistance than I expected.

This week, he went a journey to Philadelphia, in order to engage the *Governor* there to use his interest with the chief men of the *Six Nations* (with whom he maintained a strict friendship), that he would give him leave to live at Susquehannah, and instruct the Indians that are within their territories.¹ In his way to and from thence, he lodged with Mr. Beaty, a young Presbyterian minister. He speaks of seasons of sweet spiritual refreshment that he enjoyed at his lodgings.

Sat., Ap. 20. —Rode with Mr. Beaty to Abington, to at-

148 THE LIFE OF

tend Mr. Treat’s administration of the sacrament, according to the method of the Church of Scotland. When we arrived, we found Mr. Treat preaching: afterwards I preached a sermon from Matt. v. 3, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” &c. God was pleased to give me great freedom and tenderness, both in prayer and sermon; the assembly was sweetly melted, and scores were all in tears. It was, as I then hoped, and was afterwards abundantly satisfied by conversing with them, a “word spoken in season to many weary souls.” I was extremely

¹ The Indians at Susquehannah are a mixed company of many nations, speaking various languages, and few of them properly of the Six Nations. But yet the country having formerly been conquered by the Six Nations, they claim the land; and the Susquehannah Indians are a kind of vassals to them.

tired, and my spirits much exhausted, so that I could scarcely speak loud; yet I could not help rejoicing in God.

Lord's day, Ap. 21. —In the morning, was calm and com., posed, and had some outgoings of soul after God in secret duties, and longing desires of his presence in the *sanctuary* and at his *table*, that his presence might be in the assembly, and that his children might be entertained with a *feast of fat things*. In the forenoon, Mr. Treat preached. I felt some affection and tenderness in the season of the administration of the ordinance. Mr. Beaty preached to the multitude abroad, who could not half have crowded into the meetinghouse. In the season of the communion, I had comfortable and sweet apprehensions of the blissful communion of God's people, when they shall meet at their Father's table in his kingdom, in a state of perfection. In the afternoon, I preached abroad to the whole assembly from Rev. xiv. 4, "These are they that follow the Lamb," &c. God was pleased again to give me very great freedom and clearness, but not so much warmth as before. However, there was a most amazing attention in the whole assembly; and, as I was informed afterwards, this was a sweet season to many.

Mon, Ap. 22. —I enjoyed some sweetness in retirement, in the morning. At eleven o'clock, Mr. Beaty preached, with freedom and life. Then I preached from Job vii. 37, and concluded the solemnity. Had some freedom, but not equal to what I enjoyed before; yet in the prayer, the Lord enabled me to cry (I hope) with a child-like temper, with tenderness and brokenness of heart. Came home with Mr. Beaty to his lodgings, and spent the time, while riding, and afterwards, very agreeably on divine things.

Tues., Ap. 23. —Left Mr. Beaty's, and returned home to the Forks of Delaware; enjoyed some sweet meditations on the road, and was enabled to lift up my heart to God in prayer and praise.

DAVID BRAINERD. 149

The next two days, he speaks of much bodily disorder, but of some degree of spiritual assistance and freedom.

Fri., Ap. 26. —Conversed with a Christian friend with some warmth; and felt a spirit of mortification to the world, in a very great degree. Afterwards, was enabled to pray fervently, and to rely on God sweetly, for "all things pertaining to life and godliness." Just in the evening, was visited by a dear Christian friend, with whom I spent an hour or two in conversation, on the very soul of religion. There are many with whom I can talk *about religion*; but, alas! I find few with whom I can talk *religion itself*; but, blessed be the Lord, there are some that love to feed on the kernel, rather than the shell.

The next day, he went to the Irish settlement, often before mentioned, about fifteen miles distant, where he spent the Sabbath, and preached with some considerable assistance. On Monday, he returned, in a very weak state, to his own lodgings.

Tues., Ap. 30. —Was scarce able to walk about, and was obliged to betake myself to the bed much of the day; and spent away the time in a very solitary manner, being neither able to read, meditate, nor pray, and had none to converse with in that wilderness. O how heavily does time pass away, when I can do nothing to any good purpose, but seem obliged to trifle away precious time! But, of late, I have seen it my duty to *divert* myself by all lawful means, that I may be fit, at least some small part of my time, to labour for God. And here is the difference between my present diversions, and those I once pursued, when in a natural state. Then I made a god of diversions, delighted in them with a neglect of God, and drew my highest satisfaction from them —now I use them as *means* to help me in *living to God*, fixedly delighting in *him*, and not in them, drawing my highest satisfaction from him. Then they were my *all*; now they are only *means* leading to my *all*. And those things that are the greatest diversion, when pursued with this view, do not tend to hinder, but promote my spirituality; and I see now, more than ever, that they are absolutely necessary.

Wed., May 1. —Was not able to sit up more than half the day, and yet had such recruits of strength sometimes, that I was able to write a little on a divine subject. Was grieved

150 THE LIFE OF

that I could no more live to God. In the evening, had some sweetness and intenseness in secret prayer.

Thurs., May 2. —In the evening, being a little better in health, I walked into the woods, and enjoyed a sweet season of meditation and prayer. My thoughts run upon Ps. xvii. 15, “I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” And it was indeed a precious text to me. I longed to preach to the whole world, and it seemed to me they must needs all be melted in hearing such precious divine truths, as I had then a view and relish of. My thoughts were exceeding clear, and my soul was refreshed. Blessed be the Lord, that in my late and present weakness, now for many days together, my mind is not gloomy, as at some other times.

Fri., May 3. —Felt a little vigour of body and mind, in the morning; had some freedom, strength, and sweetness in prayer. Rode to, and spent some time with, my Indians. In the evening, again retiring into the woods, I enjoyed some sweet meditations on Isa. liii. 10, “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him,” &c.

The next three days were spent in much weakness of body; but yet he enjoyed some assistance in public and private duties, and seems to have remained free from melancholy.

Tues., May 7. —Spent the day mainly in making preparation for a journey into the wilderness. Was still weak, and concerned how I should perform so difficult a journey. Spent some time in prayer for the divine blessing, direction, and protection in my intended journey, but wanted bodily strength to spend the day in fasting and prayer.

The next day, he set out on his journey to Susquehannah, with his interpreter. He endured great hardships and fatigues in his way thither through a hideous wilderness; where, after having lodged one night in the open woods, he was overtaken with a north-easterly storm, in

which he was almost ready to perish. Having no manner of shelter, and not being able to make a fire in so great a rain, he could have no comfort if he stopt; therefore determined to go forward in hopes of meeting with some shelter, without which bethought it impossible he should live the night through, but their horses happening to have ate poison (for want of other food), at a place where they lodged the night before, were so sick

DAVID BRAINERD. 151

that they could neither ride nor lead them, but were obliged to drive them before them, and travel on foot; until, through the mercy of God (just at dusk), they came to a bark-hut, where they lodged that night. After he came to Susquehannah, he travelled about the length of a hundred miles on the river, and visited many towns and settlements of the Indians; saw some of seven or eight distinct tribes, and preached to different nations, by different interpreters. He was sometimes much discouraged, and sunk in his spirits, through the opposition that appeared in the Indians to Christianity. At other times, he was encouraged by the disposition that some of these people manifested to hear, and willingness to be instructed. He here met with some that had formerly been his hearers at Kaunaumee, and had removed hither, who saw and heard him again with great joy. He spent a fortnight among the Indians on this river, and passed through considerable labours and hardships, frequently lodging on the ground, and sometimes in the open air; and at length he fell extremely ill, as he was riding in the wilderness, being seized with an ague, followed by a burning fever, and extreme pains in his head and bowels, attended with a great evacuation of blood; so that he thought he must have perished in the wilderness. But at last coming to an Indian, trader's hut, he got leave to stay there; and though without physic or food proper for him, it pleased God, after about a week's distress, to relieve him so far that he was able to ride. He returned homewards from Juncauta, an island far down the river, where was a considerable number of Indians, who appeared more free from prejudices against Christianity than most of the other Indians. He arrived at the Forks of Delaware on Thursday, May 30, after having rode in this journey about three hundred and forty miles.¹ He came home in a very weak state, and under dejection of mind, which was a great hindrance to him in religious exercises. However, on the Sabbath, after having preached to the Indians, he preached to the *white* people, with some success, from Isa. liii. 10, "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him," &c., some being awakened by his preaching. The next day, he was much exercised for want of spiritual life and fervency.

Tues., June 4. —Towards evening, was in distress for God's presence, and a sense of divine things; withdrew myself to

152 THE LIFE OF

the woods, and spent near an hour in prayer and meditation; and I think the Lord had compassion on me, and gave me some sense of divine things, which was indeed refreshing and quickening to me; my soul enjoyed intenseness and freedom in prayer, so that it grieved me to leave the place.

¹ This is the journey which he occasionally mentions in his printed journal.

Wed., June 5. —Felt thirsting desires after God, in the morning. In the evening, enjoyed a precious season of retirement, was favoured with some clear and sweet meditations upon a sacred text; divine things opened with clearness and certainty, and had a divine stamp upon them; my soul was also enlarged, and refreshed in prayer, and I delighted to continue in the duty, and was sweetly assisted in praying for fellow-Christians, and my dear brethren in the ministry. Blessed be the dear Lord for such enjoyments! O how sweet and precious it is, to have a clear apprehension and tender sense of the *mystery of godliness*, of true holiness, and likeness to the best of beings! O what a blessedness it is, to be as much like God as it is possible for a creature to be like his great Creator! Lord, give me more of *thy likeness*; “I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with it.”

Thurs., June 6. —Was engaged, a considerable part of the day, in meditation and study on divine subjects. Enjoyed some special freedom, clearness, and sweetness in meditation. O how refreshing it is to be enabled to improve time well!

Next day, he went a journey of near fifty miles to Neshaminy, to assist at a sacramental occasion, to be attended at Mr. Beaty’s meeting-house; being invited thither by him and his people.

Sat., June 8. —Was exceeding weak and fatigued with riding in the heat yesterday; but being desired, I preached in the afternoon, to a crowded audience, from Isa. xl. 1, “Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God.” God was pleased to give me great freedom in opening the sorrows of God’s people, and in setting before them comforting considerations. And, blessed be the Lord, it was a sweet melting season in the assembly.

Lord’s day, June 9. —Felt some longing desires of the presence of God, to be with his people on the solemn occasion of the day. In the forenoon, Mr. Beaty preached, and there appeared some warmth in the assembly. Afterwards, I assisted in the administration of the Lord’s Supper, and towards the close of it, I discoursed to the multitude *extem-*

DAVID BRAINERD. 153

pore, with some reference to that sacred passage, Isa. liii. 10, “Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him.” Here God gave me great assistance in addressing sinners, and the word was attended with amazing power; many scores, if not hundreds, in that great assembly, consisting of three or four thousand, were much affected; so that there was a “very great mourning, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon.” In the evening, I could hardly look anybody in the face, because of the imperfections I saw in my performances in the day past.

Mon., June 10. —Preached with a good degree of clearness and some sweet warmth, from Ps. xvii. 15, —“I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” And blessed be God, there was a great solemnity and attention in the assembly, and sweet refreshment among God’s people; as was evident then and afterwards.

Tues., June 11. —Spent the day mainly in conversation with dear Christian friends, and enjoyed some sweet sense of divine things. O how desirable it is to keep company with

God's dear children! These are the "excellent ones of the earth, in whom," I can truly say, "is all my delight." O what delight will it afford to meet them all in a state of perfection! Lord, prepare me for that state!

The next day he left Mr. Beaty's, and went to Maidenhead, in New Jersey, and spent the next seven days in a comfortable state of mind, visiting several ministers in those parts.

Tues., June 18. —Set out from New Brunswick with a design to visit some Indians at a place called *Crosweeksung*, in New Jersey, towards the sea.¹ In the afternoon, came to a place called *Cranberry*, and meeting with a serious minister, Mr. Macknight, I lodged there with him. Had some enlargement and freedom in prayer with a number of people.

¹ Mr. Brainerd having, when at Boston, written and left with a friend a brief *relation* of facts touching his labours with the Indians, and reception among them, during the space of time between November 5, 1744, and June 19, 1745, concludes the same with this passage, "As my body was very feeble, so my mind was scarce ever so much damped and discouraged about the conversion of the Indians, as at this time. And in this state of body and mind, I made my first visit to the Indians in New Jersey, where God was pleased to display his power and grace in the remarkable manner that I have represented in my printed journal."

PART VII.

FROM HIS FIRST BEGINNING TO PREACH TO THE INDIANS AT CROSWEKSUNG,
TILL HE RETURNED FROM HIS LAST JOURNEY TO SUSQUEHANNAH, ILL WITH
CONSUMPTION, WHEREOF HE DIED.

WE are now come to that part of Mr. Brainerd's life, wherein he had his greatest *success* in his labours for the good of souls, and in his particular business as a missionary to the *Indians*—an account of which, if here published, would doubtless be very entertaining to the reader, after he has seen by the preceding parts of this account of his life, how great and long-continued his desires for the spiritual good of this sort of people were; how he prayed, laboured, and wrestled, and how much he denied himself, and suffered, to this end. After all Mr. Brainerd's agonizing in prayer, and travailing in birth, for the conversion of Indians, and all the interchanges of his raised hopes and expectations, and then disappointments and discouragements, and after waiting in a way of persevering prayer, labour, and suffering as it were through a long *night*, at length the *day* dawns: "Weeping continues for a night, but joy comes in the morning. He went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, and now he comes with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." The desired event is brought to pass at last; but at a time, in a place, and upon subjects, that scarce ever entered into his heart. An account of this would undoubtedly now much gratify the Christian reader: and it should have been here inserted, as it stands in his diary, had it not been that a particular account of this glorious and wonderful success was drawn up by Mr. Brainerd himself, pursuant to the order of the honourable society in (Scotland, and published by him in his lifetime; which account many have in their hands.

Wed., June 19, 1745. —Rode to the Indians at Crosweeksung, found few at home: discoursed to them, however, and observed them very serious and attentive. At night I was extremely worn out, and scarce able to walk or sit up. O how tiresome is earth! how dull the body!

Thurs., June 20. —Towards night, preached to the In-

DAVID BRAINERD. 155

dians again, and had more hearers than before. In the evening, enjoyed some peace and serenity of mind, some composure and comfort in prayer alone, and was enabled to lift up my head with some degree of joy, under an apprehension that my redemption draws nigh. O blessed be God, that there remains a rest to his poor weary people!

Fri., June 21. —Rode to Freehold, to see Mr. William Tennent, and spent the day comfortably with him. My sinking spirits were a little raised and encouraged, and I felt my soul breathing after God, in the midst of Christian conversation. And in the evening, was refreshed in secret prayer; saw myself a poor worthless creature, without wisdom to direct, or

strength to help myself. O blessed be God, that lays me under a happy, a blessed necessity of living upon himself!

Sat., June 22. —About noon, rode to the Indians again; and near night, preached to them. Found my body much strengthened, and was enabled to speak with abundant plainness and warmth. And the power of God evidently attended the word; so that sundry persons were brought under great concern for their souls, and made to shed many tears, and to wish for Christ to save them. My soul was much refreshed, and quickened in my work; and I could not but spend much time with them, in order to open both their misery and remedy. This was indeed a sweet afternoon to me. While riding, before I came to the Indians, my spirits were refreshed, and my soul enabled to cry to God almost incessantly, for many miles together. In the evening, also, I found the consolations of God were not small, I was then willing to live, and in some respects desirous of it, that I might do something for the dear kingdom of Christ; and yet death appeared pleasant, so that I was in some measure in a strait between two, having a desire to depart. I am often weary of this world, and want to leave it on that account; but it is desirable to be drawn, rather than driven out of it.

Thurs., June 27. —My soul rejoiced to find that God enabled me to be faithful, and that he was pleased to, awaken these poor Indians by my means. O how heart-reviving, and soul-refreshing is it to me to see the fruit of my labours!

Fri., June 28. —In the evening, my soul was revived, and my heart lifted up to God in prayer, for my poor Indians, myself, and friends, and the dear church of God. And O how refreshing, how sweet was this! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not his goodness and tender mercy!

156 THE LIFE OF

Sat., June 29. —Preached twice to the Indians, and could not but wonder at their seriousness, and the strictness of their attention. Blessed be God that has inclined their hearts to hear. And O how refreshing it is to me, to see them attend with such uncommon diligence and affection, with tears in their eyes, and concern in their hearts! In the evening, could not but lift up my heart to God in prayer, while riding to my lodgings; and blessed be his name, had assistance and freedom. O how much *better than life* is the presence of God!

His diary gives an account of nothing remarkable on the two next days, besides what is in his public journal; excepting his heart's being lifted up with thankfulness, rejoicing in God, &c.

Tues., July 2. —Rode from the Indians to Brunswick near forty miles, and lodged there. Felt my heart drawn out after God in prayer, almost all the forenoon, especially while riding. And in the evening, could not help crying to God for those poor Indians; and after I went to bed, my heart continued to go out to God for them, till I dropped asleep. O blessed be God that I may pray!

He was so beat out by constant preaching to these Indians, yielding to their earnest and importunate desires, that he found it necessary to give himself some relaxation. He spent

therefore about a week in New Jersey, after he left these Indians, visiting several ministers, and performing some necessary business, before he went to the Forks of Delaware. And though he was very weak in body, yet he seems to have been strong in spirit. On Friday, July 12, he arrived at his own house in the Forks of Delaware; continuing still free from melancholy; from day to day, enjoying freedom, assistance, and refreshment in the inner man. But on Wednesday, the next week, he seems to have had some melancholy thoughts about his, doing so little for God, being so much hindered by weakness of body.

Thurs., July 18. —Longed to spend the little inch of time I have in the world more for God. Felt a spirit of seriousness, tenderness, sweetness, and devotion, and wished to spend the whole night in prayer and communion with God.

Fri., July 19. —In the evening, walked abroad for prayer

DAVID BRAINERD. 157

and meditation, and enjoyed composure and freedom in these sweet exercises; especially in meditation on Rev. iii. 12, “Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God,” &c. This was then a delightful theme to me, and it refreshed my soul to dwell upon it. O when shall I *go no more out* from the service and enjoyment of the dear Lord! Lord hasten the blessed day!

Within the space of the next six days, he speaks of much inward refreshment and enlargement, from time to time.

Fri., July 26. —In the evening, God was pleased to help me in prayer, beyond what I have experienced for some time; especially my soul was drawn out for the enlargement of Christ’s kingdom, and for the conversion of my poor people, and my soul relied on God for the accomplishment of that great work. O how sweet were the thoughts of death to me at this time! O how I longed to be with Christ, to be employed in the glorious work of angels, and with an angel’s freedom, vigour, and delight! And yet how willing was I to stay a while on earth, that I might do something, if the Lord pleased, for his interest in the world! My soul, my very soul, longed for the ingathering of the poor heathen; and I cried to God for them most willingly and heartily, and yet because I could not but cry. This was a sweet season, for I had some lively taste of heaven, and a temper of mind suited in some measure to the employments and entertainments of it. My soul was grieved to leave the place, but my body was weak and worn-out, and it was near nine o’clock. O I longed that the remaining part of my life might be filled up with more fervency and activity in the things of God! O the inward peace, composure, and God-like serenity of such a frame! heaven must needs differ from this only in degree, and not in kind! “Lord, ever give me this bread of life.”

Much of this frame seemed to continue the next day.

Lord’s day, July 28. —In the evening, my soul was melted, and my heart broken, with a sense of past barrenness and deadness; and O how I then longed to live to God, and bring forth much fruit to his glory!

Mon., July 29. —Was much exercised with a sense of vileness, with guilt and shame before God.

158 THE LIFE OF

For other things remarkable, while he was this time at the Forks of Delaware, the reader must be referred to his public journal as particularly for his labours and success there among the Indians.

On Wednesday, July 31, he set out on his return to Crosweeksung, and arrived there the next day. In his way thither, he had longing desires that he might come to the Indians there, in the “fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ,” attended with a sense of his own great weakness, dependence, and worthlessness.

Fri., Aug. 2. —In the evening I retired, and my soul was drawn out in prayer to God, especially for my poor people, to whom I had sent word that they might gather together, that I might preach to them the next day. I was much enlarged in praying for their saving conversion; and scarce ever found my desires of any thing of this nature so sensibly and clearly (to my own satisfaction) disinterested, and free from selfish views. It seemed to me, I had no care, or hardly any desire, to be the instrument of so glorious a work, as I wished and prayed for among the Indians; if the blessed work might be accomplished to the honour of God, and the enlargement of the dear Redeemer’s kingdom this was all my desire and care, and for this mercy I hoped, but with trembling; for I felt what Job expresses, chap. ix. 16. My rising hopes respecting the conversion of the Indians have been so often dashed, that my spirit is as it were broken, and courage wasted, and I hardly dare hope.

Concerning his labours and marvellous success amongst the Indians, for the following ten days, let the reader see his public journal. The things worthy of note in his *diary*, not there published, are his earnest and importunate prayers for the Indians, and the *travail of his soul* for them from day to day; his great refreshment and joy in beholding the wonderful mercy of God, and the glorious manifestations of his power and grace in his work among them; his ardent thanksgivings to God; his heart’s rejoicing in Christ, as King of his Church, and King of his soul; in particular, at the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper at Mr. Macknight’s meeting-house; a sense of his own exceeding unworthiness, which sometimes was attended with dejection and melancholy.

Mon., Aug. 19. —Near noon, I rode to Freehold, and

DAVID BRAINERD. 159

preached to a considerable assembly, from Matt. v. 3. It pleased God to leave me to be very dry and barren; so that I do not remember to have been so straitened for a whole twelvemonth past. God is just, and he has made my soul acquiesce in his will in this regard. It is contrary to *flesh and blood* to be cut off from all freedom, in a large auditory, where their expectations are much raised; but so it was with me, and God helped me to say *Amen* to

it; "Good is the will of the Lord." In the evening I felt quiet and composed, and had freedom and comfort in secret prayer.

Tues., Aug. 20. —Was composed and comfortable, still in a resigned frame. Travelled from Mr. Tennent's, in Freehold, to Elizabeth Town. Was refreshed to see friends, and relate to them what God had done, and was still doing, among my poor people.

Wed., Aug. 21. —Spent the forenoon in conversation with Mr. Dickinson, contriving something for the settlement of the Indians together in a body, that they might be under better advantages for instruction. In the afternoon, spent time agreeably with other friends; wrote to my brother at college; but was grieved that time slid away, while I did so little for God.

Fri., Aug. 23. —In the morning, was very weak; but favoured with some freedom and sweetness in prayer; was composed and comfortable in mind. After noon, rode to Crosweeksung, to my poor people.

Sat., Aug. 24. —Had composure and peace, while riding from the Indians to my lodgings; was enabled to pour out my soul to God for dear friends in New England. Felt a sweet, tender frame of spirit; my soul was composed and refreshed in God. Had likewise freedom and earnestness in praying for my dear people, blessed be God. "O the peace of God that passeth all understanding!" it is impossible to describe the sweet peace of conscience, and tenderness of soul, I then enjoyed. O the blessed foretastes of heaven!

Lord's day, Aug. 25. —I rode to my lodgings in the evening blessing the Lord for his gracious visitation of the Indians, and the soul-refreshing things I had seen the day past amongst them, and praying that God would still carry on his divine work among them.

Mon., Aug. 26. —I went from the Indians to my lodgings rejoicing for the goodness of God to my poor people; and enjoyed freedom of soul in prayer, and other duties, in the evening. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

160 THE LIFE OF

The next day, he set out on a journey towards the Forks of Delaware, designing to go from thence to Susquehannah, before he returned to Crosweeksung. It was five days from his departure from Crosweeksung, before he reached the Forks, going round by the way of Philadelphia, and waiting on the Governor of Pennsylvania, to get a recommendation from him to the chiefs of the Indians, which he obtained. He speaks of much comfort and spiritual refreshment in this journey, and also a sense of his exceeding unworthiness, thinking himself the meanest creature that ever lived.

Lord's day, Sept. 1. —[At the Forks of Delaware.] God gave me the *spirit of prayer*, and it was a blessed season in that respect. My soul cried to God for mercy, in an affectionate manner. In the evening also my soul rejoiced in God.

His private *diary* has nothing remarkable, for the next two days, but what is in his public journal.

Wed., Sept. 4. —Rode fifteen miles to an Irish settlement, and preached there from Luke xiv. 22, “And yet there is room.” God was pleased to afford me some tenderness and enlargement in the first prayer, and much freedom, as well as warmth, in sermon. There were many tears in the assembly; the people of God seemed to melt, and others to be in some measure awakened. Blessed be the Lord, that lets me see his work going on in one place and another!

The account for Thursday is the same for substance as in his public journal.

Fri., Sept. 6. —Enjoyed some freedom and intenseness of mind in prayer alone; and longed to have my soul more warmed with divine and heavenly things. Was somewhat melancholy towards night, and longed to die and quit a scene of sin and darkness; but was a little supported in prayer.

This melancholy continued the next day.

Lords day, Sept. 8. —In the evening, God was pleased to enlarge me in prayer, and give me freedom at the throne of grace; I cried to God for the enlargement of his kingdom in

DAVID BRAINERD. 161

the world, and in particular among my dear people; was also enabled to pray for many dear ministers of my acquaintance, both in these parts and in New England; and also for other dear friends in New England. And my soul was so engaged and enlarged in that sweet exercise, that I spent near an hour in it, and knew not how to leave the mercy-seat. O how I delighted to pray and cry to God! I saw God was both able and willing to do all that I desired, for myself and friends, and his church in general. I was likewise much enlarged and assisted in family prayer. And afterwards, when I was just going to bed, God helped me to renew my petitions with ardency and freedom. O it was to me a blessed evening of prayer! Bless the Lord, O my soul!

The next day, he set out from the Forks of Delaware to go to Susquehannah. And on the fifth day of his journey, he arrived at Shaumoking, a large Indian town on Susquehannah river. He performed the journey under a considerable degree of melancholy, occasioned at first by his hearing that the Moravians were gone before him to the Susquehannah Indians.

Sat., Sept. 14. —[At Shaumoking]. In the evening, my soul was enlarged and sweetly engaged in prayer; especially, that GOD would set up his kingdom in this place, where the devil now reigns in the most eminent manner. And I was enabled to ask this for God, for his glory, and because I longed for the enlargement of his kingdom, to the honour of his dear name. I could appeal to God with the greatest freedom that he knew it was *his* dear cause, and not my own, that engaged my heart, and my soul cried, “Lord, set up thy kingdom, for thine own glory. Glorify thyself; and I shall rejoice. Get honour to thy blessed name, and this is all I desire. Do with me just what thou wilt. Blessed be thy name for ever, that thou art

God, and that thou wilt glorify thyself! O that the whole world might glorify thee! O let these poor people be brought to know thee, and love thee, for the glory of thy dear ever-blessed name." I could not but hope that God would bring in these miserable wicked Indians; though there appeared little human probability of it, for they were then *dancing* and *revelling*, as if possessed by the *devil*. But yet I *hoped*, though *against hope*, that God would be glorified, that God's name would be glorified, by these poor Indians. I con-

102 THE LIFE OF

tinued long in prayer and praise to God, and had great freedom, enlargement, and sweetness, remembering dear friends in New England, as well as the people of my charge. Was entirely free from that dejection of spirit with which I am frequently exercised. Blessed be God!

His *diary* from this time to September 22 (the last day of his continuance among the Indians at Susquehannah) is not legible, by reason of the badness of the ink. It was probably written with the juice of some berries found in the woods, having no other ink in that wilderness. So that for this space of time the reader must be wholly referred to his public journal.

On Monday, September 23, he left the Indians, in order to his return to the Forks of Delaware, in a very weak state of body, and under dejection of mind, which continued the first two days of his journey.

Wed., Sept. 25. —Rode still homeward. In the forenoon, enjoyed freedom and intenseness of mind in meditation on Job xlii. 5, 6, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The Lord gave me clearness to penetrate into the sweet truths contained in that text. It was a comfortable and sweet season to me.

Thurs., Sept. 26. —Was still much disordered in body, and able to ride but slowly. Continued my journey, however. Near night, arrived at the Irish settlement, about fifteen miles from mine own house. This day, while riding, I was much exercised with a sense of my barrenness; and verily thought, there was no creature that had any true grace, but what was more spiritual and fruitful than I; I could not think that any of God's children made so poor a hand of living to God as I.

Fri., Sept. 27. —Spent considerable time, in the morning, in prayer and praise to God. My mind was somewhat intense in the duty, and my heart in some degree warmed with a sense of divine things; my soul was melted to think that "God had accounted me faithful, putting me into the ministry," notwithstanding all my barrenness and deadness. My soul was also in some measure enlarged in prayer for the dear people of my charge, as well as for other dear friends. In the afternoon, visited some Christian friends, and spent the time, I think, profitably; my heart was warmed, and

more engaged in the things of God. In the evening, I enjoyed enlargement, warmth, and comfort in prayer; my soul relied on God for assistance and grace to enable me to do something in his cause; my heart was drawn out in thankfulness to God for what he had done for his own glory among my poor people of late, and I felt encouraged to proceed in his work, being persuaded of his power, and hoping *his arm* might be further *revealed*, for the enlargement of his dear kingdom, and my soul “rejoiced in hope of the glory of God,” in hope of the advancement of his declarative glory in the world, as well as of enjoying him in a world of glory. O blessed be God, the living God, for ever!

He continued in this comfortable, sweet frame of mind the next two days. On the day following, he went to his own house, in the Forks of Delaware, and continued still in the same frame. The next day, which was Tuesday, he visited his Indians. Wednesday, he spent mostly in writing the meditations he had had in his late journey to Susquehannah. On Thursday, he left the Forks of Delaware, and travelled towards Crossweeksung, where he arrived on Saturday (October 5), and continued from day to day in a comfortable state of mind. There is nothing material in his *diary* for this day and the next, but what is in his printed journal.

Mon., Oct. 7. —Being called by the church and people of East Hampton on Long Island, as a member of a council to assist and advise in affairs of difficulty in that church, I set out on my journey this morning, before it was well light, and travelled to Elizabeth Town, and there lodged. Enjoyed some comfort on the road, in conversation with Mr. William Tennent, who was sent for on the same business.

He prosecuted his journey with the other ministers that were sent for, and did not return till October 24. While he was at East Hampton, the importance of the business that the council were come upon, lay with such weight on his mind, and he was so concerned for the interest of religion in that place, that he slept but little for several nights successively. In his way to and from East Hampton, he had several seasons of sweet refreshment, wherein his soul was enlarged and comforted with divine consolations, in secret

164 THE LIFE OF

retirement; and he had special assistance in public ministerial performances in the house of God; and yet, at the same time, a sense of extreme vileness and unprofitableness. He from time to time speaks of soul refreshment and comfort in conversation with the ministers that travelled with him, and seems to have little or nothing of melancholy, till he came to the west end of Long Island, in his return. After that, he was oppressed with dejection and gloominess of mind, for several days together. For an account of the four first days after his return from his journey, I refer the reader to his public journal.

Mon., Oct. 28. —Had an evening of sweet refreshing; my thoughts were raised to a blessed eternity; my soul was melted with desires of perfect holiness, and perfectly glorifying God.

Tues., Oct. 29. —About noon, rode and viewed the Indian lands at Cranberry; was much dejected, and greatly perplexed in mind; knew not how to see anybody again, my soul was so

sunk within me. O that these trials might make me more humble and holy! O that God would keep me from giving way to sinful dejection which may hinder my usefulness!

Wed., Oct. 30. —My soul was refreshed with a view of the continuance of God's blessed work among the Indians.

Thurs., Oct. 31. —Spent most of the day in writing; enjoyed not much spiritual comfort, but was not so much sunk with melancholy as at some other times.

Fri., Nov. 1. —See the public journal.

Sat., Nov. 2. —Spent the day with the Indians, and wrote some things of importance: and longed to do more for God than I did, or could do in this present feeble and imperfect state.

Nov., 3 and 4. —See the public journal.

Tues., Nov. 5. —He left the Indians, and spent the remaining part of this week in travelling to various parts of New Jersey, in order to get a collection for the use of the Indians, and to obtain a schoolmaster to instruct them. And in the meantime, he speaks of very sweet refreshment and entertainment with Christian friends, and of his being sweetly employed, while riding, in meditation on divine sub-

DAVID BRAINERD. 165

jects, [of] his heart's being enlarged, his mind clear, his spirit refreshed with divine truths, and his "heart's burning within him, while he went by the way, and the Lord opened to him the Scriptures."

Lord's day, Nov, 10 —[At Elizabeth Town] Was comfortable in the morning, both in body and mind; preached in the forenoon from 2 Cor. v. 20. God was pleased to give me freedom and fervency in my discourse, and the presence of God seemed to be in the assembly; numbers were affected, and there were many in tears among them. In the afternoon, preached from Luke xiv. 22 —"And yet there is room." Was favoured with divine assistance in the first prayer, and poured out my soul to God with a filial temper of mind; the living God also assisted me in sermon.

The next day, he went to New Town on Long Island, to a meeting of the *Presbytery*. He speaks of some sweet meditations he had while there, on "Christ's delivering up the kingdom to the Father," and of his soul's being much refreshed and warmed with the consideration of that blissful day.

Fri., Nov. 15. —Could not cross the ferry by reason of the violence of the wind, nor could I enjoy any place of retirement at the ferry-house; so that I was in perplexity. Yet God gave me some satisfaction and sweetness in meditation, and lifted up my heart to God in the midst of company. And although some were drinking and talking profanely, which was indeed a grief to me, yet my mind was calm and composed. And I could not but bless God, that I was not

like to spend an eternity in such company. In the evening, I sat down and wrote with composure and freedom, and can say (through pure grace) it was a comfortable evening to my soul, an evening I was enabled to spend in the service of God.

Sat., Nov. 16. —Crossed the ferry about ten o'clock; arrived at Elizabeth Town near night. Was in a calm, composed frame of mind, and felt an entire resignation with respect to a loss I had lately sustained, in having my horse stolen from me the last Wednesday night, at New Town. Had some longings of soul for the dear people of Elizabeth Town, that God would *pour out his Spirit* upon them, and *revive his work* amongst them.

166 THE LIFE OF

He spent the next four days at Elizabeth Town, for the most part in a free and comfortable state of mind, intensely engaged in the service of God, and enjoying, at some times, the special assistances of his Spirit. On Thursday, this week, he rode to Freehold, and spent the day under considerable dejection.

Fri., Nov. 22. —Rode to Mr. Tennent's, and from thence to Crosweeksung. Had little freedom in meditation, while riding; which was a grief and burden to my soul. O that I could fill up all my time, whether in the house or by the way, for God! I was enabled, I think, this day to give up my soul to God, and put over all my concerns into his hands; and found some real consolation in the thought of being entirely at the divine disposal, and having no will or interest of my own. I have received my *all* from God; O that I could return my *all* to God! Surely God is worthy of my highest affection, and most devout adoration; he is infinitely worthy, that I should make him my last end, and live for ever to him, that I might never more, in any one instance, live to myself!

Sat., Nov. 23. —Visited my people; spent the day with them; wrote some things of importance. But was pretty much dejected, most of the day.

There is nothing very material in his *diary* for the next four days, but what is also in his public journal.

Thurs., Nov. 28. —I enjoyed some divine comfort, and fervency in the public exercise, and afterwards. And while riding to my lodgings, was favoured with some sweet meditations on Luke ix. 31, "Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." My thoughts ran with freedom, and I saw and felt what a glorious subject the *death* of CHRIST is for *glorified* souls to dwell upon in their conversation. O the *death* of CHRIST! how infinitely *precious*!

For the next three days, see the public journal.

Mon., Dec. 2. —Was much affected with grief, that I had not lived more to God, and felt strong resolutions to double my diligence in my Master's service.

After this, he went to a meeting of the *Presbytery*, at a

place in New Jersey, called *Connecticut Farms*, which occasioned his absence from his people the rest of this week. He speaks of some seasons of sweetness, solemnity, and spiritual affection, in his absence.

Lord's day, Dec. 8. —See his public journal.

Mon., Dec. 9. —Spent most of the day in procuring provisions, in order to my setting up housekeeping among the Indians. Enjoyed little satisfaction through the day, being very much out of my element.

Tues., Dec. 10. —Was engaged in the same business as yesterday. Towards night, got into my own house.¹

Wed., Dec. 11. —Spent the forenoon in necessary labour about my house. In the afternoon, rode out upon business, and spent the evening with some satisfaction among friends in conversation on a serious and profitable subject.

Thurs., Dec. 12. —See his public journal.

Fri., Dec. 13. —Spent the day mainly in labour about my house. In the evening, spent some time in writing, but was very weary, and much outdone with the labour of the day.

Sat., Dec. 14. —Rose early, and wrote by candlelight some considerable time; spent most of the day in writing, but was somewhat dejected. In the evening, was exercised with a pain in my head.

For the next two days, see his public journal. The remainder of this week he spent chiefly in writing, some part of the time under a degree of melancholy, but some part of it with a sweet ardency in religion.

Sat., Dec. 21. —After my labours with the Indians, I spent some time in writing some things divine and solemn, and was much wearied with the labours of the day; found that my spirits were extremely spent, and that I could do no more. I am conscious to myself that my labours are as great and constant as my nature will bear, and that ordinarily I go to the extent of my strength, so that I do all I can; but the misery is, I do not labour with that *heavenly* temper, that single eye to the *glory* of God, that I long for.

168 THE LIFE OF

Lord's day, Dec. 22. —See the public journal.

¹ This is the *third* house that he built to dwell in by himself among the Indians: the first at Kaunaumeeek, in the county of Abany: the second at the Forks of Delaware, in Pennsylvania; and now this at Crosweeksung, in New Jersey.

Mon. and Tues., Dec. 23 and 24. —Spent these days in writing-, with the utmost diligence. Felt in the main a sweet mortification to the world, and a desire to live and labour only for God; but wanted more warmth and spirituality, a more sensible and affectionate regard to the glory of God.

Wed., Dec. 25. —See the public journal.

Thurs. and Fri., Dec. 26 and 27. —Laboured in my studies, to the utmost of my strength; and though I felt a steady disposition of mind to live to God, and that I had nothing in this world to live for, yet I did not find that sensible affection in the service of God that I wanted to have; my heart seemed barren, though my head and hands were full of labour.

For the next four days, see his public journal.

Wed., Jan. 1, 1745-6. —I am this day beginning a *New Year*, and God has carried me through numerous trials and labours in the past. He has amazingly supported my feeble frame, for “having obtained help of God, I continue to this day.” O that I might live nearer to God this year, than I did the last! The business I have been called to, and enabled to go through, I know, has been as great as nature could bear up under, and what would have sunk and overcome me quite, without special support. But alas, alas! though I have done the labours, and endured the trials, with what spirit have I done the one, and borne the ether? how cold has been the frame of my heart oftentimes! and how little have I sensibly eyed the glory of God, in all my doings and sufferings! I have found, that I could have no peace without filling up all my time with labours, and thus “necessity has been laid upon me; “yea, in that respect I have loved to labour, but the misery is, I could not sensibly labour *for God*, as I would have done. May I for the future be enabled more sensibly to make the glory of God my *all*!

For the space from this time till the next Monday, see the public journal.

Mon., Jan. 6. —Being very weak in body, I rode for my

DAVID BRAINERD. 169

health. While riding, my thoughts were sweetly engaged, for a time, upon “the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which brake in pieces all before it, and waxed great, and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth:” and I longed that Jesus should “take to himself his Great power, and reign to the ends of the earth” And how sweet were the moments, wherein I felt my soul warm with hopes of the enlargement of the Redeemer’s kingdom! I wanted nothing else but that Christ should reign, to the glory of his blessed name.

The next day he complains of want of fervency.

Wed., Jan. 8. —In the evening, my heart was drawn out after God in secret, my soul was refreshed and quickened, and, I trust, faith was in exercise. I had great hopes of the ingathering of precious souls to Christ, not only among my own people, but others also. I was

sweetly resigned and composed under my bodily weakness, and was willing to live or die, and desirous to labour for God to the utmost of my strength.

Thurs., Jan. 9. —Was still very weak, and much exercised with vapoury disorders. In the evening, enjoyed some enlargement and spirituality in prayer. O that I could always spend my time profitably, both in health and weakness!

Fri., Jan. 10. —My soul was in a sweet, calm, composed frame, and my heart filled with love to all the world, and Christian simplicity and tenderness seemed then to prevail and reign within me. Near night, visited a serious Baptist minister, and had some agreeable conversation with him; and found that I could taste God in friends.

For the next four days, see the public journal.

Wed., Jan. 15. —My spirits were very low and flat, and I could not but think I was a burden to God's earth, and could scarcely look anybody in the face, through shame and sense of barrenness. God pity a poor unprofitable creature!

The next two days, he had some comfort and refreshment. For the two following days, see the public journal.

The next day, he set out on a journey to Elizabeth Town,

170 THE LIFE OF

to confer with the *Correspondents*, at their meeting there; and enjoyed much spiritual refreshment from day to day, through this week. The things expressed in this space of time are such as these: serenity, composure, sweetness, and tenderness of soul; thanksgiving to God for his success among the Indians; delight in prayer and praise sweet and profitable meditations on various divine subjects; longing for more love, for more vigour to live to God, for a life more entirely devoted to God, that he might spend all his time profitably for God and in his cause; conversing on spiritual subjects with affection; and lamentation for unprofitableness.

Lord's day, Jan. 26 —[At Connecticut Farms]. Was calm and composed. Was made sensible of my utter inability to preach without divine help; and was in some good measure willing to leave it with God, to give or withhold assistance, as he saw would be most for his own glory. Was favoured with a considerable degree of assistance in my public work. After public worship, I was in a sweet and solemn frame of mind, thankful to God that he had made me in some measure faithful in addressing precious souls, but grieved that I had been no more fervent in my work; and was tenderly affected towards all the world, longing that every sinner might be saved; and could not have entertained any bitterness towards the worst enemy living. In the evening, rode to Elizabeth Town; while riding, was almost constantly engaged in lifting up my heart to God, lest I should lose that sweet heavenly solemnity and composure of soul I then enjoyed. Afterwards, was pleased to think that God *reigneth*; and thought I could never be uneasy with any of his dispensations, but must be entirely satisfied,

whatever trials he should cause me or his church to encounter. Never felt more sedateness, divine serenity, and composure of mind; could freely have left the dearest earthly friend, for the society of “angels and spirits of just men made perfect;” my affections soared aloft to the blessed Author of every dear enjoyment; I viewed the emptiness and unsatisfactory nature of the most desirable earthly objects, any further than God is seen in them, and longed for a life of spirituality and inward purity, without which, I saw, there could be no true pleasure.

He retained a great degree of this excellent frame of

DAVID BRAINERD. 171

mind the next four days. As to his public services for and among the Indians, and his success in this time, see the public journal.

Sat., Feb. 1. —Towards night, enjoyed some of the clearest thoughts on a divine subject (viz., that treated of 1 Cor. xv. 13-16) that ever I remember to have had upon any subject whatsoever, and spent two or three hours in writing them. I was refreshed with this intenseness; my mind was so engaged in these meditations, I could scarcely turn it to any thing else; and indeed I could not be willing to part with so sweet an entertainment.

Lord's day, Feb. 2. —After public worship, my bodily strength being much spent, my spirits sunk amazingly, and especially on hearing that I was so generally taken to be a *Roman Catholic*, sent by the Papists to draw the Indians into an insurrection against the English, that some were in fear of me, and others were for having me taken up by authority and punished. Alas, what will not the devil do to bring a slur and disgrace on the work of God! O how holy and circumspect had I need to be! Through divine goodness, I have been enabled to “mind my own business,” in these parts, as well as elsewhere; and to let all men, and all denominations of men, alone as to their *party-notions*; and only preached the plain and necessary truths of *Christianity*, neither inviting to nor excluding from *my meeting* any of any sort or persuasion whatsoever. Towards night, the Lord gave me freedom at the throne of grace, in my first prayer before my *catechetical* lecture; and in opening the 46th Psalm to my people, my soul confided in God. although the wicked world should slander and persecute me, or even condemn and execute me as a traitor to my king and country. Truly God is a “present help in the time of trouble.” In the evening, my soul was in some measure comforted, having some hope that one poor soul was brought home to God this day, though the case did by no means appear clear. O that I could fill up every moment of time, during my abode here below, in the service of my God and King!

Mon., Feb. 3. —My spirits were still much sunk with what I heard the day before, of my being suspected to be engaged in the *Pretender's* interest. It grieved me, that after there had been so much evidence of a glorious *work of grace* among these poor Indians, as that the most carnal men could not but take notice of the great *change* made among them, so

172 THE LIFE OF

many poor souls should still suspect the whole to be only a *Popish* plot, and so cast an awful reproach on this blessed work of the divine Spirit, and at the same time wholly exclude themselves from receiving any benefit by this divine influence. This put me upon searching whether I had ever dropped any thing inadvertently, that might give occasion to any to suspect that I was stirring up the Indians against the English; and could think of nothing, unless it was my attempting sometimes to vindicate the rights of the Indians, and complaining of the horrid practice of making the Indians drunk, and then cheating them out of their lands and other properties; and once, I remembered, I had done this with too much warmth of spirit. And this much distressed me, thinking that this might possibly prejudice them against this work of grace, to their everlasting destruction. God, I believe, did me good by this trial, which served to humble me, and show me the necessity of watchfulness, and of being “wise as a serpent,” as well as “harmless as a dove.” This exercise led me often to the throne of grace, and there I found some support, though I could not get the burden wholly removed. Was assisted in prayer, especially in the evening.

He remained still under a degree of exercise of mind about this affair, which continued to have the same effect upon him, to cause him to reflect upon, and humble himself, and frequent the throne of grace, but soon found himself much more relieved and supported. He was this week in an extremely weak state, and obliged (as he expresses it) “to consume considerable time in diversions for his health.”

For Sat., Feb. 7, and the Sabbath following, see his public journal.

The Monday after, he set out on a journey to the Forks of Delaware, to visit the Indians there. He performed the journey under great weakness, and sometimes was exercised with much pain; but says nothing of dejection and melancholy. He arrived at his own house at the Forks, on Friday. The things appertaining to his inward frames and exercises, expressed within this week, are —sweet composure of mind; thankfulness to God for his mercies to him and others; resignation to the divine will; comfort in prayer and religious conversation; his heart drawn out after God, and affected with a sense of his own barrenness, as well as the fulness and freeness of divine grace.

DAVID BRAINERD. 173

Lord's day, Feb. 16. —In the evening, was in a sweet, composed frame of mind. It was exceeding refreshing and comfortable, to think that God had been with me, affording me some good measure of assistance. I then found freedom and sweetness in prayer and thanksgiving to God, and found my soul sweetly engaged and enlarged in prayer for dear friends and acquaintance. Blessed be the name of the Lord, that ever I am enabled to do any thing for his dear interest and kingdom! Blessed be God who enables me to be faithful! Enjoyed more resolution and courage for God, and more refreshment of spirit, than I have been favoured with for many weeks past.

Mon., Feb. 17. —I was refreshed and encouraged; found a spirit of prayer in the evening, and earnest longings for the illumination and conversion of these poor Indians.

Tues., Feb. 18. —See the public journal.

Wed., Feb. 19. —My heart was comforted and refreshed, and my soul filled with longings for the conversion of the Indians here.

Thurs., Feb. 20. —God was pleased to support and refresh my spirits, by affording me assistance this day, and so hopeful a prospect of success; and I returned home rejoicing, and blessing the name of the Lord, and found freedom and sweetness afterwards in secret prayer, and had my soul drawn out for dear friends. O how blessed a thing is it to labour for God faithfully, and with encouragement of success! Blessed be the Lord for ever and ever, for the assistance and comfort granted this day.

Fri., Feb. 21. —My soul was refreshed and comforted, and I could not but bless God, who had enabled me in some good measure to be faithful in the day past. O how sweet it is to be spent and worn out for God!

Sat., Feb. 22. —My spirits were much supported, though my bodily strength was much wasted. O that God would be gracious to the souls of these poor Indians!

God has been very gracious to me this week, he has enabled me to preach every day, and has given me some assistance, and encouraging prospect of success in almost every sermon. Blessed be his name! Divers of the white people have been awakened this week, and sundry of the Indians much cured of their prejudices and jealousies they had conceived against Christianity, and some seem to be really awakened.

174 THE LIFE OF

Lord's day, Feb. 23. —See the public journal.

The next day, he left the Forks of Delaware, to return to Crosweeksung, and spent the whole week till Saturday, before he arrived there; but preached by the way every day, excepting one, and was several times greatly assisted, and had much inward comfort, and earnest longings to fill up all his time with the service of God. He utters such expressions as these, after preaching: "O that I may be enabled to plead the cause of God faithfully, to my dying moment! O how sweet it would be to spend myself wholly for God, and in his cause, and to be freed from selfish motives in my labours!"

For Saturday and Lord's day, March 1 and 2, see the public journal. The next four days were spent in great bodily weakness, but he speaks of some seasons of considerable inward comfort.

Thurs., March 6. —I walked alone in the evening, and enjoyed sweetness and comfort in prayer, beyond what I have of late enjoyed; my soul rejoiced in my *pilgrimage-state*, and I was delighted with the thoughts of labouring and *enduring hardness* for God; felt some longing desires to preach the gospel to dear immortal souls; and confided in God, that *he*

would be *with me* in my work, and that he “never would leave nor forsake me,” to the end of my race. O may I “obtain mercy of God to be faithful,” to my dying moment!

Fri., March 7. —In the afternoon, went on in my work with freedom and cheerfulness, God assisting me; and enjoyed comfort in the evening.

For the next two days, see the public journal.

Mon., March 10. —My soul was refreshed with freedom and enlargement, and (I hope) the lively exercise of faith, in secret prayer, this night; my will was sweetly resigned to the divine will, and my hopes respecting the enlargement of the dear kingdom of Christ somewhat raised, and could commit Zion’s cause to God as his own.

On Tuesday he speaks of some sweetness and spirituality in Christian conversation. On Wednesday, complains that he enjoyed not much comfort and satisfaction through the day, because he did but little for God. On Thursday, spent considerable time in company, on a special occasion, but

DAVID BRAINERD. 175

in perplexity, because without savoury religious conversation. For Friday, Saturday, and Lord’s day, see the public journal.

In the former part of the week following he was very ill; and also under great dejection, being, as he apprehended, rendered unserviceable by his illness, and fearing that he should never be serviceable any more; and therefore exceedingly longed for death. But afterwards was more encouraged, and life appeared more desirable, because (as he says) he “had a little dawn of hope, that he might be useful in the world.” In the latter part of the week, he was in some measure relieved of his illness, in the use of means prescribed by a physician.

For Saturday and Lord’s day, March 22 and 23, see his public journal.

Mon., March 24. —After the Indians were gone to their work, to clear their lands, I got alone, and poured out my soul to God, that he would smile upon these feeble beginnings, and that he would settle an Indian town, that might be *a mountain of holiness*; and found my soul much refreshed in these petitions, and much enlarged for Zion’s interest, and for numbers of dear friends in particular. My sinking spirits were revived and raised, and I felt animated in the service God has called me to. This was the dearest hour I have enjoyed for many days, if not weeks. I found an encouraging hope, that something would be done for God, and that God would use and help me in his work. And O how sweet were the thoughts of labouring for God, when I felt any spirit and courage, and had any hope that ever I should be succeeded!

The next day, his *schoolmaster* was taken sick with a pleurisy, and he spent great part of the remainder of this week in tending him; which in his weak state was almost an overbearing burden to him, he being obliged constantly to wait upon him all day, from day to day, and to

lie on the floor at night. His spirits sunk in a considerable degree, with his bodily strength, under this burden.

For Saturday and Lord's day, March 29 and 30, see the public journal.

Mon., March 31. —Towards night, enjoyed some sweet meditations on those words: "It is good for me to draw

176 THE LIFE OF

near to God." My soul, I think, had some sweet sense of what is intended in those words.

The next day, he was extremely busy in tending the schoolmaster, and in some other necessary affairs, that greatly diverted him from what he looked upon as his proper business; but yet speaks of comfort and refreshment, at some times of the day.

Wed., April 2. —Was somewhat exercised with a spiritless frame of mind. Was a little relieved and refreshed in the evening, with meditation alone in the woods. But, alas! my days pass away as the *chaff*! it is but little I do, or can do, that turns to any account; and it is my constant misery and burden, that I am so fruitless in the vineyard of the Lord. O that I were *spirit*, that I might be active for God! This (I think), more than any thing else, makes me long that "this corruptible might put on in corrupt! on, and this mortal put on immortality." God deliver me from clogs, fetters, and a *body of death*, that impede my service for him \

The next day, he complains bitterly of some exercises by corruption he found in his own heart.

Fri., April 4. —Spent most of the day in writing on Rev. xxii. 17, "And whosoever will," &c. Enjoyed some freedom and encouragement in my work, and found some comfort and composure in prayer.

Sat., April 5. —After public worship, a number of my dear Christian Indians came to my house, with whom I felt a sweet union of soul; my heart was knit to them, and I cannot say I have felt such a sweet and fervent *love to the brethren* for some time past, and I saw in them appearances of the same love. This gave me something of a view of the heavenly state, and particularly that part of the happiness of heaven which consists in the *communion of saints*, and this was affecting to me.

For the next two days, see the public journal.

On Tuesday, he went to a meeting of the Presbytery appointed at Elizabeth-Town. In his way thither, he enjoyed some sweet meditations: but after he came there he was (as he expresses it) very *vapoury and melancholy, and under an awful gloom*, that oppressed his mind. And this

continued till Saturday evening, when he began to have some relief and encouragement. He spent the Sabbath at Staten Island, where he preached to an assembly of Dutch and English, and enjoyed considerable refreshment and comfort, both in public and private. In the evening he returned to Elizabeth Town.

Mon., Ap. 14. —My spirits this day were raised and refreshed, and my mind composed, so that I was in a comfortable frame of soul most of the day. In the evening my head was clear, my mind serene; I enjoyed sweetness in secret prayer, and meditation on Ps. lxxiii. 28. O how free, how comfortable, cheerful, and yet solemn, do I feel when I am in a good measure freed from those damps and melancholy glooms, that I often labour under! And, blessed be the Lord, I find myself relieved in this respect.

Tues., Ap. 15. —My soul longed for more spirituality, and it was my burden that I could do no more for God. O my barrenness is my daily affliction and heavy load! how precious is time, and how it pains me to see it slide away, while I do so very little to any good purpose! O that God would make me more fruitful and spiritual!

The next day, he speaks of his being almost overwhelmed with vapoury disorders, but yet not so as wholly to destroy the composure of his mind.

Thurs., Ap. 17. —Enjoyed some comfort in prayer, some freedom in meditation, and composure in my studies. Spent some time in writing, in the forenoon. In the afternoon, spent some time in conversation with several dear ministers. In the evening, preached from Ps. lxxiii. 28, “But it is good for me to draw near to God.” God helped me to feel the truth of my text, both in the first prayer and in sermon. I was enabled to pour out my soul to God, with great freedom, fervency, and affection, and, blessed be the Lord, it was a comfortable season to me. I was enabled to speak with tenderness, and yet with faithfulness, and divine truths seemed to fall with weight and influence upon the hearers. My heart was melted for the dear assembly, and I loved everybody in it, and scarce ever felt more love to immortal souls in my life; my soul cried, “O that the dear creatures might be saved! O that God would have mercy on them!”

178 THE LIFE OF

He seems to have been in a very comfortable frame of mind the next two days.

*Lord's day, Ap. 20.*¹ —Enjoyed some freedom, and, I hope, exercise of faith in prayer, in the morning; especially when I came to pray for Zion. I was free from that gloomy discouragement that so often oppresses my mind, and my soul rejoiced in the hopes of Zion's prosperity, and the enlargement of the dear kingdom of the great Redeemer. O that his kingdom might come!

Mon., Ap. 21. —Was composed and comfortable in mind, most of the day; was mercifully freed from those gloomy damps that I am frequently exercised with; had freedom and

¹ This day he entered into the 29th year of his age.

comfort in prayer, several times; especially had some rising hopes of Zion's enlargement and prosperity. And O how refreshing were these hopes to my soul! O that the kingdom of the dear Lord might come! O that the poor Indians might quickly be gathered in, in great numbers!

Tues., Ap. 22. —My mind was remarkably free, this day, from melancholy damps and glooms, and animated in my work. I found such fresh vigour and resolution in the service of God, that the *mountains* seemed to become a *plain* before me. O blessed be God for an interval of refreshment, and fervent resolution in my Lord's work! In the evening, my soul was refreshed in secret prayer, and my heart drawn out for divine blessings; especially for the church of God, and his interest among my own people, and for dear friends in remote places. O that Zion might prosper, and precious souls be brought home to God!

In this comfortable, fervent frame of mind he remained the next two days.

For the next four days, viz., Friday, Saturday, Lord's day, and Monday, see his public journal. On Tuesday, he went to Elizabeth Town, to attend the meeting of the Presbytery there, and seemed to spend the time, while absent from his people on this occasion, in a free and comfortable state of mind.

Sat., May 3. —Rode from Elizabeth Town home to my people, at or near Cranberry, whither they are now removed, and where I hope God will settle them as a Christian congregation. Was refreshed in lifting up my heart to

DAVID BRAINERD. 179

God, while riding; and enjoyed a thankful frame of spirit, for divine favours received the week past. Was somewhat uneasy and dejected, in the evening 1, having no house of my own to go into in this place, but God was my support.

For Lord's day and Monday, see the public journal.

Tues., May 6. —Enjoyed some spirit and courage in my work; was in a good measure free from melancholy; blessed be God for freedom from this *death*.

Wed., May 7. —Spent most of the day in writing, as usual. Enjoyed some freedom in my work. Was favoured with some comfortable meditations, this day. In the evening, was in a sweet, composed frame of mind; was pleased and delighted to leave all with God, respecting myself, for time and eternity, and respecting the people of my charge, and dear friends; had no doubt but that God would take care of me, and of his own interest among my people, and was enabled to use freedom in prayer, as a child with a tender father. O how sweet is such a frame!

Thurs., May 8. —In the evening, was somewhat refreshed with divine things, and enjoyed a tender melting frame in secret prayer, wherein my soul was drawn out for the interest of Zion, and comforted with the lively hope of the appearing of the kingdom of the great

Redeemer. These were sweet moments; I felt almost loath to go to bed, and grieved that sleep was necessary. However, I lay down with a tender reverential fear of God, sensible that “his favour is life,” and his smiles better than all that earth can boast of infinitely better than life itself.

Fri., May 9. —See the public journal.

Sat., May 10. —Rode to Allen’s Town, to assist in the administration of the Lord’s Supper. In the afternoon, preached from Tit. ii. 14, “Who gave himself for us,” c. God was pleased to carry me through with some competency of freedom, and yet to deny me that enlargement and power I longed for. In the evening, my soul mourned, and could not but mourn, that I had treated so excellent a subject in so defective a manner, that I had borne so broken a testimony for so worthy and glorious a Redeemer. And if my discourse had met with the utmost applause from all the world (as I accidentally heard it applauded by some persons of judgment,)

180 THE LIFE OF

it would not have given me any satisfaction. O it grieved me to think that I had had no more holy warmth and fervency, that I had been no more melted in discoursing of Christ’s death, and the end and design of it! Afterwards, enjoyed some freedom and fervency in secret and family prayer, and longed much for the presence of God to attend his word and ordinances the next day.

Lord’s day, May 11. —Assisted in the administration of the Lord’s Supper; but enjoyed little enlargement, was grieved and sunk with some things I thought undesirable, &c. In the afternoon, went to the house of God weak and sick in soul, as well as feeble in body, and longed that the people might be entertained and edified with divine truths, and that an honest, fervent testimony might be borne for God; but knew not how it was possible for me to do any thing of that kind, to any good purpose. Yet God, who is rich in mercy, was pleased to give me assistance, both in prayer and preaching; God helped me to wrestle for his presence, in prayer, and to tell him that he had promised, “Where two or three are met together in his name, there he would be in the midst of them, “and that we were, at least some of us, so met; and pleaded, that for his truth’s sake he would be with us. And blessed be God it was sweet to my soul thus to plead and rely on God’s promises. Discoursed upon Luke ix. 30, 31, “And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.” Enjoyed special freedom, from the beginning to the end of my discourse, without interruption. Things pertinent to the subject were abundantly presented to my view, and such a fulness of matter, that I scarce knew how to dismiss the various heads and particulars I had occasion to touch upon. And, blessed be the Lord, I was favoured with some fervency and power, as well as freedom; so that the Word of God seemed to awaken the attention of a stupid audience, to a considerable degree. I was inwardly refreshed with the consolations of God, and could with my whole heart say, “Though there be no fruit in the vine, &c. yet will I rejoice in the Lord.” After public service, was refreshed with the sweet conversation of some Christian friends.

The next four days seem to have been mostly spent with spiritual comfort and profit.

DAVID BRAINERD. 181

Fri., May 16. —Near night, enjoyed some agreeable and sweet conversation with a dear minister, which, I trust, was blessed to my soul; my heart was warmed, and my soul engaged to live to God; so that I longed to exert myself with more vigour than ever I had done in his cause, and those words were quickening to me, “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit.” O my soul longed, and wished, and prayed, to be enabled to live to God with utmost constancy and ardour! In the evening, God was pleased to shine upon me in secret prayer, and draw out my soul after himself; and I had freedom in supplication for myself, but much more in intercession for others, so that I was sweetly constrained to say, “Lord, use me as thou wilt; do as thou wilt with me, but O. promote thine own cause! Zion is thine; O visit thine heritage! O let thy kingdom come! O let thy blessed interest be advanced in the world!” When I attempted to look to God, respecting my worldly circumstances, and his providential dealings with me, in regard of my settling down in my congregation, which seems to be necessary, and yet very difficult, and contrary to my fixed intention for years past, as well as my disposition, which has been, and still is, at times especially, to go forth, and spend my life in preaching the gospel from place to place, and gathering souls *afar off* to JESUS the great Redeemer; when I attempted to look to God with regard to these things, and his designs concerning me, I could only say, “The will of the Lord be done, it is no matter for me.” The same frame of mind I felt with respect to another important affair I have lately had some serious thoughts of; I could say, with utmost calmness and composure, “Lord, if it be most for thy glory, let me proceed in it; but if thou seest that it will in any wise hinder my usefulness in thy cause, O prevent my proceeding, for all I want, respecting this world, is such circumstances as may best capacitate me to do service for God in the world.” But, blessed be God, I enjoyed liberty in prayer for my dear flock, and was enabled to pour out my soul into the bosom of a tender Father; my heart within me was melted when I came to plead for my dear people, and for the kingdom of Christ in general. O how sweet was this evening to my soul! I knew not how to go to bed, and when got to bed, longed for some way to improve time for God, to some excellent purpose. “Bless the Lord, O my soul!”

Sat., May 17. —Walked out in the morning, and felt

182 THE LIFE OF

much of the same frame I enjoyed the evening before, had my heart enlarged in praying for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ, and found utmost freedom in leaving all my concerns with God.

I find *discouragement* to be an exceeding hindrance to my spiritual fervency and affection, but when God enables me sensibly to find that I have done something for him, this refreshes” and animates me, so that I could break through all hardships, undergo any labours, and nothing seems too much either to do or to suffer. But, O what a death it is, to strive and strive, to be always in a *hurry*, and yet do *nothing*, or at least nothing *for* GOD! Alas, alas, that time flies away, and I do so little for God!

Lord's day, May 18. —I felt my own utter insufficiency for my work; God made me to see, that I was a *child*, yea, that I was a *fool*. I discoursed, both parts of the day, from Rev. iii. 20, "Behold I stand at the door, and knock." God gave me freedom and power in the latter part of my (forenoon's) discourse; although, in the former part of it, I felt peevish and provoked with the unmannerly behaviour of the *white* people, who crowded in between my people and me; which proved a great temptation to me. But, blessed be God, I got these shackles off before the middle of my discourse, and was favoured with a sweet frame of spirit in the latter part of the exercise; was full of love, warmth, and tenderness, in addressing my dear people. In the intermission season, could not but discourse to my people on the kindness and patience of Christ in *standing* and *knocking at the door*, &c. In the evening, I was grieved that I had done so little for God. O that I could be a *flame of fire* in the service of my God!

Mon., May 19. —See the public journal. On Tuesday, he complains of want of freedom and comfort; but had some return of these on Wednesday.

Thurs., May 22. —In the evening, was in a frame somewhat remarkable; had apprehended for several days before that it was the design of providence I should *settle* among my people here, and had in my own mind begun to make provision for it, and to contrive means to hasten it, and found my heart something engaged in it, hoping I might then enjoy more agreeable circumstances of life, in several respects, and yet was never fully determined, never quite pleased with the

DAVID BRAINERD. 183

thoughts of being settled and confined to one place. Nevertheless I seemed to have some freedom in that respect, because the congregation I thought of settling with was one that God had enabled me to gather from among Pagans. For I never, since I began to preach, could feel any freedom "to enter into other men's labours," and settle down in the ministry where the "gospel was preached before;" I never could make that appear to be my providence; when I felt any disposition to consult my ease and worldly comfort, God has never given me any liberty in that respect, either since, or for some years before I began to preach. But God having succeeded my labours, and made me instrumental of gathering a church for him among these Indians, I was ready to think it might be his design to give me a quiet settlement and a stated home of my own. And this, considering the late frequent sinking and failure of my spirits, and the need I stood in of some agreeable society, and my great desire of enjoying conveniences and opportunities for profitable studies, was not altogether disagreeable to me, although I still wanted to go about far and wide, in order to spread the gospel among benighted souls, far remote; yet I never had been so willing to settle in any one place, for more than five years past, as I was in the foregoing part of this week. But now these thoughts seemed to be wholly dashed to pieces; not by necessity, but of choice, for it appeared to me that God's dealings towards me had fitted me for a life of solitariness and hardship; it appeared to me I had nothing to lose, nothing to do with earth, and, consequently, nothing to lose by a total renunciation of it, and it appeared just right, that I should be destitute of house and home, and many comforts of life, which I rejoiced to see others of God's people enjoy. And, at the same time, I saw so much of the excellency of Christ's kingdom, and the infinite

desirableness of its advancement in the world, that it swallowed up all my other thoughts, and made me willing, yea, even rejoice, to be made a pilgrim or hermit in the wilderness, to my dying moment, if I might thereby promote the blessed interest of the great Redeemer. And if ever my soul presented itself to God for his service, without any reserve of any kind, it did so now. The language of my thoughts and disposition (although I spake no words) now were, "*Here I am, Lord send me; send me to the ends of the earth*"; send me to the rough, the savage Pagans of the wilderness; send me from all that is called comfort in earth, or earthly comfort; send me even to death

184 THE LIFE OF

itself, if it be but in thy service and to promote thy kingdom." And at the same time I had as quick and lively a sense of the value of worldly comforts as ever I had; but only saw them infinitely overmatched by the worth of Christ's kingdom, and the propagation of his blessed gospel. The quiet settlement, the certain place of abode, the tender friendship which I thought I might be likely to enjoy in consequence of such circumstances, appeared as valuable to me, considered *absolutely* and *in themselves*, as ever before; but considered *comparatively*, they appeared nothing; compared with the value and preciousness of an enlargement of Christ's kingdom, they vanished like the stars before the rising sun. And sure I am, that although the comfortable accommodations of life appeared valuable and dear to me, yet I did surrender and resign myself, soul and body, to the service of God, and the promotion of Christ's kingdom, though it should be in the loss of them all. And I could not do any other, because I could not will or choose any other. I was constrained, and yet chose to say, "Farewell, friends and earthly comforts, the dearest of them all, the very dearest, if the Lord calls for it; adieu, adieu; I'll spend my life, to my latest moments, *in caves and dens of the earth*, if the kingdom of Christ may thereby be advanced." I found extraordinary freedom at this time in pouring out my soul to God for his cause, and especially that his kingdom might be extended among the Indians, far remote: and I had a great and strong hope that God would do it. I continued wrestling with God in prayer for my dear little flock here, and more especially for the Indians elsewhere, as well as for dear friends in one place and another, till it was bedtime, and I feared I should hinder the family, &c. But, O with what reluctancy did I find myself obliged to consume time in sleep! I longed to be as a *flame of fire*, continually glowing in the divine service, preaching and building up Christ's kingdom, to my latest, my dying moment.

Fri., May 23. —In the morning, was in the same frame of mind as in the evening before. The glory of Christ's kingdom so much outshone the pleasure of earthly accommodations and enjoyments, that they appeared comparatively nothing, though in themselves good and desirable. My soul was melted in secret meditation and prayer, and I found myself divorced from any part in this world: so that in those affairs that seemed of the greatest importance to me, in respect of the present life, and those wherein the tender powers

DAVID BRAINERD. 185

of the mind are most sensibly touched. I could only say, "The will of the Lord be done." But just the same things that I felt the evening before, I felt now; and found the same freedom in

prayer for the people of my charge, for the propagation of the gospel among the Indians, and for the enlargement and spiritual welfare of Zion in general, and my dear friends in particular, now, as I did then; and longed to burn out in one continued flame for God. Retained much of the same frame through the day. In the evening, was visited by my brother John Brainerd, the first visit I have ever received from any near relative since I have been a missionary. Felt the same frame of spirit in the evening as in the morning, and found that "it was good for me to draw near to God," and leave all my concerns and burdens with him. Was enlarged and refreshed in pouring out my soul for the propagation of the gospel of the Redeemer among the distant tribes of Indians. Blessed be God! If ever I filled up a day with studies and devotion, I was enabled so to fill up this day.

Sat., May 24 —Enjoyed, this day, something of the same frame of mind as I felt the day before.

Lord's day, May 25. —See the public journal.

This week, at least the former part of it, he was in a very weak state, but yet seems to have been free from melancholy, which often had attended the failing of his bodily strength. He from time to time speaks of comfort and inward refreshment this week.

Lord's day, June 1. —See the public journal.

Mon., June 2. —In the evening, enjoyed some freedom in secret prayer and meditation.

Tues., June 3. —My soul rejoiced, early in the morning, to think that all things were at God's disposal. O it pleased me to leave them there! Felt afterwards much as I did on Thursday evening, May 22 last, and continued in this frame for several hours. Walked out into the wilderness, and enjoyed freedom, fervency, and comfort in prayer; and again enjoyed the same in the evening.

Wed., June 4. —Spent the day in writing, and enjoyed some comfort, satisfaction, and freedom in my work. In the evening, I was favoured with a sweet, refreshing frame of soul in secret prayer and meditation. Prayer was now wholly turned into praise, and I could do little else but try to

186 THE LIFE OF

adore and bless the living God; the wonders of his grace displayed in gathering to himself a church among the poor Indians here, were the subject-matter of my meditation, and the occasion of exciting my soul to praise and bless his name. My soul was scarce ever more disposed to inquire, "What I should render to God for all his benefits," than at this time. O I was brought into a strait, a sweet and happy strait, to know what to do! I longed to make some returns to God, but found I had nothing to return; I could only rejoice, that God had done the work himself, and that none in heaven or earth might pretend to share the honour of it with him; I would only be glad, that God's declarative glory was advanced by the conversion of these souls, and that it was to the enlargement of his kingdom in the world; but

saw I was so poor, that I had nothing to offer to him. My soul and body, through grace, I could cheerfully surrender to him; but it appeared to me, this was rather a cumber than a gift, and nothing could I do to glorify his dear and blessed name. Yet I was glad at heart that he was unchangeably possessed of glory and blessedness. O that he might be adored and praised by all his intelligent creatures, to the utmost of their power and capacities! My soul would have rejoiced to see others praise him, though I could do nothing towards it myself.

The next day, he speaks of his being subject to some degree of melancholy, but of being something relieved in the evening.

Fri., June 6. —See the public journal.

Sat., June 7. —Rode to Freehold to assist Mr. Tennent in the administration of the Lord's Supper. In the afternoon, preached from Ps. lxxiii. 28. God gave me some freedom and warmth in my discourse, and I trust his presence was in the assembly. Was comfortably composed, and enjoyed a thankful frame of spirit, and my soul was grieved that I could not render something to God for his benefits bestowed. O that I could be swallowed up in his praise!

Lord's day, June 8. —Spent much time in the morning in secret duties, but between hope and fear respecting the enjoyment of God in the business of the day then before us. Was agreeably entertained, in the forenoon, by a discourse from Mr. Tennent, and felt somewhat melted and refreshed. In the season of communion, enjoyed some comfort, and

DAVID BRAINERD. 187

especially in serving one of the tables. Blessed be the Lord, it was a *time of refreshing* to me, and I trust to many others. A number of my dear people sat down by themselves at the last table; at which time God seemed to be in the midst of them, and the thoughts of what God had done among them were refreshing and melting to me. In the afternoon, God enabled me to preach with uncommon freedom, from 2 Cor. v. 20. Through the great goodness of God, I was favoured with a constant flow of pertinent matter, and proper expressions, from the beginning to the end of my discourse. In the evening, I could not but rejoice in God, and bless him for the manifestations of grace in the day past. O it was a sweet and solemn day and evening! a season of comfort to the godly, and of awakening to some souls. O that I could praise the Lord! Mon., June 9. Enjoyed some sweetness in secret duties. Preached the concluding sermon from Gen. v. 24, "And Enoch walked with God," &c. God gave me enlargement and fervency in my discourse, so that I was enabled to speak with plainness and power; and God's presence seemed to be in the assembly. Praised be the Lord, it was a sweet meeting, a desirable assembly. I found my strength renewed, and lengthened out, even to a wonder; so that I felt much stronger at the conclusion, than in the beginning of this sacramental solemnity. I have great reason to bless God for this solemnity, wherein I have found assistance in addressing others, and sweetness in my own soul.

On Tuesday, he found himself spent, and his spirits exhausted by his late labours; and on Wednesday, complains of vapoury disorders, and dejection of spirit, and of enjoying but little comfort or spirituality.

Thurs., June 12. —In the evening, enjoyed freedom of mind, and some sweetness in secret prayer; it was a desirable season to me; my soul was enlarged in prayer for my own dear people, and for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, and especially for the propagation of the gospel among the Indians, back in the wilderness. Was refreshed in prayer for dear friends in New England, and elsewhere; I found it sweet to pray at this time, and could with all my heart say, "It is good for me to draw near to God."

Fri., June 13. —I came away from the meeting of the Indians, this day, rejoicing and blessing God for his grace manifested at this season.

188 THE LIFE OF

Sat., June 14. —Rode to Kingston, to assist the Rev. Mr. Wales in the administration of the Lord's Supper. In the afternoon, preached, but almost fainted in the pulpit; yet God strengthened me when I was just gone, and enabled me to speak his word with freedom, fervency, and application to the conscience. And, praised be the Lord, "out of weakness I was made strong." I enjoyed some sweetness in and after worship, but was extremely tired. O how many are the mercies of the Lord! "To them that have no might, he increaseth strength."

Lord's day, June 15. —Was in a dejected, spiritless frame, that I could not hold up my head, nor look anybody in the face. Administered the Lord's Supper at Mr. Wales's desire; and found myself in a good measure unburdened and relieved of my pressing load, when I came to ask a blessing on the elements. Here God gave me enlargement, and a tender, affectionate sense of spiritual things; so that it was a season of comfort in some measure to me, and I trust more so to others. In the afternoon, preached to a vast multitude, from Rev. xxii. 17, "And whosoever will," &c. God helped me to offer a testimony for himself, and to leave sinners inexcusable in neglecting his grace. I was enabled to speak with such freedom, fluency, and clearness, as commanded the attention 'of the great body of the congregation. Was extremely tired in the evening, but enjoyed composure and sweetness.

Mon., June 16. —Preached again, and God helped me amazingly, so that this was a sweet, refreshing season to my soul and others. O for ever blessed be God for help afforded at this time, when my body was so weak, and while there was so large an assembly to hear! Spent the afternoon in a comfortable, agreeable manner.

The next day was spent comfortably.

On Wednesday, he went to a meeting of ministers at Hopewell.

Thurs., June 19. —See his public journal.¹

¹ The public journal that has been so often referred to, concludes with the account of this day.

On Friday and Saturday, he was very much amiss; but yet preached to his people on Saturday. His illness continued on the Sabbath; but he preached, notwithstanding, to his people, both parts of the day; and after the public worship was ended, he endeavoured to apply divine truths to the

DAVID BRAINERD. 189

consciences of some, and addressed them personally for that end; several were in tears, and some appeared much affected. But he was extremely wearied with the services of the day, and was so ill at night, that he could have no bodily rest; but remarks, that “God was his support, and that he was not left destitute of comfort in him.” On Monday, he continued very ill; but speaks of his mind being calm and composed, resigned to the divine dispensations, and content with his feeble state. And by the account he gives of himself, the remaining part of this week, he continued very feeble, and for the most part dejected in mind, and enjoyed no great freedom nor sweetness in spiritual things; excepting that for some very short spaces of time he had refreshment and encouragement, which engaged his heart on divine things; and sometimes his heart was melted with spiritual affection.

Lord’s day, June 29. —Preached both parts of the day, from John xiv. 19, “Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more,” &c. God was pleased to assist me, to afford me both freedom and power, especially towards the close of my discourses, both forenoon and afternoon. God’s power appeared in the assembly, in both exercises. Numbers of God’s people were refreshed and melted with divine things; one or two comforted, who had been long under distress; convictions, in divers instances, powerfully revived; and one man in years much awakened, who had not long frequented our meeting, and appeared before as stupid as a stock. God amazingly renewed and lengthened out my strength. I was so spent at noon, that I could scarce walk, and all my joints trembled, so that I could not sit, nor so much as hold my hand still: and yet God strengthened me to preach with power in the afternoon, although I had given out word to my people that I did not expect to be able to do it. Spent some time afterwards in conversing particularly with several persons about their spiritual state, and had some satisfaction concerning one or two. Prayed afterwards with a sick child, and gave a word of exhortation. Was assisted in all my work. Blessed be God! Returned home with more health than I went out with, although my linen was wringing wet upon me, from a little after ten in the morning till past five in the afternoon. My spirits also were considerably refreshed, and my soul rejoiced in hope that I had through grace done something for God. In the evening, walked out, and enjoyed a sweet season in secret prayer and praise. But, O I found

190 THE LIFE OF

the truth of the Psalmist’s words, “My goodness extendeth not to thee! “I could not make any returns to God; I longed to live only to him, and to be in tune for his praise and service for ever. O for spirituality and holy fervency, that I might *spend and be spent* for God to my latest moment!

Mon., June 30. —Spent the day in writing; but under much weakness and disorder. Felt the labours of the preceding day; although my spirits were so refreshed the evening before, that I was not then sensible of my being spent.

Tues., July 1. —In the afternoon, visited and preached to my people, from Heb. ix. 27, on occasion of some persons lying at the point of death, in my congregation. God gave me some assistance, and his word made some impression on the audience in general. This was an agreeable and comfortable evening to my soul; my spirits were somewhat refreshed with a small degree of freedom and help enjoyed in my work.

On Wednesday, he went to Newark, to a meeting of the Presbytery; complains of lowness of spirits; and greatly laments his spending his time so unfruitfully. The remaining part of the week he spent there, and at Elizabeth Town; and speaks of comfort and divine assistance, from day to day, but yet greatly complains for want of more spirituality.

Lord's day, July 6. —[At Elizabeth Town.] Enjoyed some composure and serenity of mind, in the morning; heard Mr. Dickinson preach, in the forenoon, and was refreshed with his discourse; was in a melting frame some part of the time of sermon: partook of the Lord's Supper, and enjoyed some sense of divine things in that ordinance. In the afternoon, I preached from Ezek. xxxiii. 11, "As I live, saith the Lord God," &c. God favoured me with freedom and fervency, and helped me to plead his cause, beyond my own power.

Mon., July 7. —My spirits were considerably refreshed and raised in the morning. There is no comfort, I find, in any enjoyment, without enjoying God and being engaged in his service. In the evening, had the most agreeable conversation that ever I remember in all my life, upon God's being *all in all*, and all enjoyments being just that to us which God makes them, and no more. It is good to begin and end with God. O how does a sweet solemnity lay a foundation for true pleasure and happiness!

DAVID BRAINERD. 191

Tues., July 8. —Rode home, and enjoyed some agreeable meditations by the way.

Wed., July 9. —Spent the day in writing, enjoyed some comfort and refreshment of spirit in my evening retirement.

Thurs., July 10. —Spent most of the day in writing. Towards night, rode to Mr. Tennent's; enjoyed some agreeable conversation; went home in the evening in a solemn, sweet frame of mind; was refreshed in secret duties, longed to live wholly and only for God, and saw plainly there was nothing in the world worthy of my affection; so that my heart was dead to all below; yet not through dejection, as at some times, but from views of a better inheritance.

Fri., July 11. —Was in a calm, composed frame, in the morning, especially in the season of my secret retirement. I think I was well pleased with the will of God, whatever it was, or should be, in all respects I had then any thought of. Intending to administer the Lord's Supper the next Lord's day, I looked to God for his presence and assistance upon that occasion; but

felt a disposition to say, "The will of the Lord be done," whether it be to give me assistance or not. Spent some little time in writing; visited the Indians, and spent sometime in serious conversation with them, thinking it best not to preach, by reason that many of them were absent.

Sat., July 12. —This day was spent in fasting and prayer by my congregation, as preparatory to the sacrament. I discoursed both parts of the day, from Rom. iv. 25, "Who was delivered for our offences," &c. God gave me some assistance in my discourses, and something of divine power attended the word; so that this was an agreeable season. Afterwards led them to a solemn renewal of their covenant, and fresh dedication of themselves to God. This was a season both of solemnity and sweetness, and GOD seemed to be "in the midst of us." Returned to my lodgings, in the evening, in a comfortable frame of mind.

Lord's day, July 13. —In the forenoon, discoursed on the *bread of life*, from John vi. 35. God gave me some assistance, in part of my discourse especially, and there appeared some tender affection in the assembly under divine truths; my soul also was somewhat refreshed. Administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to thirty-one persons of the Indians. God seemed to be present in this ordinance; the communicants were sweetly melted and refreshed, most of them. O how they melted, even when the elements were

192 THE LIFE OF

first uncovered! There was scarcely a dry eye among them, when I took off the linen, and showed them the symbols of *Christ's broken body*. Having rested a little, after the administration of the sacrament, I visited the communicants, and found them generally in a sweet, loving frame; not unlike what appeared among them on the former sacramental occasion, on April 27. In the afternoon, discoursed upon *coming to Christ*, and the *satisfaction* of those who do so, from the same verse I insisted on in the forenoon. This was likewise an agreeable season, a season of much tenderness, affection, and enlargement in divine service; and God, I am persuaded, crowned our assembly with his divine presence. I returned home much spent, yet rejoicing in the goodness of God!

Mon., July 14. —Went to my people, and discoursed to them from Ps. cxix. 106, "I have sworn, and I will perform it," &c. Observed, 1. That .all God's *judgments* or commandments are *righteous*. 2. That God's people have *sworn* to *keep* them, and this they do especially at the Lord's table. There appeared to be a powerful divine influence on the assembly, and considerable melting under the word. Afterwards, I led them to a renewal of their covenant before God (that they would watch over themselves and one another, lest they 'should fall into sin, and dishonour the name of Christ), just as I did on Monday, April 28. This transaction was attended with great solemnity, and God seemed to own it by exciting in them a fear and jealousy of themselves, lest they should sin against God; so that the presence of God seemed to be amongst us in this conclusion of the sacramental solemnity.

The next day, he set out on a journey towards Philadelphia, whence he did not return till Saturday. He went this journey, and spent the week, under a great degree of illness of body, and dejection of mind.

Lord's day, July 20. —Preached twice to my people, from John xvii. 24, "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." Was helped to discourse with great clearness and plainness in the forenoon. In the afternoon, enjoyed some tenderness, and spake with some influence. Divers were in tears, and some, to appearance, in distress.

Mon., July 21. —Preached to the Indians, chiefly for the

DAVID BRAINERD.

193

sake of some *strangers*. Then proposed my design of taking a journey speedily to Susquehannah; exhorted my people to pray for me, that God would be with me in that journey, &c. Then chose divers persons of the congregation to travel with me. Afterwards, spent time in discoursing to the strangers, and was somewhat encouraged with them. Took care of my people's secular business, and was not a little exercised with it. Had some degree of composure and comfort in secret retirement.

Tues., July 22. —Was in a dejected frame, most of the day; wanted to wear out life, and have it at an end; but had some desires of *living to God*, and wearing out life *for him*. O that I could indeed do so ‘

The next day he went to Elizabeth Town, to a meeting of the Presbytery; and spent this, and Thursday, and the former part of Friday, under a very great degree of melancholy, and exceeding gloominess of mind; not through any fear of future punishment, but as being distressed with a senselessness of all good, so that the whole world appeared empty and gloomy to him. But in the latter part of Friday, he was greatly relieved and comforted.

Sat., July 26. —Was comfortable in the morning; my countenance and heart were not sad, as in days past; enjoyed some sweetness in lifting up my heart to God. Rode home to my people, and was in a comfortable, pleasant frame by the way; my spirits were much relieved of their burden, and I felt free to go through all difficulties and labours in my Master's service.

Lord's day, July 27. —Discoursed to my people, in the forenoon, from Luke xii. 37, on the duty and benefit of watching; God helped me in the latter part of my discourse, and the power of God appeared in the assembly. In the afternoon, discoursed from Luke xiii. 25. Here also I enjoyed some assistance, and the spirit of God seemed to attend what was spoken, so that there was a great solemnity, and some tears among Indians and others.

Mon., July 28. —Was very weak, and scarce able to perform any business at all; but enjoyed sweetness and comfort in prayer both morning and evening, and was composed and comfortable through the day; my mind was intense, and my heart fervent, at least in some degree, in secret duties, and I longed to *spend and be spent for God*.

Tues., July 29. —My mind was cheerful, and free from those melancholy damps, that I am often exercised with; had freedom in looking up to God, at sundry times in the day. In the evening-, I enjoyed a comfortable season in secret prayer; was helped to plead with God for my own dear people, that he would carry on his own blessed work among them; was assisted also in praying for the divine presence to attend me in my intended journey to Susquehannah; was also helped to remember dear brethren and friends in New England; scarce knew how to leave the throne of grace, and it grieved me that I was obliged to go to bed; I longed to do something for God, but knew not how. Blessed be God for this freedom from dejection!

Wed., July 30. —Was uncommonly comfortable, both in body and mind, in the forenoon especially; my mind was solemn. I was assisted in my work, and God seemed to be near to me, so that the day was as comfortable as most I have enjoyed for some time. In the evening, was favoured with assistance in secret prayer, and felt much as I did the evening before. Blessed be God for that freedom I then enjoyed at the throne of grace, for myself, my people, and my dear friends! “It is good for me to draw near to God.”

He seems to have continued very much in the same free, comfortable state of mind the next day.

Fri., Aug. 1. —In the evening enjoyed a sweet season in secret prayer, clouds of darkness and perplexing care were sweetly scattered, and nothing anxious remained. O how serene was my mind at this season! how free from that distracting concern I have often felt! “Thy will be done,” was a petition sweet to my soul; and, if God had bidden me choose for myself in any affair, I should have chosen rather to have referred the choice to him; for I saw he was infinitely wise, and could not do any thing amiss, as I was in danger of doing. Was assisted in prayer, for my dear flock, that God would promote his own work among them, and that God would go with me in my intended journey to Susquehannah; was helped to remember dear friends in New England, and my dear brethren in the ministry. I found enough in the sweet duty of prayer to have engaged me to continue in it the whole night, would my bodily state have admitted of it. O how sweet it is to be enabled heartily to say, “Lord, not my will, but thine be done! “

DAVID BRAINERD. 195

Sat., Aug. 2. —Near night, preached from Matt. xi. 29. Was considerably helped, and the presence of God seemed to be somewhat remarkable in the assembly: divine truths made powerful impressions, both upon saints and sinners. Blessed be God for such a revival among us! In the evening, was very weary, but found my spirits supported and refreshed.

Lord's day, Aug. 3. —Discoursed to my people in the forenoon, from Col. iii. 4; observed that Christ is the believer's life. God helped me, and gave me his presence in this discourse, and it was a season of considerable power in the assembly. In the afternoon, preached from Luke xix. 41, 42. I enjoyed some assistance, though not so much as in the forenoon. In the

evening I enjoyed freedom and sweetness in secret prayer; God enlarged my heart, freed me from melancholy damps, and gave me satisfaction in drawing near to himself. O that my soul could magnify the Lord, for these seasons of composure and resignation to his will!

Mon., Aug. 4. —Spent the day in writing; enjoyed much freedom and assistance in my work; was in a composed and comfortable frame most of the day, and in the evening enjoyed some sweetness in prayer. Blessed be God, my spirits were yet up, and I was free from sinking damps, as I have been in general ever since I came from Elizabeth Town last. O what a mercy is this!

Tues., Aug. 5. —Towards night, preached at the funeral of one of my Christians, from Isaiah lvii. 2; was oppressed with nervous headache, and considerably dejected; however, had a little freedom some part of the time I was discoursing. Was extremely weary in the evening, but notwithstanding enjoyed some liberty and cheerfulness of mind in prayer, and found the dejection that I feared much removed, and my spirits considerably refreshed.

He continued in a very comfortable, cheerful frame of mind the next day, with his heart enlarged in the service of God.

Thurs., Aug. 7. —Rode to my house, where I spent the last winter, in order to bring some things I needed for my Susquehannah journey; was refreshed to see that place, which God so marvellously visited with the showers of his grace. O how amazingly did the *power of God* often appear there! “Bless the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

195 THE LIFE OF

The next day, he speaks of liberty, enlargement, and sweetness of mind in prayer and religious conversation.

Sat., Aug. 9. —In the afternoon, visited my people; set their affairs in order, as much as possible, and contrived for them the management of their worldly business; discoursed to them in a solemn manner, and concluded with prayer. Was composed and comfortable in the evening, and somewhat fervent in secret prayer; had some sense and view of the eternal world, and found a serenity of mind. O that I could magnify the Lord for any freedom he affords me in prayer!

Lord's day, Aug. 10. —Discoursed to my people both parts of the day, from Acts iii. 19. In discoursing of repentance in the forenoon, God helped me, so that my discourse was searching; some were in tears, both of the Indians and white people, and the Word of God was attended with some power. In the intermission season, I was engaged in discoursing to some in order to their baptism, as well as with one who had then lately met with some comfort, after spiritual trouble and distress. In the afternoon, was somewhat assisted again, though weak and weary. Afterwards baptized six persons, three adults and three children. Was in a comfortable frame in the evening, and enjoyed some satisfaction in secret prayer. I scarce ever in my life felt myself so full of tenderness, as this day.

Mon., Aug. 11. —Being about to set out on a journey to Susquehannah the next day, with leave of Providence, I spent some time this day in prayer with my people that God would bless and succeed my intended journey, that he would send forth his blessed Spirit with his Word”, and set up his kingdom among the poor Indians in the wilderness. While I was opening and applying part of the 110th and 2d psalms, the *power of God* seemed to descend on the assembly in some measure; and while I was making the first prayer, numbers were melted, and I found some affectionate enlargement of soul myself. Preached from Acts iv. 31. God helped me, and my interpreter also; there was a shaking and melting among us, and divers, I doubt not, were in some measure “filled with the Holy Ghost.” Afterwards, Mr. Macknight prayed; I then opened the two last stanzas of the 72d psalm, at which time God was present with us, especially while I insisted upon the promise of *all nations blessing* the great *Redeemer*; my soul was refreshed to think, that this

DAVID BRAINERD. 197

day this blessed, glorious season should surely come, and I trust numbers of my dear people were also refreshed. Afterwards prayed; had some freedom but was almost spent; then walked out, and left my people to carry on religious exercises among themselves, they prayed repeatedly, and sung, while I rested and refreshed myself. Afterwards went to the meeting, prayed with and dismissed the assembly. Blessed be God, this has been a day of grace. There were many tears and affectionate sobs among us this day. In the evening, my soul was refreshed in prayer; enjoyed liberty at the throne of grace, in praying for my people and friends, and the church of God in general. “Bless the Lord, O my soul.”

The next day, he set out on his journey towards Susquehannah, and six of his Christian Indians with him, whom he had chosen out of his congregation, as those that he judged most fit to assist him in the business he was going upon. He took his way through Philadelphia, intending to go to Susquehannah river, far down along, where it is settled by the white people, below the country inhabited by the Indians, and so to travel up the river to the Indian habitations; for although this was much farther about, yet hereby he avoided the huge mountains and hideous wilderness, that must be crossed in the nearer way, which in time past he had found to be extremely difficult and fatiguing. He rode this week as far as Charlestown, a place of that name about thirty miles westward of Philadelphia, where he arrived on Friday, and in his way hither was for the most part in a composed, comfortable state of mind.

Sat., Aug. 16. —At Charlestown. It being a day kept by the people of the place where I now was as preparatory to the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, I tarried, heard Mr. Treat preach, and then preached myself. God gave me some good degree of freedom, and helped me to discourse with warmth, and application to the conscience. Afterwards, I was refreshed in spirit, though much tired, and spent the evening agreeably, having some freedom in prayer, as well as Christian conversation.

Lord’s day, Aug. 17. —Enjoyed liberty, composure, and satisfaction in the secret duties of the morning; had my heart somewhat enlarged in prayer for dear friends, as well as for myself. In the forenoon, attended Mr. Treat’s preaching,

partook of the Lord's Supper, five of my people also communicating in this holy ordinance; I enjoyed some enlargement and outgoing of soul in this season. In the afternoon preached from Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Enjoyed not so much sensible assistance as the day before; however, was helped to some fervency in addressing immortal souls. Was somewhat confounded in the evening, because I thought I had done little or nothing for God, yet enjoyed some refreshment of spirit in Christian conversation and prayer. Spent the evening, till near midnight, in religious exercises, and found my bodily strength, which was much spent when I came from the public worship, something renewed before I went to bed.

Mon., Aug. 18. —Rode on my way towards Paxton, upon Susquehannah River. Felt my spirits sink towards night, so that I had little comfort.

Tues., Aug. 19. —Rode forward still, and at night lodged by the side of Susquehannah. Was weak and disordered both this and the preceding day, and found my spirits considerably damped, meeting with none that I thought godly people.

Wed., Aug. 20. —Having lain in a cold sweat all night, I coughed much bloody matter this morning, and was under great disorder of body, and not a little melancholy; but what gave me some encouragement was, I had a secret hope that I might speedily get a dismissal from earth, and all its toils and sorrows. Rode this day to one Chambers's, upon Susquehannah, and there lodged. Was much afflicted in the evening with an ungodly crew, drinking, swearing, &c. O what a *hell* would it be to be numbered with the *ungodly*! Enjoyed some agreeable conversation with a traveller, who seemed to have some relish of true religion.

Thurs., Aug. 21. —Rode up the river about fifteen miles, and there lodged in a family that appeared quite destitute of God. Laboured to discourse with the man about the life of religion, but found him very artful in evading such conversation. O what a death it is to some to hear of *the things of God*! Was out of my element; but was not so dejected as at some times.

Fri., Aug. 22. —Continued my course up the river, my people now being with me, who before were parted from me; travelled above all the English settlements; at night, lodged in the open woods, and slept with more comfort than while among an ungodly company of white people. Enjoyed some liberty in secret prayer this evening, and was helped to re-

DAVID BRAINERD. 199

member clear friends, as well as my dear flock, and the church of God in general.

Sat., Aug. 23. —Arrived at the Indian town, called *Shaumoking*, near night. Was not so dejected as formerly, but yet somewhat exercised. Felt somewhat composed in the evening; enjoyed some freedom in leaving my *all* with God; through the great goodness of God, I

enjoyed some liberty of mind; was not distressed with a despondency, as frequently heretofore.

Lord's day, Aug. 24. —Towards noon, visited some of the Delawares, and discoursed with them about Christianity. In the afternoon, discoursed to the king and others upon divine things, who seemed disposed to hear. Spent most of the day in these exercises. In the evening, enjoyed some comfort and satisfaction; and especially had some sweetness in secret prayer, this duty was made so agreeable to me, that I loved to walk abroad and repeatedly engage in it. O how comfortable is a little glimpse of God!

Mon., Aug. 25. —Spent most of the day in writing. Sent out my people that were with me to talk with the Indians, and contract a friendship and familiarity with them, that I might have a better opportunity of treating with them about Christianity. Some good seemed to be done by their visit this day, divers appeared willing to hearken to Christianity. My spirits were a little refreshed this evening, and I found some liberty and satisfaction in prayer.

Tues., Aug. 26. —About noon, discoursed to a considerable number of Indians; God helped me, I am persuaded; I was enabled to speak with much plainness, and some warmth and power. The discourse had impression upon some, and made them appear very serious. I thought things now appeared as encouraging as they did at Croswicksung. At the time of my first visit to those Indians, I was a little encouraged; I pressed things with all my might, and called out my people who were then present, to give in *their testimony* for God; which they did. Toward night, was refreshed; felt a heart to pray for the setting up of God's kingdom here, as well as for my dear congregation below, and my dear friends elsewhere.

Wed., Aug. 27. —There having been a thick smoke in the house where I lodge all night before, whereby I was almost choked, I was this morning distressed with pains in my head and neck, and could have no rest. In the morning, the smoke was still the same; and a cold easterly storm gathering, I

200 THE LIFE OF

could never live within doors nor without any long time together; I was pierced with the rawness of the air abroad, in the house distressed with the smoke. I was this day very vapoury, and lived in great distress, and had not health enough to do any thing to any purpose.

Thurs., Aug. 28. —In the forenoon, was under great concern of mind about my work. Was visited by some who desired to hear me preach; discoursed to them in the afternoon with some fervency, and laboured to persuade them to *turn to God*. Was full of concern for the kingdom of Christ, and found some enlargement of soul in prayer, both in secret and in my family. Scarce ever saw more clearly than this day that it is God's *work* to convert souls, and especially poor *heathens*; I knew I could not touch them; I saw I could only speak to *dry bones*, but could give them no sense of what I said. My eyes were up to God for help; I could say, the *work* was *his*; and if done, the *glory* would be *his*.

Fri., Aug. 29. —Felt the same concern of mind as the day before. Enjoyed some freedom in prayer, and a satisfaction to leave all with God. Travelled to the Delawares; found few at home; felt poorly, but was able to spend some time alone in reading God's word and in prayer, and enjoyed some sweetness in these exercises. In the evening, was assisted repeatedly in prayer, and found some comfort in coming to the throne of grace.

Sat., Aug. 30. —Spent the forenoon in visiting a trader that came down the river sick, who appeared as ignorant as any Indian. In the afternoon, spent some time in writing, reading, and prayer.

Lord's day, Aug. 31. —Spent much time in the morning in secret duties, found a weight upon my spirits, and could not but cry to God with concern and engagement of soul. Spent some time also in reading and expounding God's Word to my dear family that was with me, as well as in singing and prayer with them. Afterwards spake the Word of God to some few of the Susquehannah Indians. In the afternoon, felt very weak and feeble. Near night, was something refreshed in mind with some views of things relating to my great work. O how heavy is my work, when faith cannot take hold of an *almighty Arm* for the performance of it! Many times have I been ready to sink in this case. Blessed be God that I may repair to a full *fountain*.

Mon., Sept. 1. —Set out on a journey towards a place

DAVID BRAINERD. 201

called the *great island*, about fifty miles distant from Shaumoking, in the north-western branch of Susquehannah. Travelled some part of the way, and at night lodged in the woods. Was exceeding feeble this day, and sweated much the night following.

Tues., Sept. 2. —Rode forward, but no faster than my people went on foot. Was very weak on this as well as the preceding days; was so feeble and faint, that I feared it would kill me to lie out in the open air; and some of our company being parted from us, so that we had now no axe with us, I had no way but to climb into a young pine-tree, and with my knife to lop the branches, and so made a shelter from the dew. But the evening being cloudy, and very likely for rain, I was still under fears of being extremely exposed; sweat much in the night, so that my linen was almost wringing wet all night. I scarce ever was more weak and weary than this evening, when I was able to sit up at all. This was a melancholy situation I was in; but I endeavoured to quiet myself with considerations of the possibility of my being in much worse circumstances amongst enemies, &c.

Wed., Sept. 3. —Rode to the Delaware Town; found divers drinking and drunken. Discoursed with some of the Indians about Christianity; observed my *interpreter* much engaged and assisted in his work; some few persons seemed to hear with great earnestness and engagement of soul. About noon, rode to a small town of Shauwaunoos, about eight miles distant; spent an hour or two there, and returned to the Delaware Town, and lodged there. Was scarce ever more confounded with a sense of my own unfruitfulness and unfitness for my work, than now. O what a dead, heartless, barren, unprofitable wretch did I now see

myself to be! My spirits were so low, and my bodily strength so wasted, that I could do nothing at all. At length, being much overdone, lay down on a *buffalo-skin*; but sweat much the whole night.

Thurs., Sept. 4. —Discoursed with the Indians in the morning about Christianity, my *interpreter* afterwards carrying on the discourse to a considerable length; some few appeared well-disposed, and somewhat affected. Left this place, and returned towards Shaumoking; and at night lodged in the place where I lodged the Monday night before. Was in very uncomfortable circumstances in the evening, my people being belated, and not coming to me till past

202 THE LIFE OF

ten at night; so that I had no fire to dress any victuals, or to keep me warm, or keep off wild beasts; and I was scarce ever more weak and worn out in all my life. However, I lay down and slept before my people came up, expecting nothing else but to spend the whole night alone, and without fire.

Fri., Sept. 5. —Was exceeding weak, so that I could scarcely ride; it seemed sometimes as if I must fall off from my horse and lie in the open woods; however, got to Shaumoking towards night; felt something of a spirit of thankfulness that God had so far returned me; was refreshed to see one of my Christians whom I left here in my late excursion.

Sat., Sept. 6. —Spent the day in a very weak state; coughing and spitting blood, and having little appetite to any food I had with me; was able to do very little, except discourse a while of divine things to my own people, and to some few I met with. Had by this time very little life or heart to speak for God, through feebleness of body, and flatness of spirits. Was scarcely ever more ashamed and confounded in myself, than now. I was sensible that there were numbers of God's people who knew I was then out upon a design (or at least the pretence) of doing something for God, and in his cause, among the poor Indians; and they were ready to suppose, that I was *fervent in spirit*; but O the heartless frame of mind that I felt filled me with confusion! O (methought) if God's people knew me, as God knows, they would not think so highly of my zeal and resolution for God, as perhaps now they do! I could not but desire they should see how heartless and irresolute I was, that they might be undeceived, and "not think of me above what they ought to think." And yet I thought, if they saw the utmost of my flatness and unfaithfulness, the smallness of my courage and resolution for God, they would be ready to shut me out of their doors, as unworthy of the company or friendship of Christians.

Lord's day, Sept. 7. —Was much in the same weak state of body, and afflicted frame of mind, as in the preceding day; my soul was grieved, and mourned that I could do nothing for God. Read and expounded some part of God's Word to my own dear family, and spent some time in prayer with them; discoursed also a little to the Pagans; but spent the Sabbath with a little comfort.

Mon., Sept. 8. —Spent the forenoon among the Indians;

in the afternoon, left Shaumoking, and returned down the river a few miles. Had proposed to have tarried a considerable time longer among the Indians upon Susquehannah; but was hindered from pursuing my purpose by the sickness that prevailed there, the weakly circumstances of my own people that were with me, and especially my own extraordinary weakness, having been exercised with great nocturnal sweats, and a coughing up of blood, in almost the whole of the journey; and was a great part of the time so feeble and faint, that it seemed as though I never should be able to reach home; and at the same time very destitute of the comforts, and even necessities of life; at least, what was necessary for one in so weak a state. In this journey, I sometimes was enabled to speak the Word of God with some power, and divine truths made some impressions on divers that heard me; so that several, both men and women, old and young, seemed to *cleave to us*, and be well “disposed towards *Christianity*; but *others mocked* and shouted, which damped those who before seemed friendly, at least some of them; yet God, at times, was evidently present, assisting me, my interpreter, and other dear friends who were with me; God gave, sometimes, a good degree of freedom in prayer for the ingathering of souls there; and I could not but entertain a strong hope that the journey should not be wholly fruitless. Whether the issue of it would be the setting up Christ’s kingdom there, or only the drawing of some few persons down to my congregation in New Jersey, or whether they were now only preparing for some further attempts that might be made among them, I did not determine; but I was persuaded, the journey would not be lost. Blessed be God, that I had any encouragement and hope!

Tues., Sept. 9. —Rode down the river, near thirty miles. Was extremely weak, much fatigued, and wet with a thunder-storm. Discoursed with some warmth and closeness to some poor ignorant souls, on the *life* and *power* of *religion*; what were, and what were not, the *evidences* of it. They seemed much astonished when they saw my Indians ask a blessing and give thanks at dinner, concluding *that* a very high evidence of grace in them; but were astonished when I insisted, that neither that, nor yet secret prayer, was any sure evidence of grace. O the ignorance of the world! How are some empty outward *forms*, that may all be entirely *selfish*, mistaken for true religion, infallible evidences of it! The Lord pity a deluded world!

204 THE LIFE OF

Wed. Sept. 10. —Rode near twenty miles homeward. Was much solicited to preach, but utterly unable, through bodily weakness. Was extremely overdone with the heat and showers this day, and coughed up considerable blood.

Thurs., Sept. 11. —Rode homeward, but was very weak, and sometimes scarce able to ride. Had a very importunate invitation to preach at a meeting-house I came by, the people being then gathering; but could not, by reason of weakness. Was resigned and composed under my weakness, but was much exercised with concern for my companions in travel, whom I had left with much regret, some lame, and some sick.

Fri., Sept. 12. —Rode about fifty miles, and came just at night to a Christian friend's house, about twenty-five miles westward from Philadelphia. Was courteously received, and kindly entertained, and found myself much refreshed in the midst of my weakness and fatigues.

Sat., Sept. 13. —Was still agreeably entertained with Christian friendship, and all things necessary for my weak circumstances. In the afternoon, heard Mr. Treat preach, and was refreshed in conversation with him, in the evening.

Lord's day, Sept. 14. —At the desire of Mr. Treat and the people, I preached both parts of the day (but short) from Luke xiv. 23. God gave me some freedom and warmth in my discourse, and, I trust, helped me in some measure to labour in *singleness of heart*. Was much tired in the evening, but was comforted with the most tender treatment I ever met with in my life. My mind, through the whole of this day, was exceeding calm, and I could ask for nothing in prayer, with any encouragement of soul, but that "the will of God might be done."

Mon., Sept. 15. —Spent the whole day, in concert with Mr. Treat, in endeavours to compose a difference subsisting between certain persons in the congregation where we now were; there seemed to be a blessing on our endeavours. In the evening, baptised a child; was in a calm, composed frame, and enjoyed, I trust, a spiritual sense of divine things, while administering the ordinance. Afterwards, spent the time in religious conversation, till late in the night. 'This was indeed a pleasant, agreeable evening.

Tues., Sept. 16. —Continued still at my friend's house, about twenty-five miles westward of Philadelphia. Was very weak, unable to perform any business, and scarcely able to sit up.

DAVID BRAINERD. 205

Wed., Sept. 17. —Rode in to Philadelphia. Still very weak, and my cough and spitting of blood continued. Enjoyed some agreeable conversation with friends, but wanted more spirituality.

Thurs., Sept. 18. —Went from Philadelphia to Mr. Treat's; was agreeably entertained on the road; and was in a sweet, composed frame in the evening.

Fri., Sept. 19. —Rode from Mr. Treat's to Mr. Stockton's at Prince Town; was extremely weak, but kindly received and entertained. Spent the evening with some degree of satisfaction.

Sat., Sept. 20. —Arrived among my own people, just at night; found them praying together; went in, and gave them some account of God's dealings with me and my companions in the journey, which seemed affecting to them. I then prayed with them, and thought the divine presence was amongst us; divers were melted into tears, and seemed to have a sense of divine things. Being very weak, I was obliged soon to repair to my lodgings, and felt much worn out in the evening. Thus, God has carried me through the fatigues and perils of another journey to Susquehannah, and returned me again in safety, though under a great degree of bodily

indisposition. O that my soul were truly thankful for renewed instances of mercy! Many hardships and distresses I endured in this journey; but the Lord supported me under them all.

PART VIII.

AFTER HIS RETURN FROM HIS LAST JOURNEY TO SUSQUEHANNAH, UNTIL HIS DEATH.

HITHERTO Mr. Brainerd had kept a constant *diary*, giving an account of what passed from day to day, with very little interruption; but henceforward his diary is very much interrupted by his illness, under which he was often brought so low, as either not to be capable of writing, or not well able to bear the burden of a care so constant, as was requisite to recollect, every evening, what had passed in the day, and digest it, and set down an orderly account of it in writing. However, his *diary* was not wholly neglected; but he took care, from time to time, to take some notice in it of the most

206 THE LIFE OF

material things concerning himself and the state of his mind, even till within a few days of his death, as the reader will see afterwards.

Lord's day, Sept, 21, 1746. —I was so weak I could not preach, nor pretend to ride over to my people in the forenoon. In the afternoon, rode out; sat in my chair, and discoursed to my people from Rom. xiv. 7, 8. I was strengthened and helped in my discourse, and there appeared something agreeable in the assembly. I returned to my lodgings extremely tired, but thankful that I had been enabled to speak a word to my poor people I had been so long absent from. Was able to sleep very little this night, through weariness and pain. O how blessed should I be, if the little I do were all done with right views! O that, “whether I live, I might live to the Lord! “&c.

Sat., Sept. 27. —Spent this day, as well as the whole week past, under a great degree of bodily weakness, exercised with a violent cough, and a considerable fever; had no appetite to any kind of food, and frequently brought up what I eat, as soon as it was down; and oftentimes had little rest in my bed, by reason of pains in my breast and back; was able, however, to ride over to my people, about two miles, every day, and take some care of those who were then at work upon a small house for me to reside in amongst the Indians.¹ I was sometimes scarce able to walk, and never able to sit up the whole day, through the week. Was calm and composed, and but little exercised with melancholy damps, as in former seasons of weakness. Whether I should ever recover or no, seemed very doubtful; but this was many times a comfort to me, that *life* and *death* did not depend upon *my* choice; I was pleased to think, that He who is infinitely wise, had the determination of this matter, and that I had no trouble to consider and weigh things upon all sides, in order to make the choice, whether I would live or die. Thus my time was consumed; I had little strength to pray, none to write or read, and scarce any to meditate; but, through divine goodness. I could with great composure look *death* in the face, and frequently with sensible joy. O how blessed it is to be *habitually prepared* for death! The Lord grant that I may be *actually ready also!*

¹ This was the *fourth* house he built for his residence among the Indians. Besides that at Kaunaumeeke, and that at the Forks of Delaware, and another at Crosweeksung, he built one now at Cranberry.

Lord's day, Sept. 28. —Rode to my people, and, though under much weakness, attempted to preach from 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Discoursed about half an hour, at which season divine power seemed to attend the word; but, being extremely weak, I was obliged to desist, and after a turn of faintness, with much difficulty rode to my lodgings, where, betaking myself to my bed, I lay in a burning fever, and almost delirious, for several hours, till towards morning my fever went off with a violent sweat. I have often been feverish, and unable to rest quietly after preaching, but this was the most severe distressing turn that ever preaching brought upon me. Yet I felt perfectly at rest in my own mind, because I had made my utmost attempts to speak for God, and knew I could do no more.

Tues., Sept. 30. —Yesterday and to-day, was in the same weak state, or rather weaker than in days past; was scarce able to sit up half the day. Was in a composed frame of mind, remarkably free from dejection and melancholy damps; as God has been pleased, in great measure, to deliver me from these unhappy glooms, in the general course of my present weakness hitherto, and also from a peevish, froward spirit. And O how great a mercy is this! O that I might always be perfectly quiet in seasons of greatest weakness, although nature should sink and fail! O that I may always be able with utmost sincerity to say, "Lord, not my will, but thine, be done!" This, through grace, I can say at present, with regard to life or death, "The Lord do with me as seems good in his sight; that whether I live or die, I may glorify Him, who is "worthy to receive blessing, and honour, and dominion for ever. Amen."

Sat., Oct. 4. —Spent the former part of this week under a great degree of infirmity and disorder, as I had done several weeks before; was able, however, to ride a little every day, although unable to sit up half the day, till Thursday. Took some care daily of some persons at work upon my house. On Friday afternoon, found myself wonderfully revived and strengthened; and having some time before given notice to my people, and those of them at the Forks of Delaware in particular, that I designed, with leave of Providence, to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper upon the first Sabbath in October the Sabbath now approaching on Friday afternoon I preached, preparatory to the sacrament, from 2 Cor. xiii. 5, finishing what I had

203 THE LIFE OF

proposed to offer upon the subject the Sabbath before. The sermon was blessed of God to the stirring up religious affection, and a spirit of devotion, in the people of God, and to the greatly affecting one who had *backslidden* from God, which caused him to judge and condemn himself. I was surprisingly strengthened in my work, while I was speaking; but was obliged immediately after to repair to bed, being now removed into my own house among the Indians, which gave me such speedy relief and refreshment, as I could not well have lived without. Spent some time on Friday night in conversing with my people about divine things, as I lay upon my bed, and found my soul refreshed, though my body was weak. This being Saturday, I discoursed particularly with divers of the communicants; and this afternoon preached from Zech. xii. 10. There seemed to be a tender melting, and hearty mourning for

sin, in numbers in the congregation. My soul was in a comfortable frame, and I enjoyed freedom and assistance in public service; was myself, as well as most of the congregation, much affected with the humble confession, and apparent brokenheartedness, of the before-mentioned backslider; and could not but rejoice, that God had given him such a sense of his sin and un worthiness. Was extremely tired in the evening; but lay on my bed, and discoursed to my people.

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 i. 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 innocency 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

DAVID BRAINERD. 209

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. After sermon, baptized two persons. Then administered the Lord's Supper to near forty communicants, of the Indians, besides divers dear Christians of the white people. It seemed to be a season of divine power and grace, and numbers seemed to rejoice in God. O the sweet union and harmony then appearing among the religious people! My soul was refreshed; and my religious friends, of the white people, with me. After the sacrament, could scarcely get home, though it was not more than twenty rods, but was supported and led by my friends, and laid on my bed, where I lay in pain till some time in the evening; and then was able to sit up and discourse with friends. O how was this day spent in prayers and praises among my dear people! One might hear them, all the morning before public worship, and in the evening till near midnight, praying and singing praises to God, in one or other of their houses. My soul was refreshed, though my body was weak.

This week, he went (in a very low state) in two days to Elizabeth Town to attend the meeting of the Synod there, but was disappointed by its removal to New York. He continued in a very composed, comfortable frame of mind.

Sat., Oct. 11. —Towards night was seized with an ague, which was followed with a hard fever, and considerable pain; was treated with great kindness, and was ashamed to see so

much concern about so unworthy a creature as I knew myself to be. Was in a comfortable frame of mind, wholly submissive with regard to *life* or *death*. It was indeed a peculiar satisfaction to me to think that it was not *my* concern or business to determine whether I should live or die. I likewise felt peculiarly satisfied while under this uncommon degree of disorder, being now fully convinced of my being really weak, and unable to perform my work, whereas at other times my mind was perplexed with fears that I was a misimprover of time, by conceiting I was sick when I was

210 THE LIFE OF

not in reality so. O how precious is time! and how guilty it makes me feel when I think I have trifled away and misimproved it, or neglected to fill up each part of it with duty, to the utmost of my ability and capacity.

Lord's day, Oct. 12. —Was scarce able to sit up in the forenoon; in the afternoon, attended public worship, and was in a composed, comfortable frame.

Lord's day, Oct. 19. —Was scarcely able to do any thing at all in the week past, except that on Thursday I rode out about four miles, at which time I took cold. As I was able to do little or nothing, so I enjoyed not much spirituality, or lively religious affection, though at some times I longed much to be more fruitful and full of heavenly affection, and was grieved to see the hours slide away, while I could do nothing for God. Was able this week to attend public worship. Was composed and comfortable, willing either to die or live, but found it hard to be reconciled to the thoughts of living *useless*. O that I might never live to be a burden to God's creation, but that I might be allowed to repair *home* when my *sojourning* work is done!

This week, he went back to his Indians at Cranberry, to take some care of their spiritual and temporal concerns, and was much spent with riding, though he rode but a little way in a day.

Thurs., Oct. 23. —Went to my own house, and set things in order. Was very weak, and somewhat melancholy, laboured to do something, but had no strength, and was forced to lie down on my bed, very solitary.

Fri., Oct. 24. —Spent the day in overseeing and directing my people about mending their fence, and securing their wheat. Found that all their concerns of a secular nature depended upon me. Was somewhat refreshed in the evening, having been able to do something valuable in the daytime. O how it pains me to see time pass away, when I can do nothing to any purpose!

Sat., Oct. 25. —Visited some of my people, spent some time in writing, and felt much better in body than usual; when it was near night, I felt so well that I had thoughts of expounding, but in the evening was much disordered again, and spent the night in coughing and spitting of blood.

Lord's day, Oct. 26. —In the morning was exceeding

weak, spent the day till near night in pain to see my poor people wandering *as sheep not having a shepherd*, waiting and hoping to see me able to preach to them before night; it could not but distress me to see them in this case, and to find myself unable to attempt any thing for their spiritual benefit. But towards night, finding myself a little better, I called them together to my house, and sat down, and read and expounded Matt. v. 1-16. This discourse, though delivered in much weakness, was attended with power to many of the hearers, especially what was spoken upon the last of these verses, where I insisted on the infinite wrong done to religion by having our light become *darkness*, instead of *shining before men*. As many in the congregation were now deeply affected with a sense of their deficiency, in regard of a spiritual conversation that might recommend religion to others, and a spirit of concern and watchfulness seemed to be excited in them so there was one, in particular, that had fallen into the sin of drunkenness some time before, who was now deeply convinced of his sin, and the great dishonour done to religion by his misconduct, and discovered a great degree of grief and concern on that account. My soul was refreshed to see this. And though I had no strength to speak so much as I would have done, but was obliged to lie down on the bed, yet I rejoiced to see such an humble melting in the congregation, and that divine truths, though faintly delivered, were attended with so much efficacy upon the auditory.

Mon., Oct. 27. —Spent the day in overseeing and directing the Indians about mending the fence round their wheat; was able to walk with them, and contrive their business, all the forenoon. In the afternoon, was visited by two dear friends, and spent some time in conversation with them. Towards night, was able to walk out, and take care of the Indians again. In the evening, enjoyed a very peaceful frame.

Tues., Oct. 28. —Rode to Princetown, in a very weak state; had such a violent fever by the way, that I was forced to alight at a friend's house, and lie down for some time. Near night, was visited by Mr. Treat, Mr. Beaty and his wife, and another friend; my spirits were refreshed to see them, but I was surprised, and even ashamed, that they had taken so much pains as to ride thirty or forty miles to see me. Was able to sit up most of the evening, and spent the time in a very comfortable manner with my friends.

212 THE LIFE OF

Wed., Oct. 29. —Rode about ten miles with my friends that came yesterday to see me, and then parted with them all but one, who stayed on purpose to keep me company, and cheer my spirits. Was extremely weak, and very feverish, especially towards night, but enjoyed comfort and satisfaction.

Thurs., Oct. 30. —Rode three or four miles, to visit Mr. Wales; spent some time in an agreeable manner, in conversation, and though extremely weak, enjoyed a comfortable, composed frame of mind.

Fri., Oct. 31. —Spent the day among friends, in a comfortable frame of mind, though exceeding weak, and under a considerable fever.

Sat., Nov. 1. —Took leave of friends, after having spent the forenoon with them, and returned home to my own house. Was much disordered in the evening, and oppressed with my cough, which has now been constant for a long time, with a hard pain in my breast, and fever.

Lord's day, Nov. 2. —Was unable to preach, and scarcely able to sit up the whole day. Was grieved, and almost sunk, to see my poor people destitute of the means of grace, especially considering they could not read, and so were under great disadvantages for spending the Sabbath comfortably. O, methought, I could be contented to be sick, if my poor flock had a faithful pastor to feed them with spiritual knowledge! A view of their want of this was more afflictive to me than all my bodily illness.

Mon., Nov. 3. —Being now in so weak and low a state, that I was utterly incapable of performing my work, and having little hope of recovery, unless by much riding, I thought it my duty to take a lengthy journey into New England, and to divert myself among my friends, whom I had not now seen for a long time. And accordingly took leave of my congregation this day. Before I left my people, I visited them all in their respective houses, and discoursed to each one, as I thought most proper and suitable for their circumstances, and found great freedom and assistance in so doing. I scarcely left one house but some were in tears, and many were not only affected with my being about to leave them, but with the “solemn addresses I made them upon divine things, for I was helped to be *fervent in spirit*, while I discoursed to them. When I had thus gone through my congregation (which took me most of the day), and had taken leave of them, and of the school, I left home, and rode

DAVID BRAINERD. 213

about two miles, to the house where I lived in the summer past, and there lodged. Was refreshed this evening in that I had left my congregation so well disposed and affected, and that I had been so much assisted in making my farewell addresses to them.

Tues., Nov. 4. —Rode to Woodbridge, and lodged with Mr. Pierson, continuing still in a very weak state.

Wed., Nov. 5. —Rode to Elizabeth Town, intending, as soon as possible, to prosecute my journey into New England. But was, in an hour or two after my arrival, taken much worse.

After this, for near a week, was confined to my chamber, and most of the time to my bed, and then so far revived as to be able to walk about the house, but was still confined within doors.

In the beginning of this extraordinary turn of disorder, after my coming to Elizabeth Town, I was enabled through mercy to maintain a calm, composed, and patient spirit, as I had been before from the beginning of my weakness. After I had been in Elizabeth Town about a fortnight, and had so far recovered that I was able to walk about house, upon a day of thanksgiving kept in this place I was enabled to recall and recount over the mercies of God, in such a manner as greatly affected me, and filled me (I think) with thankfulness and praise

to God. Especially my soul praised him for his work of grace among the Indians, and the enlargement of his dear kingdom; my soul blessed God for what he is in himself, and adored him that he ever would display himself to creatures; I rejoiced that he was God, and longed that all should know it, and feel it, and rejoice in it. “Lord, glorify thyself,” was the desire and cry of my soul. O that *all people* might love and praise the blessed God, that he might have all possible honour and glory from the intelligent world! ¹

After this comfortable thanksgiving-season, I frequently enjoyed freedom and enlargement, and engagedness of soul in prayer, and was enabled to intercede with God for my dear congregation, very often for every family, and every person in particular; and it was often a great comfort to me that I could pray heartily to God for those to whom I could not speak, and whom I was not allowed to see. But at other times my spirits were so flat and low, and my bodily

214 THE LIFE OF

vigour so much wasted, that I had scarce any affections at all.

In December, I had revived so far as to be able to walk abroad and visit friends, and seemed to be on the gaining hand with regard to my health, in the main, until Lord’s day, December 21, at which time I went to the public worship; and it being sacrament day, I laboured much at the Lord’s table, to bring forth a certain corruption, and have it slain as being an *enemy* to God and my own soul; and could not but hope that I had gained some strength against this as well as other corruptions; and felt some brokenness of heart for my sin.

After this, having perhaps taken some cold, I began to decline as to bodily health; and continued to do so till the latter end of January 1746-7. And having a violent cough, a considerable fever, and asthmatic disorder, and no appetite for any manner of food, nor any power of digestion, I was reduced to so low a state, that my friends (I believe) generally despaired of my life; and some of them for some time together thought I could scarce live a day to an end. In this time I could think of nothing with any application of mind, and seemed to be in a great measure void of all affection, and was exercised with great temptations; but yet was not ordinarily afraid of death.

On Lord’s day, Feb. 1, though in a very weak and low state, I enjoyed a considerable deal of comfort and sweetness in divine things, and was enabled to plead and use arguments with God in prayer, I think, with a childlike spirit. That passage of Scripture occurred to my mind, and gave me great assistance, “If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” “This text I was helped to plead, and insist upon; and saw the divine faithfulness engaged for dealing with me better than any earthly parent can do with his child. This season so refreshed my soul, that my body seemed also to be a gainer by it; and from this time, I began gradually to amend. And as I recovered some strength, vigour, and spirit, I found at times some freedom and life in the exercises of devotion, and some longings after spirituality and a life of usefulness to the interests of the great Redeemer, although at other times, I was

¹ About this time he wrote the *seventh* letter, published at the end of this account of his life.

awfully barren and lifeless, and out of frame for the things of God; so that I was ready often to cry out, "O that it were with me as in months past!" that God had taken me

DAVID BRAINERD. 215

away in the midst of my usefulness, with a sudden stroke, that I might not have been under a necessity of trifling away time in diversions! O that I had never lived to spend so much precious time in so poor a manner, and to so little purpose! Thus I often reflected, was grieved, ashamed, and even confounded, sunk, and discouraged.

On Tues., Feb. 24, I was able to ride as far as Newark (having been confined within Elizabeth Town almost four months), and the next day returned to Elizabeth Town. My spirits were somewhat refreshed with the ride, though my body was weary.

On Sat., Feb. 28, was visited by an Indian of my own congregation, who brought me letters, and good news of the sober and good behaviour of my people in general; this refreshed my soul. I could not but soon retire and bless God for his goodness, and found, I trust, a truly thankful frame of spirit, that God seemed to be building up that congregation for himself.

On Wed., March 4, I met with reproof from a friend, which, although I thought I did not deserve it from him, yet was (I trust) blessed of God to make me more tenderly afraid of sin, more jealous over myself, and more concerned to keep both heart and life pure and unblameable; it likewise caused me to reflect on my past deadness, and want of spirituality, and to abhor myself, and look on myself most unworthy. This frame of mind continued the next day, and for several days after; I grieved to think, that in my necessary diversions I had not maintained more seriousness, solemnity, heavenly affection and conversation. And thus my spirits were often depressed and sunk; and yet, I trust, that reproof was made to be beneficial to me.

Wed., March 11, being kept in Elizabeth Town as a day of fasting and prayer, I was able to attend public worship; which was the first time I was able so to do after December 21. O how much weakness and distress did God carry me through in this space of time! But, *having obtained help from him*, I yet live. O that I could live more to his glory!

Lord's day, March 15. —Was able again to attend the public worship, and felt some earnest desires of being restored to the ministerial work; felt, I think, some spirit and life to speak for God.

Wed., March 18. —Rode out with a design to visit my people, and the next day arrived among them; was under great dejection in my journey.

216 THE LIFE OF

On Friday morning I rose early, walked about among my people, and inquired into their state and concerns, and found an additional weight and burden on my spirits upon hearing some things disagreeable. I endeavoured to go to God with my distresses, and made some kind of

lamentable complaint, and in a broken manner spread my difficulties before God; but, notwithstanding, my mind continued very gloomy. About ten o'clock I called my people together, and after having explained and sung a psalm, I prayed with them. There was a considerable deal of affection among them; I doubt not, in some instances, that which was more than merely natural.

This was the *last interview* that he ever had with his people. About eleven o'clock the same day he left them, and the next day came to Elizabeth Town; his melancholy remaining still, and he continued for a considerable time under a great degree of dejection through vapoury disorders.

Sat., March 28. —Was taken this morning with violent griping pains. These pains were extreme and constant for several hours; so that it seemed impossible for me, without a miracle, to live twenty-four hours in such distress. I lay confined to my bed the whole day, and in distressing pain all the former part of it, but it pleased God to bless means for the abatement of my distress. Was exceedingly weakened by this pain, and continued so for several days following; being exercised with a fever, cough, and nocturnal sweats. In this distressed case, so long as my head was free of vapoury confusions, *death* appeared agreeable to me; I looked on it as the end of toils, and an entrance into a place “where the weary are at rest; “and I think I had some relish of the entertainments of the heavenly state; so that by these I was allured and drawn, as well as driven by the fatigues of life. O how happy it is to be drawn by desires of a state of perfect holiness!

Sat., Ap. 4. —Was sunk and dejected, very restless and uneasy, by reason of the misimprovement of time, and yet knew not what to do. I longed to spend time in fasting and prayer, that I might be delivered from indolence and coldness in the things of God; but, alas, I had not bodily strength for these exercises! O how blessed a thing is it to enjoy peace of conscience! but how dreadful, a want of

DAVID BRAINERD. 217

inward peace and composure of soul! It is impossible, I find, to enjoy this happiness without redeeming time, and maintaining a spiritual frame of mind

Lord's day, Ap. 5. —It grieved me to find myself so inconceivably barren. My soul thirsted for grace, but, alas, how far was I from obtaining what I saw so exceeding excellent! I was ready to despair of ever being a holy creature, and yet my soul was desirous of *following hard after God*; but never did I see myself so far from *having apprehended, or being already perfect*, as at this time. The Lord's Supper being this day administered, I attended the ordinance. And though I saw in myself a dreadful emptiness and want of grace, and saw myself as it were at an infinite distance from that purity which is becoming the gospel yet, in the season of communion, especially in the time of the distribution of the bread, I enjoyed some warmth of affection, and felt a tender *love to the brethren*, and, I think, to the glorious Redeemer, the *first-born* among them. I endeavoured then to *bring forth* mine and *his enemies*, and *slay them before him*; and found great freedom in begging deliverance from this

spiritual death, as well as in asking divine favours for my friends, and congregation, and the church of Christ in general.

Tues., Ap. 7. —In the afternoon, rode to Newark, in order to marry the Reverend Mr. Dickinson;¹ and in the evening, performed that work. Afterwards rode home to Elizabeth Town, in a pleasant frame, full of composure and sweetness.

Thurs., Ap. 9. —Attended the ordination of Mr. Tucker,² and afterwards the examination of Mr. Smith; was in a comfortable frame of mind this day, and felt my heart, I think, sometimes in a spiritual frame.

Fri., Ap. 10. —Spent the forenoon in Presbyterial business; in the afternoon, rode to Elizabeth Town; found my

218 THE LIFE OF

brother John³ there: spent some time in conversation with him, but was extremely weak and outdone, my spirits considerably sunk, and my mind dejected.

Mon., Ap. 13. —Assisted in examining my brother. In the evening, was in a solemn, devout frame; but was much overdone and oppressed with a violent headache.

Tues., Ap. 14. —Was able to do little or nothing; spent some time with Mr. Byram and other friends. This day my brother went to my people.

Wed., Ap. 15. —Found some freedom at the throne of grace several times this day. In the afternoon, was very weak, and spent the time to very little purpose; and yet in the evening, had (I thought) some religious warmth and spiritual desires in prayer; my soul seemed to go forth after God, and take complacency in his divine perfections. But, alas! afterwards awfully let down my watch, and grew careless and secure.

Thurs., Ap. 16. —Was in bitter anguish of soul, in the morning, such as I have scarce ever felt, with a sense of sin and guilt. I continued in distress the whole day, attempting to pray wherever I went; and indeed could not help so doing; but looked upon myself as so vile, I

¹ The learned and very excellent, Mr. Jonathan Dickson, pastor of a church in Elizabeth Town, president of the College of New Jersey, and one of the correspondents of the Honourable Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge: who had a great esteem for Mr. Brainerd, and had kindly entertained him in his house during his sickness in the winter past; and who, after a short illness, died in the next ensuing October, two days before Mr. Brainerd.

² A worthy, pious young man, who lived in the ministry but a very short time; he died at Stratfield in Connecticut the December following his ordination, being a little while after Mr. Brainerd's death at Northampton. He was taken ill on a journey returning from a visit to his friends at Milton (in the Massachusetts), which, as I take it, was his native place, and Harvard College the place of his education.

³ This brother of his had been sent for by the *correspondents*, to take care of and instruct Mr. Brainerd's congregation of Indians, he being obliged by his illness to be absent from them. And he continued to take care of them till Mr. Brainerd's death; and after his death, was ordained his *successor* in his mission.

dared not look anybody in the face, and was even grieved that anybody should show me any respect, or at least that they should be so deceived as to think I deserved it.

Fri., Ap. 17. —In the evening, could not but think that God helped me to “draw near to the throne of grace,” though most unworthy, and gave me a sense of his favour, which gave me inexpressible support and encouragement; though I scarcely dared to hope the mercy was real, it appeared so great, yet could not but rejoice that ever God should discover his reconciled face to such a vile sinner. Shame and confusion at times covered me; and then hope, and joy, and admiration of divine goodness gained the ascendant. Sometimes I could not but admire the divine goodness, that the Lord had not let me fall into all the grossest, vilest acts of sins and open scandal that could be thought of; and felt myself so necessitated to praise God, that this was ready for a little while to swallow up my shame and pressure of spirit OF account of my sins.

DAVID BRAINERD. 219

After this his dejection and pressure of spirit returned, and he remained under it the next two days.

Mon., Ap. 20. —Was in a very disordered state, and kept my bed most of the day. I enjoyed a little more comfort than in several of the preceding days. This day I arrived at the age of twenty-nine years.

Tues., Ap. 21. —I set out on my journey for New England, in order (if it might be the will of God) to recover my health by riding; travelled to New York, and there lodged.

This proved his final departure from New Jersey. He travelled slowly, and arrived among his friends at East Haddam about the beginning of May. There is very little account in his diary of the time that passed from his setting out on this journey to May 10. He speaks of his sometimes finding his heart rejoicing in the glorious perfections of God, and longing to live to him; but complains of the unfixedness of his thoughts, and their being easily diverted from divine subjects, and cries out of his leanness, as testifying against him in the loudest manner. And concerning those diversions he was obliged to use for his health, he says that he sometimes found he could use diversions with “singleness of heart,” aiming at the glory of God, but that he also found there was a necessity of great care and watchfulness, lest he should lose that spiritual temper of mind in his diversions, and lest they should degenerate into what was merely selfish, without any supreme aim at the glory of God in them.

Lord’s day, May 10. —[At Had-lime]. I could not but feel some measure of gratitude to God at this time (wherein I was much exercised), that he had always disposed me in my ministry to insist on the great doctrines of *regeneration*, the *new creature*, *faith in Christ*, *progressive sanctification*, *supreme love to God*, *living entirely to the glory of God*, *being not our own*, and the like. God has helped me to see in the surest manner from time to time, that these, and the like doctrines necessarily connected with them, are the only *foundation* of safety and salvation for perishing sinners; and that those divine dispositions, which are consonant hereto, are that *holiness* “without which no man shall see the Lord:” the exercise of these

Godlike tempers wherein the soul acts in a kind of concert with God, and would be and do every thing that is pleasing to God; this, I saw, would stand by

220 THE LIFE OF

the soul in a dying hour, for God must I think *deny himself*, if he cast away *his own image*, even the soul that is one in desires with himself.

Lord's day, May 17. —[At Millington.] Spent the forenoon at home, being unable to attend the public worship. At this time, God gave me some affecting sense of my own vileness, and the exceeding sinfulness of my heart, that there seemed to be nothing but sin and corruption within me. “Innumerable evils compassed me about;” my want of spirituality and holy living, my neglect of God, and living to myself. All the abominations of my heart and life seemed to be open to my view, and I had nothing to say but “God be merciful to me a sinner.” Towards noon, I saw that the grace of God in Christ is infinitely free towards sinners, and such sinners as I was; I also saw that God is the supreme good, that in his presence is life; and I began to long to die, that I might *be with him*, in a state of freedom from all sin. O how a small glimpse of his excellency refreshed my soul! O how worthy is the blessed God to be loved, adored, and delighted in, for himself, for his own divine excellencies!

Though I felt much dulness and want of a spirit of prayer this week, yet I had some glimpses of the excellency of divine things; and especially one morning, in secret meditation and prayer, the excellency and beauty of holiness, as a likeness to the glorious God, was so discovered to me, that I began to long earnestly to be in that world where holiness dwells in perfection; and I seemed to long for this perfect holiness, not so much for the sake of my own happiness (although I saw clearly that this was the greatest, yea, the only happiness of the soul), as that I might please God, live entirely to him, and glorify him to the utmost stretch of my rational powers and capacities.

Lord's day, May 24. —[At Long-Meadow, in Springfield]. Could not but think, as I have often remarked to others, that much more of *true religion* consists in *deep humility, brokenness of heart, and an abasing sense of barrenness and want of grace and holiness*, than most who are called *Christians* imagine — especially those who have been esteemed the converts of the *late day* — many of whom seem to know of no other religion but elevated *joys and affections*, arising only from some flights of *imagination*, or some *suggestion* made to their mind, of *Christ's* being *their's*, God's *loving them*, and the like.

DAVID BRAINERD. 221

On Thursday, May 28, he came from Long-Meadow to Northampton, appearing vastly better than, by his account, he had been in the winter, indeed so well, that he was able to ride twenty-five miles in a day, and to walk half a mile, and appeared cheerful, and free from melancholy; but yet undoubtedly at that time he was in a confirmed, incurable consumption.

I had had much opportunity, before this, of particular information concerning him, from many that were well acquainted with him, and had myself once an opportunity of

considerable conversation and some acquaintance with him, at New Haven, near four years before, in the time of the commencement, when he offered that confession to the rector of the college that has been already mentioned in this history (I being one he was pleased then several times to consult on that affair); but now I had opportunity for a more full acquaintance with him. I found him remarkably sociable, pleasant and entertaining in his conversation, yet solid, savoury, spiritual, and very profitable; appearing meek, modest, and humble, far from any stiffness, moroseness, superstitious demureness, or affected singularity in speech or behaviour, and seeming to nauseate all such things. We enjoyed not only the benefit of his conversation, but had the comfort and advantage of hearing him pray in the family, from time to time. His manner of praying was very agreeable, most becoming a worm of the dust and a disciple of Christ addressing an infinitely great and holy God and Father of mercies; not with florid expressions, or a studied eloquence; not with any intemperate vehemence, or indecent boldness; at the greatest distance from any appearance of ostentation, and from every thing that might look as though he meant to recommend himself to those that were about him, or set himself off to their acceptance; free, too, from vain repetitions, without impertinent excursions, or needless multiplying of words. He expressed himself with the strictest propriety, with weight, and pungency; and yet what his lips uttered seemed to flow from the *fulness of his heart*, as deeply impressed with a great and solemn sense of our necessities, unworthiness, and dependence, and of God's infinite greatness, excellency, and sufficiency, rather than merely from a warm and fruitful brain, pouring out good expressions. And I know not that ever I heard him so much as ask a blessing or return thanks at table, but there was something remarkable to be observed both in the matter and

222 THE LIFE OF

manner of the performance. In his prayers, he insisted much on the prosperity of Zion, the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, and the flourishing and propagation of religion among the Indians. And he generally made it one petition in his prayer, "that we might not out-live our usefulness."

Lord's day, May 31. —[At Northampton]. I had little inward sweetness in religion, most of the week past, not realizing and beholding spiritually the *glory of God, and the blessed Redeemer*, from whence always arise my comforts and joys in religion, if I have any at all; and if I cannot so behold the excellencies and perfections of God, as to cause me to rejoice in him for what he is *in himself*, I have no solid foundation for joy. To rejoice only because I apprehend I have *an interest in Christ*, and shall be finally saved, is a poor, mean business indeed.

This week, he consulted Dr Mather, at my house, concerning his illness; who plainly told him that there were great evidences of his being in a confirmed *consumption*, and that he could give him no encouragement that he should ever recover. But it seemed not to occasion the least discomposure in him, nor to make any manner of alteration as to the cheerfulness and serenity of his mind, or the freedom or pleasantness of his conversation.

Lord's day, June 7. —My attention was greatly engaged, and my soul so drawn forth this day, by what I heard of the "exceeding preciousness of the saving grace of God's Spirit," that

it almost overcame my body, in my weak state. I saw that true grace is exceeding precious indeed; that it is very rare; and that there is but a very small degree of it, even where the reality of it is to be found; at least, I saw this to be *my* case.

In the preceding week, I enjoyed some comfortable seasons of meditation. One morning, the cause of God appeared exceeding precious to me. The Redeemer's kingdom is all that is valuable in the earth, and I could not but long for the promotion of it in the world; I saw also, that this cause is God's; that he has an infinitely greater regard and concern for it than I could possibly have; that if I have any true love to this blessed interest, it is only a drop derived from that ocean; hence I was ready to "lift up

DAVID BRAINERD. 223

my head with joy," and conclude, "Well, if God's cause be so dear and precious to him, he will promote it." And thus I did as it were rest on God, that surely he would promote that which was so agreeable to his own will; though the time *when*, must still be left to his sovereign pleasure.

He was advised by physicians still to continue riding, as what would tend, above any other means, to prolong his life. He was at a loss, for some time, which way to bend his course next, but finally determined to ride from hence to Boston; we having concluded that one of this family should go with him, and be helpful to him in his weak and low state.

Tues., June 9. —I set out on a journey from Northampton to Boston. Travelled slowly, and got some acquaintance with divers ministers on the road.

I having now continued to ride for some considerable time together, felt myself much better than I had formerly done; and I found, that in proportion to the prospect I had of being restored to a state of usefulness, so I desired the continuance of life; but *death* appeared inconceivably more desirable to me than a *useless life*; yet blessed be God, I found my heart at times fully resigned and reconciled to this greatest of afflictions, if God saw fit thus to deal with me.

Fri., July 12. —I arrived in Boston this day, somewhat fatigued with my journey. Observed that there is no rest but in God; fatigues of body, and anxieties of mind, attend us both in town and country; no place is exempted.

Lord's day, June 14. —I enjoyed some enlargement and sweetness in family prayer, as well as in secret exercises; God appeared excellent, his ways full of pleasure and peace, and all I wanted was a spirit of holy fervency to live to him.

Wed., June 17. —This, and the two preceding days, I spent mainly in visiting the ministers of the town, and was treated with great respect by them.

On Thurs., June 18, I was taken exceeding ill, and brought to the gates of death, by the breaking of small ulcers in my lungs, as my physician supposed. In this extreme weak state I

continued for several weeks, and was frequently reduced so low, as to be utterly speechless, and not able so much as to whisper a word; and even after I had so far revived, as to walk about house, and to step out of doors, I was exercised every day with a faint turn, which con-

224 THE LIFE OF

tinued usually four or five hours; at which times, though I was not utterly speechless, so but that I could say *yes* or *no*, yet I could not converse at all, nor speak one sentence, without making stops for breath; and divers times in this season my friends gathered round my bed, to see me breathe my last, which they looked for every moment, as I myself also did.

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 demonstrating 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.

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 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

DAVID BRAINERD. 225

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.

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, 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

226 THE LIFE OF

of wondrous grace), the *imaginings*, 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 heats 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.

As God was pleased to afford me clearness of thought, and composure of mind, almost continually, for several weeks together, under my great weakness; so he enabled me, in some

measure, to improve my time (as I hope) to valuable purposes, I was enabled to write a number of important *letters*, to friends in remote places;¹ and sometimes I wrote when I was speechless, *i.e.* unable to maintain conversation with anybody, though perhaps I was able to speak a word or two so as to be heard. At this season also, while I was confined at Boston, I read with care and attention some papers of old Mr. Shepard's lately come to light, and designed for the press; and as I was desired, and greatly urged, made some corrections, where the sense was left dark for want of a word or two. 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

DAVID BRAINERD. 227

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*, 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, endeavouring 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.

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 country. 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.²

¹ Among these are the *eighth*, *ninth*, and *tenth* letters, at the end of this history.

² I have had advantage, for the more full information of his conduct and conversation, the entertainment he met with, and what passed relating to him while in Boston; as he was constantly attended, during his continuance there, by one of my children, in order to his assistance in his illness.

Also the honourable commissioners in Boston, of the in-

228 THE LIFE OF

corporated society in London, for propagating the gospel in New England and parts adjacent, having newly had committed to them a legacy of the late reverend and famous Dr Daniel Williams of London, for the support of *two missionaries* to the heathen, were pleased, while he was in Boston, to consult him about a mission to those Indians called the *Six Nations*, particularly about the qualifications requisite in a missionary to those Indians; and were so satisfied with his sentiments on this head, and had that confidence in his faithfulness, and his judgment and discretion in things of this nature, that they desired him to undertake to find and recommend a couple of persons fit to be employed in this business, and very much left the matter with him.

Likewise certain pious and generously-disposed gentlemen in Boston, being moved by the wonderful narrative of his labours and success among the Indians at New Jersey, and more especially by their conversation with him on the same subject, took opportunity to inquire more particularly into the state and necessities of his congregation, and the school among the Indians, with a charitable intention of contributing something of their substance to promote the excellent design of the advancement of the interests of Christianity among the Indians; and understanding that there was a want of Bibles in the school, three dozen of Bibles were immediately procured, and £14 in bills (of the old tenor) given over and above, besides more large benedictions made afterwards, which I shall have occasion to mention in their proper place.

Mr. Brainerd's restoration from his extremely low state in Boston so as to go abroad again and to travel, was very unexpected to him and his friends. My daughter, who was with him, writes thus concerning him, in a letter dated June 23: —“On Thursday, he was very ill with a violent fever, and extreme pain in his head and breast, and, at turns, delirious. So he remained till Saturday evening, when he seemed to be in the agonies of death; the family was up with him till one or two o'clock, expecting every hour would be his last. On Sabbath-day he was a little revived, his head was better, but very full of pain, and exceeding sore at his breast, much put to it for breath, &c. Yesterday, he was better upon all accounts. Last night, he slept but little. This morning, he is much worse. Dr Pynchon says, he has no hopes of his life; nor does he think it likely he will ever come out of the chamber; though he says, he may be able to come to Northampton.”

DAVID BRAINERD. 229

In another letter, dated June 29, she says as follows: “Mr. Brainerd has not so much pain nor fever, since I last wrote, as before: yet he is extremely weak and low, and very faint, expecting every day will be his last. He says, it is impossible for him to live, for want of life. He has hardly vigour enough to draw his breath. I went this morning into town, and when I came home, Mr. Bromfield said, he never expected I should see him alive; for he lay two hours, as they thought, dying; one could scarcely tell whether he was alive or not; he was not able to speak for some time, but now is much as he was before. The doctor thinks he will

drop away in such a turn. Mr. Brainerd says, he never felt any thing so much like *dissolution*, as what he felt today, and says, he never had any conception of its being possible for any creature to be alive, and yet so weak as he is from day to day. Dr Pyncheon says, he should not be surprised if he should so recover as to live half a year; nor would it surprise him if he should die in half a day. Since I began to write, he is not so well, having had a faint turn again; yet patient and resigned, having no distressing fears, but the contrary.”

His physician, the Honourable Joseph Pyncheon, Esq., when he visited him in his extreme illness in Boston, attributed his sinking so suddenly into a state so extremely low, and nigh unto death, to the breaking of ulcers, that had been long gathering in his lungs (as Mr. Brainerd himself intimates in a forementioned passage in his diary), and their discharging and diffusing their purulent matter; which, while nature was labouring and struggling to throw off, that could be done no otherwise, than by a gradual straining of it through the small vessels of those vital parts; this occasioned a high fever, and violent coughing, and threw the whole frame of nature into the utmost disorder, and brought it near to a dissolution. But he supposed, if the strength of nature held till the lungs had this way gradually cleared themselves of this matter, he might revive, and continue better, till new ulcers gathered and broke; but then would surely sink again; and that there was no hope of his recovery; but (as he expressed himself to one of my neighbours, who at that time saw him in Boston) he was as certainly a dead man, as if he was shot through the heart.

But so it was ordered in divine providence, that the strength of nature held out through this great conflict, so

230 THE LIFE OF

as just to escape the grave at that turn; and then he revived, to the astonishment of all that knew his case.

After he began to revive, he was visited by his youngest brother, Mr. Israel Brainerd, a student at Yale College, who having heard of his extreme illness, went from thence to Boston, in order to see him, if he might find him there alive, which he but little expected.

This visit was attended with a mixture of joy and sorrow to Mr. Brainerd. He greatly rejoiced to see his brother, especially because he had desired an opportunity of some religious conversation with him before he died. But this meeting was attended with sorrow, as his brother brought to him the sorrowful tidings of his sister Spencer’s death at Haddam —a sister between whom and him had long subsisted a peculiarly dear affection, and much intimacy in spiritual matters, and whose house he used to make his home when he went to Haddam, his native place. He had heard nothing of her sickness till this report of her death. But he had these comforts, together with the tidings, —viz., a confidence of her being gone to heaven, and an expectation of his soon meeting her there. His brother continued with him till he left the town, and came with him from thence to Northampton.

Concerning the last Sabbath Mr. Brainerd spent in Boston, he writes in his *diary* as follows.

Lord's day, July 19. —I was just able to attend public worship, being carried to the house of God in a chaise. Heard Dr Sewall preach in the forenoon; partook of the Lord's Supper at this time. In this sacrament, I saw astonishing divine *wisdom* displayed; such wisdom as I saw required the tongues of angels and glorified saints to celebrate; it seemed to me I never should do any thing at adoring the infinite *wisdom* of God discovered in the contrivance of man's redemption, until I arrived at a world of perfection; yet I could not help striving to "call upon my soul, and all within me, to bless the name of God." In the afternoon heard Mr. Prince preach. I saw more of God in the *wisdom* discovered in the plan of man's redemption, than I saw of any other of his perfections, through the whole day.

He left Boston the next day. But before he came away, he had occasion to bear a very full, plain, and open testimony against that opinion, that the *essence* of saving *faith* lies in

DAVID BRAINERD. 231

believing that Christ died for me in particular, and that this is the *first* act of faith in a true believer's closing with Christ. He did it in a long conference he had with a gentleman, that has very publicly and strenuously appeared to defend that tenet. He had this discourse with him in the presence of a number of considerable persons who came to visit Mr. Brainerd before he left the town, and to take their leave of him. In which debate, he made this plain declaration (at the same time confirming what he said by many arguments), that the *essence* of saving *faith* was wholly left out of that definition of saving faith which that gentleman has published; and that the faith which he had *defined*, had nothing of God in it, nothing above nature, nor indeed above the power of the devils; and that all such as had *this* faith, and had *no better*, though they might have this to never so high a degree, would surely perish. And he declared also, that he never had greater *assurance* of the *falseness* of the principles of those that maintained *such* a faith, and of their dangerous and destructive tendency, or a more affecting sense of the great delusion and misery of those that depended on getting to heaven by such a faith (while they had *no better*) than he lately had when he was supposed to be at the point to *die*, and expected every minute to pass into *eternity*. Mr. Brainerd's discourse at this time, and the forcible reasonings by which he confirmed what he asserted, appeared to be greatly to the satisfaction of those present, as several of them took occasion expressly to manifest to him before they took leave of him.

When this conversation was ended, having bid an affectionate farewell to his friends, he set out in the cool of the afternoon on his journey to Northampton, attended by his brother, and my daughter that went with him to Boston; and would have been accompanied out of the town by a number of gentlemen, besides that honourable person who gave him his company for some miles on that occasion, as a testimony of their esteem and respect, had not his aversion to any thing of pomp and show prevented it.

Sat., July 25. —I arrived here at Northampton, having set out from Boston on Monday, about four o'clock, P.M. In this journey, I rode about sixteen miles a-day, one day with another. Was sometimes extremely tired and faint on the road, so that it seemed impossible for me to proceed any further; at other times I was considerably better, and felt some freedom both of body and mind.

Lord's day, July 26. —This day, I saw clearly that I should never be *happy*, yea, that God himself could not make me happy, unless I could be in a capacity to “please and glorify him for ever; “take away *this*, and admit me into all the fine *heavens* that can be conceived of by men or angels, and I should still be *miserable* for ever.

Though he had so far revived as to be able to travel thus far, yet he manifested no expectation of recovery; he supposed, as his physician did, that his being brought so near to death at Boston, was owing to the breaking of ulcers in his lungs; he told me that he had had several such ill turns before, only not to so high a degree, but, as he supposed, owing to the same cause; and that he was brought lower and lower every time; and it appeared to him, that in his last sickness (in Boston) he was brought as low as it was possible and yet live; and that he had not the least expectation of surviving the next return of this illness; but still appeared perfectly calm in the prospect of death.

On Wednesday morning, the week after he came to Northampton, he took leave of his brother Israel, and never expected to see him again in this world; he now setting out from hence on his journey to New Haven.

When Mr. Brainerd came hither, he had so much strength as to be able, from day to day, to ride out two or three miles, and to return, and sometimes to pray in the family; but from this time he gradually but sensibly decayed, and became weaker and weaker.

While he was here, his conversation from first to last was much on the same subjects as it had been when in Boston; he was much in speaking of the nature of *true religion* of heart and practice, as distinguished from its various *counterfeits*; expressing his great concern that the latter did so much prevail in many places. He often manifested his great abhorrence of all such *doctrines* and *principles* in religion, as in anywise favoured of, and had any (though but a remote) tendency to, Antinomianism of all such notions as seemed to diminish the necessity of holiness of life, or to abate men's regard to the commands of God, and a strict, diligent, and universal practice of virtue and piety, under a pretence of depreciating our works, and magnifying God's free grace. He spake often, with much detestation, of such *experiences* and pretended *discoveries* and *joys*, as have nothing of the nature of *sanctification* in them, and do not

DAVID BRAINERD. 233

tend to strictness, tenderness, and diligence in religion, and meekness and benevolence towards mankind, and an humble behaviour; and he also declared that he looked on such pretended *humility* as worthy of no regard, that was not manifested by *modesty of conduct* and *conversation*. He spake often, with abhorrence, of the spirit and practice that appears among the greater part of *separatists* at this day in the land, particularly those in the eastern parts of Connecticut; in their condemning and separating from the *standing* ministry and churches, their crying down *learning* and a *learned* ministry, their notion of an *immediate*

call to the work of the ministry, and the forwardness of *laymen* to set up themselves as public teachers. He had been much conversant in the eastern part of Connecticut (his native place being near to it), when the same principles, notion, and spirit began to operate, which have since prevailed to a greater height; and had acquaintance with some of those persons who are become heads and leaders of the *separatists*; he had also been conversant with persons of the same way elsewhere; and I heard him say, once and again, he knew by his acquaintance with this sort of people, that what was chiefly and most generally in repute among *them* as the *power of godliness*, was an entirely *different* thing from that true vital piety recommended in the *Scriptures*, and had *nothing in it* of that nature. He manifested a great dislike of a disposition in persons to much *noise* and *show* in religion, and affecting to be abundant in proclaiming and publishing their own *experiences*; though at the same time he did not condemn, but approved of Christians speaking of their own experiences on some occasions, and to some persons, with due modesty and discretion. He *himself* sometimes, while at my house, spake of his own experiences; but it was always with apparent *reserve*, and in the exercise of care and judgment with respect to occasions, persons, and circumstances. He mentioned some remarkable things of his own religious experience to two young gentlemen, candidates for the ministry, who watched with him (each at a different time) when he was very low, and not far from his end; but he desired both of them not to speak of what he had told them till *after his death*.

The things which were the subject of that debate I mentioned before that he had with a certain gentleman, the day he left Boston, seemed to lie with much weight on his mind after he came hither; and he began to write a *letter* to that

234 THE LIFE OF

gentleman, expressing his sentiments concerning the dangerous tendency of some of the tenets he had expressed in conversation, and in the writings he had published, with the considerations by which the exceeding hurtful nature of those notions is evident; but he had not strength to finish his letter.

After he came hither, as long as he lived, he was much in speaking of that future prosperity of Zion that is so often foretold and promised in the scripture; it was a theme he delighted to dwell upon; and his mind seemed to be carried forth with earnest concern about it, and intense desires that religion might speedily and abundantly revive and flourish; though he had not the least expectation of recovery, yea, the nearer death advanced, and the more the symptoms of its approach increased, still the more did his mind seem to be taken up with this subject. He told me, when near his end, that he never in all his life had his mind so led forth in desires and earnest prayers for the flourishing of *Christ's kingdom* on earth, as since he was brought so exceedingly low at Boston. He seemed much to wonder, that there appeared no more of a disposition in ministers and people to pray for the flourishing of religion through the world; that so little a part of their *prayers* was generally taken up about it, in their families, and elsewhere; and particularly, he several times expressed his wonder, that there appeared no more forwardness to comply with the *proposal* lately made, in a memorial from a number of ministers in Scotland, and sent over into America, *for united extraordinary prayer*, among Christ's ministers and people, for the *coming of Christ's kingdom*; and he sent

it as his dying advice to *his own congregation*, that they should practise agreeably to that proposal.¹

Though he was constantly exceeding weak, yet there appeared in him a continual care well to improve *time*, and fill it up with something that might be profitable, and in some respect for the glory of God or the good of men: either profitable conversation, or writing letters to absent friends, or noting something in his diary, or looking over his for-

DAVID BRAINERD. 235

mer writings, correcting them, and preparing them to be left in the hands of others at his death, or giving some directions concerning the future conducting and management of his people, or employment in secret devotions. He seemed never to be easy, however ill, if he was not doing something for God, or in his service.

After he came hither, he wrote a *preface* to a *diary* of the famous Mr. Shepard (in those papers before mentioned, lately found), having been much urged to it by those gentlemen in Boston who had the care of the publication; which diary, with his *preface*, has since been published.²

In his diary for Lord's day, Aug. 9, he speaks of longing desires after *death*, through "a sense of the excellency of a state of *perfection*."

In his diary for Lord's day, Aug. 16, he speaks of his having so much refreshment of *soul* in the house of God, that it seemed also to refresh his *body*. And this is not only noted in his diary, but was very observable to others; it was very apparent, not only that his *mind* was exhilarated with inward consolation, but also that his *animal* spirits and *bodily* strength seemed to be remarkably restored, as though he had forgot his illness. But this was the last time that ever he attended public worship on the Sabbath.

On Tuesday morning that week (I being absent on a journey), he prayed with my family, but not without much difficulty, for want of bodily strength; and this was the last family prayer that ever he made.

He had been wont, till now, frequently to ride out two or three miles; but this week, on Thursday, was the last time he ever did so.

Lord's day, Aug. 23. —This morning, I was considerably refreshed with the thought, yea, the hope and expectation of the *enlargement of Christ's kingdom*; and I could not but hope, the time was at hand when Babylon the great would *fall*, and *rise no more*; this led me to some

¹ His congregation, since this, have with great cheerfulness and unanimity fallen in with this advice, and have practised agreeably to the proposal from Scotland, and have at times appeared with uncommon engagedness and fervency of spirit in their meetings and united devotions, pursuant to that proposal. Also the presbyteries of New York, and New Brunswick, since this, have with one consent fallen in with the proposal, as likewise some others of God's people in those parts.

² A part of this *preface* is inserted in the *appendix* to this history, p. 279.

spiritual meditations, that were very refreshing to me. I was unable to attend public worship, either part of the day; but God was pleased to afford me fixedness and satisfaction in divine thoughts. Nothing so refreshes my soul, as when I can *go to God, yea, to God my exceeding joy*. When he is so, sensibly, to my soul, O how unspeakably delightful is this! In the week past, I had divers turns of inward refreshing;

236 THE LIFE OF

though my body was inexpressibly weak, followed continually with agues and fevers. Sometimes my soul centred in God, as my only *portion*, and I felt that I should be for ever unhappy, if *he* did not *reign*; I saw the sweetness and happiness of being *his* subject, at *his* disposal. This made all my difficulties quickly vanish.

From this Lord's day, viz., August 23, I was troubled very much with vapoury disorders, and could neither write nor read, and could scarcely live; although, through mercy, was not so much oppressed with heavy melancholy and gloominess, as at many other times.

Till this week he had been wont to lodge in a room above stairs; but he now grew so weak, that he was no longer able to go up stairs and down. Friday, August 28, was the last time he ever went above stairs; henceforward he betook himself to a lower room.

On Wednesday, September 2, being the day of our public lecture, he seemed to be refreshed with seeing the neighbouring ministers that came hither to the lecture, and expressed a great desire once more to go to the house of God on that day; and accordingly rode to the meeting, and attended divine service, while the Rev. Mr. Woodbridge of Hatfield preached. He signified that he supposed it to be the last time that ever he should attend the public worship; as it proved. And indeed it was the last time that ever he went out at our gate alive.

On the Saturday evening next following, he was unexpectedly visited by his brother Mr. John Brainerd, who came to see him from New Jersey. He was much refreshed by this unexpected visit, this brother being peculiarly dear to him; and he seemed to rejoice in a devout and solemn manner to see him, and to hear the comfortable tidings he brought concerning the state of his dear congregation of Christian Indians; and a circumstance of this visit that he was exceeding glad of was, that his brother brought him some of his private writings from New Jersey, and particularly his diary that he had kept for many years past.

Lord's day, Sept. 6. —I began to read some of my private writings, which my brother brought me; and was considerably refreshed with what I met with in them.

Mon., Sept. 7. —I proceeded further in reading my old private writings, and found they had the same effect upon

DAVID BRAINERD. 237

me as before; I could not but rejoice and bless God for what passed long ago, which without writing had been entirely lost.

This evening, when I was in great distress of body, my soul longed that God should be glorified; I saw there was no heaven out this. I could not but speak to the bystanders then of the only *happiness*, viz., *pleasing* God. O that I could for ever live to God! The day, I trust, is at hand, the perfect day: O the day of deliverance from all sin!

Lord's day, Sept. 13. —I was much refreshed and engaged in meditation and writing, and found a heart to act for God. My spirits were refreshed, and my soul delighted to do something for God.

On the evening following that Lord's day, his feet began to appear sensibly swelled, thenceforward swelled more and more, a symptom of his dissolution coming on.

The next day, his brother John left him, being obliged to return to New Jersey on some business of great importance and necessity, intending to return again with all possible speed, hoping to see his brother yet once more in the land of the living.

Mr. Brainerd having now, with much deliberation, considered of the important affair forementioned, left with him by the honourable commissioners in Boston, of the corporation in London for the propagation of the gospel in New England and parts adjacent, viz., the fixing upon and recommending two persons proper to be employed as missionaries to the Six Nations, he about this time wrote a letter, recommending two young gentlemen of his acquaintance to those commissioners, viz., Mr. Elihu Spencer of East Haddam, and Mr. Job Strong of Northampton. The commissioners, on the receipt of this letter, cheerfully and unanimously agreed to accept of and employ the persons he had recommended; who accordingly have since waited on the commissioners to receive their instructions, and, pursuant to, their instructions, have applied themselves to a preparation for the business of their mission, in the manner to which they directed them; and one of them, Mr. Spencer, has been solemnly ordained to that work, by several of the ministers of Boston, in the presence of an ecclesiastical council convened for that purpose, and is now gone forth to the nation of the Onondages, about one hundred and seventy miles beyond Albany.

238 THE LIFE OF

He also, this week, viz., on “Wednesday, September 16, wrote a letter to a particular gentleman in Boston (one of those charitable persons forementioned, who appeared so forward to contribute of their substance for the promoting Christianity among the Indians) relating to the growth of the Indian school, and the need of another schoolmaster, or some person to assist the schoolmaster in instructing the Indian children. These gentlemen, on the receipt of this letter, had a meeting, and agreed, with great cheerfulness, to give 200 (in bills of the old tenor) for the support of another schoolmaster, and desired the Rev. Mr. Pemberton of New York (who was then at Boston, and was also, at their desire, present at their meeting), as soon as possible to procure a suitable person for that service, and also agreed to allow 75 to defray some special charges that were requisite to encourage the mission to the Six Nations (besides the salary allowed by the commissioners), which was also done on some intimations given by Mr. Brainerd.

Mr. Brainerd spent himself much in writing those letters, being exceeding weak; but it seemed to be much to his satisfaction that he had been enabled to do it; hoping that it was something done for God, and which might be for the advancement of Christ's kingdom and glory. In writing the last of these letters, he was obliged to use the hand of another, not being able to write himself.

On the Thursday of this week (September 17) was the last time that ever he went out of his lodging-room. That day, he was again visited by his brother Israel, who continued with him thenceforward till his death. On that evening, he was taken with something of a diarrhoea, which he looked upon as another sign of his approaching death; whereupon he expressed himself thus: "O the glorious time is now coming! I have longed to serve God perfectly; now God will gratify those desires! "And, from time to time, at the several steps and new symptoms of the sensible approach of his dissolution, he was so far from being sunk or damped, that he seemed to be animated and made more cheerful, as being glad at the appearances of *death's* approach. He often used the epithet *glorious*, when speaking of the day of his *death*, calling it *that glorious day*. And as he saw his dissolution gradually approaching, he was much in talking about it, with perfect calmness speaking of a future state; and also settling all his affairs, very particularly and minutely giving directions concerning what he would have done in one re-

DAVID BRAINERD. 239

spect and another after he was dead. And the nearer death approached, the more desirous he seemed to be of it. He several times spake of the different kinds of *willingness to die*; and spoke of it as an ignoble, mean kind of willingness to die, to be willing to leave the body, only to get rid of pain; or to go to heaven, only to get honour and advancement there.

Sat. Sept. 19. —Near night, while I attempted to walk a little, my thoughts turned thus: "How infinitely sweet it is to love God, and be all for him! "Upon which it was suggested to me, "You are not an angel, not lively and active." To which my whole soul immediately replied, "I as sincerely desire to love and glorify God as any angel in heaven." Upon which it was suggested again, "But you are filthy, not fit for heaven." Hereupon instantly appeared the blessed robes of Christ's *righteousness*, which I could not but exult and triumph in; and I viewed the infinite excellency of God, and my soul even broke with longings that God should be *glorified*. I thought of dignity in heaven; but instantly the thought returned, "I do not go to heaven to get honour, but to give all possible glory and praise." O, how I longed that God should be glorified on earth also! O, I was made for eternity, if God might be glorified! *Bodily pains* I cared not for; though I was then in extremity, I never felt easier; I felt willing to *glorify God* in that state of bodily distress, as long as he pleased I should continue in it. The *grave* appeared really sweet, and I longed to lodge my weary bones in it; but O that God might be *glorified*! this was the burden of all my cry. O I knew I should be *active* as an angel in heaven, and that I should be stripped of my *filthy garments*, so that there was no objection. But O, to *love* and *praise* God more, to *please* him for ever! this my soul panted after, and even now pants for while I write. O that *God* might be *glorified* in the whole earth! "Lord, let thy kingdom come." I longed for a spirit of *preaching* to descend and rest on ministers, that

they might address the consciences of men with closeness and power. I saw God “had the residue of the Spirit; “and my soul longed it should be “poured from on high.” I could not but plead with God for my dear *congregation*, that he would preserve it, and not suffer *his great name* to lose its glory in that work, my soul still longing that God might be *glorified*.

The extraordinary frame that he was in that evening could

240 THE LIFE OF

not be hid; “his mouth spake out of the abundance of his heart,” expressing, in a very affecting manner, much the same things as are written in his diary; and among very many other extraordinary expressions which he then uttered, were such as these: “*My heaven is to please God, and glorify him, and to give all to him, and to be wholly devoted to his glory; that is the heaven I long for; that is my religion, and that is my happiness, and always was ever since, I suppose, I had any true religion; and all those that are of that religion, shall meet me in heaven. I do not go to heaven to be advanced, but to give honour to God. It is no matter where I shall be stationed in heaven, whether I have a high or low seat there; but to love, and please, and glorify God is all. Had I a thousand souls, if they were worth any thing, I would give them all to God; but I have nothing to give when all is done. It is impossible for any rational creature to be happy without acting all for God; God himself could not make him happy any other way. I long to be in heaven, praising and glorifying God with the holy angels: all my desire is to glorify God. My heart goes out to the burying-place; it seems to me a desirable place: but O to glorify God! that is it; that is above all. It is a great comfort to me to think, that I have done a little for God in the world, it is but a very small matter; yet I have done a little; and I lament it that I have not done more for him. There is nothing in the world worth living for but doing good and finishing God’s work, doing the work that Christ did. I see nothing else in the world that can yield any satisfaction besides living to God, pleasing him, and doing his whole will. My greatest joy and comfort has been, to do something for promoting the interest of religion, and the souls of particular persons; and now, in my illness, while I am full of pain and distress, from day to day, all the comfort I have is in being able to do some little char (or small piece of work) for God, either by something that I say, or by writing, or some other way.*”

He intermingled with these and other like expressions, many pathetic *counsels* to those that were about him; particularly to my children and servants. He applied himself to some of my younger children at this time; calling them to him, and speaking to them one by one; setting before them, in a very plain manner, the nature and essence of true piety, and its great importance and necessity; earnestly warning them not to rest in any thing short of that true and thorough

DAVID BRAINERD. 241

change of heart, and a life devoted to God; counselling them not to be slack in the great business of religion, nor in the least to delay it; enforcing his counsels with this, that his words were the words of a *dying man*. Said he, “I shall die here, and here I shall be buried, and here you will see my grave, and do you remember what I have said to you. I am going

into eternity; and it is sweet to me to think of eternity; the endlessness of it makes it sweet; but O what shall I say to the eternity of the *wicked*! I cannot mention it, nor think of it; the thought is too dreadful. When you see my grave, then remember what I said to you while I was alive; then think with yourself, how that man that lies in that grave counselled and warned me to prepare for death.”

His *body* seemed to be marvellously strengthened, through the inward vigour and refreshment of his *mind*; so that although, before, he was so weak that he could hardly utter a sentence, yet now he continued his most affecting and profitable discourse to us for more than an hour, with scarce any intermission, and said of it, when he had done, “it was the last sermon that ever he should preach.”

This extraordinary frame of mind continued the next day, of which he says in his *diary* as follows: —

Lord’s day, Sept. 20. —Was still in a sweet and comfortable frame, and was again melted with desires that God might be *glorified*, and with longings to love and live to him. Longed for the influences of the divine Spirit to descend on ministers, in a special manner. And O I longed to be *with God*, to *behold his glory*, and to bow in his presence!

It appears by what is noted in his *diary*, both of this day, and the evening preceding, that his mind at this time was much impressed with a sense of the importance of the work of the *ministry*, and the need of the grace of God, and his special spiritual assistance in this work; and it also appeared, in what he expressed in conversation, particularly in his discourse to his brother Israel, who was then a member of Yale College at New Haven, and had been prosecuting his studies and academical exercises there, to that end, that he might be fitted for the work of the ministry, and was now with him.¹ He now, and from time to time, in this his

242 THE LIFE OF

dying state, recommended to his brother a life of self-denial, of weanedness from the world, and devotedness to God, and an earnest endeavour to obtain much of the grace of God’s Spirit, and God’s gracious influences on his heart; representing the great need which ministers stand in of them, and the unspeakable benefit of them from his own experience. Among many other expressions, he said thus: “When ministers feel these special gracious influences on their hearts, it wonderfully assists them to come at the consciences of men, and as it were to handle them with hands; whereas, without them, whatever reason and oratory we make use of, we do but make use of stumps, instead of hands.”

Mon., Sept. 21. —I began to correct a little volume of my private writings; God, I believe, remarkably helped me in it; my strength was surprisingly lengthened out, and my thoughts

¹ This young gentleman was an ingenious, serious, studious, and hopefully truly pious person: there appeared in him many qualities giving hope of his being a great blessing in his day. But it pleased God, after the death of his brother, to take him away also. He died that winter, at New Haven, on January 6, 1747-8, of a nervous fever, after about a fortnight’s illness.

quick and lively, and my soul refreshed, hoping it might be a work for God. O, how good, how sweet it is, to labour for God!

Tues., Sept. 22. —Was again employed in reading and correcting, and had the same success as the day before. I was exceeding weak, but it seemed to refresh my soul thus to spend time.

Wed., Sept. 23. —I finished my corrections of the little piece forementioned, and felt uncommonly peaceful; it seemed as if I had now done all my work in this world, and stood ready for my call to a better. As long as I see any thing to be done for God, life is worth having; but O how vain and unworthy it is to live for any lower end! This day, I indited a letter, I think, of great importance, to the Rev. Mr. Byram in New Jersey; O that God would bless and succeed that letter, which was written for the benefit of his church! ¹ O that God would *purify the sons of Levi*, that his glory may be advanced! This night, I endured a dreadful turn, wherein my life was expected scarce an hour or minute together. But blessed be God, I have enjoyed considerable sweetness in divine things, this week, both by night and day.

Thurs., Sept. 24. —My strength began to fail exceedingly; which looked further as if I had done all my work; however,

DAVID BRAINERD. 243

I had strength to fold and superscribe my letter. About two I went to bed, being weak and much disordered, and lay in a burning fever till night, without any proper rest. In the evening, I got up, having lain down in some of my clothes; but was in the greatest distress that ever I endured, having an uncommon kind of hiccough; which either strangled me, or threw me into a straining to vomit; and at the same time was distressed with pains. O the distress of this evening! I had little expectation of my living the night through, nor indeed had any about me; and I longed for the *finishing* moment. I was obliged to repair to bed by six o'clock, and through mercy enjoyed some rest; but was grievously distressed at turns with the hiccough. My soul breathed after God, while the watcher was with me: "When shall I come to God, even to God, my exceeding joy? O for his blessed likeness! "

Fri., Sept. 25. —This day, I was unspeakably weak, and little better than speechless all the day; however, I was able to write a little, and felt comfortable in some part of the day. O it refreshed my soul to think of former things, of desires to glorify God, of the pleasures of living to him! "O my dear God, I am speedily coming to thee, I hope! hasten the day, O Lord, if it be thy blessed will; O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen." ²

Sat., Sept. 26. —I felt the sweetness of divine things this forenoon, and had the consolation of a consciousness that I was doing something for God.

¹ It was concerning the qualifications of *ministers*, and the examination and licensing of *candidates* for the work of the ministry.

² This was the last time ever he wrote in his diary with his own hand, though it is continued a little farther, in a broken manner, written by his brother Israel, but indited by his mouth in this his weak and dying state.

Lord's day, Sept. 27. —This was a very comfortable day to my soul; I think, *I awoke with God.* I was enabled to *lift up my soul to God* early this morning; and while I had little bodily strength, I found freedom to lift up my heart to God for myself and others. Afterwards, was pleased with the thoughts of speedily entering into the unseen world.

Early this morning, as one of the family came into the room, he expressed himself thus: "I have had more *pleasure* this morning than all the *drunkards* in the world enjoy, if it were all extracted." So much did he esteem the *joy of faith* above the *pleasures of sin*.

He felt that morning an unusual appetite for food; with which his mind seemed to be *exhilarated*, looking on it as a sign of the very near approach of *death*; he said upon it,

244 THE LIFE OF

"I was born on a *Sabbath-day*; and I have reason to think I was new-born on a *Sabbath-day*; and I hope I shall die on this *Sabbath-day*. I shall look upon it as a favour, if it may be the will of God that it should be so; I long for the time. *O why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?* I am very willing to part with all: I am willing to part with my dear brother John, and never to see him again, to go to be for ever with the Lord.¹ O when I go there, how will God's dear church on earth be upon my mind!"

Afterwards, the same morning, being asked how he did? he answered, "I am almost in eternity; I long to be there. My work is done; I have done with all my friends; all the world is nothing to me. I long to be in heaven, *praising and glorifying God* with the *holy angels*; all my desire is to glorify God."

During the whole of these last two weeks of his life, he seemed to continue in this frame of heart, loose from all the world, as having done his work, and done with all things here below, having nothing to do but to die, and abiding in an earnest desire and expectation of the happy moment when his soul should take its flight, and go to a state of perfection of holiness and perfect glorifying and enjoying God, manifested in a variety of expressions. He said, "that the consideration of the day of death, and the day of judgment, had a long time been peculiarly sweet to him." He from time to time spake of his being willing to leave the body and the world *immediately*, that day, that night, and that moment, if it was the will of God. He also was much in expressing his longings that the Church of Christ on earth might flourish, and Christ's kingdom here might be advanced, notwithstanding he was about to leave the *earth*, and should not with his eyes behold the desirable event, nor be instrumental in promoting it. He said to me, one morning, as I came into the room, "My thoughts have been employed on the old dear theme, *the prosperity* of God's church on *earth*. As I waked out of sleep, I was led to cry for the pouring out of God's Spirit, and the advancement of Christ's kingdom, which the dear Redeemer did and suffered so much for. It is that especially makes me long for it." He expressed much hope

¹ He had before this expressed a desire, if it might be the will of God, to live till his brother returned from New Jersey; who, when he went away, intended, if possible, to perform his journey, and return in a fortnight; hoping once more to meet his brother in the land of the living. The fortnight was now near expired; it ended the next day.

that a glorious advancement of Christ's kingdom was near at hand.

He once told me that "he had formerly longed for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and the glorious times of the church, and hoped they were coming, and should have been willing to have lived to promote religion at that time, if that had been the will of God; but (says he) I am willing it should be as it is; I would not have the choice to make for myself, for ten thousand worlds." He expressed on his deathbed a full persuasion that he should in heaven see the prosperity of the church on *earth*, and should rejoice with Christ therein; and the consideration of it seemed to be highly pleasing and satisfying to his mind.

He also still dwelt much on the great importance of the work of ministers of the gospel, and expressed his longings that they might be *filled with the Spirit of God*; and manifested much desire to see some of the neighbouring ministers, whom he had some acquaintance with, and whose sincere friendship he was confident of, that he might converse freely with them on that subject before he died. And it so happened that he had opportunity with some of them, according to his desire.

Another thing that lay much on his heart, and that he spake of, from time to time, in these near approaches of death, was the spiritual prosperity of his own congregation of Christian Indians in New Jersey; and when he spake of them, it was with peculiar tenderness; so that his speech would be presently interrupted and drowned with tears.

He also expressed much satisfaction in the disposals of Providence with regard to the circumstances of his *death*; particularly that God had before his death given him the opportunity he had had in Boston, with so many considerable persons, ministers and others, to give in *his testimony* for God, and against false religion, and many mistakes that lead to it and promote it, and there to lay before pious and charitable gentlemen the state of the Indians, and their necessities, to so good effect; and that God has since given him opportunity to write to them further concerning these affairs, and to write other letters of importance, that he hoped might be of good influence with regard to the state of religion among the Indians, and elsewhere, after his death. He expressed great thankfulness to God for his mercy in these things. He also mentioned it as what he accounted a merciful circumstance

246 THE LIFE OF

of his death, that he should die *here*.¹ And speaking of these things, he said, "God had granted him all his desire;" and signified that now he could with the greater alacrity leave the world.

¹ When Mr. Brainerd was at Boston, sick nigh unto death, it was with reluctance he thought of dying in a place where *funerals* are often attended with a *pomp* and *show*, which (especially on occasion of his own) he was very averse to any appearance of; and though it was with some difficulty he got his mind reconciled to the prospect then before him, yet at last he was brought to acquiesce in the divine will with respect to this circumstance of

Mon., Sept. 28. —I was able to read, and make some few corrections in my private writings; but found I could not write as I had done; I found myself sensibly declined in all respects. It has been only from a little while before noon, till about one or two o'clock, that I have been able to do any thing for some time past; yet this refreshed my heart that I could do any thing, either public or private, that I hoped was for God.

This evening he was supposed to be dying; he thought so himself, and was thought so by those who were about him. He seemed glad at the appearance of the near approach of death., He was almost speechless, but his lips appeared to move, and one that sat very near him heard him utter such expressions as these, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. O, why is his chariot so long in coming?" After he revived, he blamed himself for having been too eager to be gone. And in expressing what he found in the frame of his mind at that time, he said, he then found an inexpressibly sweet love to those that he looked upon as *belonging to Christ*, beyond almost all that ever he felt before, so that it "seemed (to use his own words) like a little piece of *heaven* to have one of them near him." And being asked, whether he heard the prayer that was (at his desire) made with him, he said, "Yes, he heard every word, and had an uncommon sense of the things that were uttered in that prayer, and that every word reached his heart."

On the evening of the next day, viz. Tuesday, Sept. 29, as he lay in his bed, he seemed to be in an extraordinary frame, his mind greatly engaged in sweet meditations concerning the prosperity of Zion. There being present here

DAVID BRAINERD 247

at that time two young gentlemen of his acquaintance, that were *candidates* for the *ministry*, he desired us all to unite in singing a psalm on that subject, even Zion's prosperity; and on his desire, we sung a part of the hundred and second psalm. This seemed much to refresh and revive him, and gave him new strength; so that, though before he could scarcely speak at all, now he proceeded, with some freedom of speech, to give his dying counsels to those two young gentlemen forementioned, relating to their preparation for and prosecution of that great work of the ministry they were designed for; and in particular, earnestly recommended to them frequent secret *fasting* and *prayer*, and enforced his counsel with regard to this from his own *experience* of the great comfort and benefit of it; which (said he) I should not mention, were it not that I am a *dying* person. And after he had finished his counsel, he made a prayer, in the audience of us all; wherein, besides praying for this family, for his brethren, and those candidates for the ministry, and for his own congregation, he earnestly prayed for the reviving and flourishing of religion in the world.

Till now, he had every day sat up part of the day; but after this he never rose from his bed.

his departure. However, it pleased God to order the event so as to gratify his *desire*, which he had expressed, of getting back to Northampton, with a view particularly to a more silent and private *burial*.

Wed., Sept. 30. —I was obliged to keep my bed the whole day, through weakness. However, redeemed a little time, and with the help of my brother, read and corrected about a dozen pages in my manuscript, giving an account of my conversion.

Thur., Oct. 1. —I endeavoured again to do something by way of writing, but soon found my powers of body and mind utterly fail. Felt not so sweetly as when I was able to do something that I hoped would do some good. In the evening, was discomposed and wholly delirious; but it was not long before God was pleased to give me some sleep, and fully composed my mind.¹ O, blessed be God for his great goodness to me, since I was so low at Mr. Broomfield's on Thursday, June 18, last past! He has, except those few minutes, given me the clear exercise of my reason, and enabled me to labour much for him, in things both of a public and private nature, and perhaps to do more good than I should have done if I had been well; besides the comfortable influences of his

248 THE LIFE OF

blessed Spirit, with which he has been pleased to refresh my soul. May his name have all the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Fri., Oct. 2. —My soul was this day at turns sweetly set on God. I longed to be with him, that I might *behold his glory*. I felt sweetly disposed to commit all to him, even my dearest friends, my dearest flock, and my absent brother, and all my concerns for time and eternity. O that *his kingdom* might come in the world; that they might all love and glorify him, for what he is in himself; and that the blessed Redeemer might “see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied! O come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Amen.”²

The next evening we very much expected his brother John from New Jersey, it being about a week after the time that he proposed for his return when he went away. And though our expectations were still disappointed, yet Mr. Brainerd seemed to continue unmoved, in the same calm and peaceful frame that he had before manifested, as having resigned all to God, and having done with his friends, and with all things here below.

On the morning of the next day, being Lord's day, October 4, as my daughter Jerusha (who chiefly tended him) came into the room, he looked on her very pleasantly, and said, “Dear Jerusha, are you willing to part with me? I am quite willing to part with you. I am willing to part with all my friends; I am willing to part with my dear brother John, although I love him the best of any creature living. I have committed him and all my friends to God, and can leave them with God. Though, if I thought I should not see you, and be happy with you in another world, I could not bear to part with you. But we shall spend a happy eternity together!”³ In the evening, as one came into the room with

¹ From this time forward he had the free use of his reason till the day before his death, excepting that at some times he appeared a little lost for a moment, at first waking out of sleep.

² Here ends his *diary*; these are the *last words* that are written in it, either by his own hand, or by any other from his mouth

³ Since this it has pleased a holy and sovereign God to take away this my dear child by death, on the 14th of February next following, after a short illness of five days, in the eighteenth year of her age. She was a person of much the same spirit with Mr. Brainerd. She had constantly taken care of, and attended him in his sickness, for

a Bible in her hand, he expressed himself thus: "O, that dear book! that lovely book! I shall soon see it opened! the mysteries that are in it, and the mysteries of God's providence, will be all unfolded!"

His distemper now very apparently preyed on his vitals in an extraordinary manner: not by a sudden breaking of *ulcers* in his lungs, as at Boston, but by a constant, discharge in great quantities, which was attended with very great inward pain and distress.

On Tuesday, Oct. 6, he lay for a considerable time as if he were dying. At which time, he was heard to utter in broken whispers such expressions as these: "He will come, he will not tarry; I shall soon be in glory; I shall soon glorify God with the angels." But after some time he revived.

The next day, viz. Wednesday, October 7, his brother John arrived, being returned from New Jersey, where he had been detained much longer than he intended, by a mortal sickness prevailing among the Christian Indians, and by some other things in their circumstances that made his stay with them necessary. Mr. Brainerd was affected and refreshed with seeing him, and appeared fully satisfied with the reasons of his delay, seeing the interest of religion and of the souls of his people required it.

The next day, Thursday, October 8, he was in great distress and agony of body, and for the greater part of the day was much disordered as to the exercise of his reason. In the evening, he was more composed, and had the use of his reason well; but the pain of his body continued and increased. He told me, it was impossible for any to conceive of the distress he felt in his breast. He manifested much concern lest he should dishonour God by impatience, under his extreme agony; which was such, that he said the thought of enduring it one minute longer was almost insupportable. He desired that others would be much in lifting up their hearts continually to God for him, that God would support him, and give him patience. He signified, that he expected to die that night, but seemed to fear a longer delay; and

250 THE LIFE OF

nineteen weeks before his death; devoting herself to it with great delight, because she looked on him as an eminent servant of Jesus Christ. In this time he had much conversation with her on things of religion; and in his dying state, often expressed to us, her parents, his great satisfaction concerning her true piety, and his confidence that he should meet her in heaven; and his high opinion of her, not only as a true Christian, but a very eminent saint, one whose soul was uncommonly fed and entertained with things that appertain to the most spiritual, experimental, and distinguishing parts of religion; and one who, by the temper of her mind, was fitted to deny herself for God, and to do good, beyond any young woman whatsoever that he knew of. She had manifested a heart uncommonly devoted to God, in the course of her life, many years before her death; and said on her deathbed, that "she had not seen one minute for several years, wherein she desired to live one minute longer for the sake of any other good in life, but doing good, living to God, and doing what might be for his glory."

the disposition of his mind with regard to death appeared still the same that it had been all along. And notwithstanding his bodily agonies, yet the interest of Zion lay still with great weight on his mind; as appeared by some considerable discourse he had that evening with the Rev. Mr. Billing, one of the neighbouring ministers (who was then present), concerning the great importance of the work of the ministry, &c. And afterwards, when it was very late in the night, he had much very proper and profitable discourse with his brother John, concerning his congregation in New Jersey, and the interest of religion among the Indians. In the latter part of the night, his bodily distress seemed to rise to a greater height than ever; and he said to those then about him, that “it was another thing to die than people imagined;” explaining himself to mean that they were not aware what *bodily* pain and anguish is undergone before death. Towards day, his eyes fixed; and he continued lying immovable, till about six o’clock in the morning, and then expired, on Friday, October 9, 1747, when his soul, as we may well conclude, was received by his dear Lord and Master, as an eminently faithful servant, into that state of perfection of holiness, and fruition of God, which he had so often and so ardently longed for, and was welcomed by the glorious assembly in the upper world, as one peculiarly fitted to join them in their blessed employments and enjoyments.

Much respect was shown to his memory at his funeral, which was on the Monday following, after a sermon preached the same day, on that solemn occasion. His funeral was attended by eight of the neighbouring ministers, and seventeen other gentlemen of liberal education, and a great concourse of people.

LETTERS WRITTEN BY MR. BRAINERD TO HIS FRIENDS.

MR BRAINERD had a large acquaintance and correspondence, especially in the latter part of his life, and he did much at writing *letters* to his absent friends; but the most of his acquaintance living at a great distance from me, I have not been able to obtain copies of many that he wrote. However, the greater part of those which I have seen, are such as appear to me of profitable tendency, and worthy of the public view. I have therefore here added a few of his *letters*.

N.B. Several of these which follow are not published at large, because some parts of them were concerning particular affairs of a private nature.

1. To his brother JOHN, then a student at Yale College in New Haven.

Kaunaumeeek, April 30, 1743.

DEAR BROTHER, I should tell you, "I long to see you," but that my own experience has taught me, there is no happiness and plenary satisfaction to be enjoyed in *earthly friends*, though ever so near and dear, or in any other enjoyment that is not God himself. Therefore, if the *God of all grace* would be pleased graciously to afford us each his *presence* and *grace* that we may perform the work and endure the trials he calls us to, in a most distressing, tiresome wilderness, till we arrive at our journey's end the local distance at which we are held from each other at the present, is a matter of no great moment or importance to either of us. But, alas! the presence of God is what I want. I live in the most lonely, melancholy *desert*, about eighteen miles from Albany (for it was not thought best that I should go to Delaware river, as

252 THE LIFE OF

I believe I hinted to you in a letter from New York). I board with a poor Scotchman; his wife can talk scarce any English. My *diet* consists mostly of hasty-pudding, boiled corn, and bread baked in the ashes, and sometimes a little meat and butter. My *lodging* is a little heap of straw, laid upon some boards, a little way from the ground; for it is a log-room, without any floor, that I lodge in. My *work* is exceeding hard and difficult; I travel on foot a mile and half, the worst of way, almost daily, and back again; for I live so far from my Indians. I have not seen an English person this month. These and many other circumstances as uncomfortable, attend me: and yet my *spiritual conflicts* and *distresses* so far *exceed* all these, that I scarce think of them, or hardly mind but that I am entertained in the most sumptuous manner. The Lord grant that I may learn to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ!" As to my *success* here, I cannot say much as yet. The Indian? seem generally kind, and well disposed towards me, and are mostly very attentive to my instructions, and seem willing to be taught further; two or three, I hope, are under some *convictions*; but there seems to be little of the special working of the divine Spirit among them yet; which gives me many a heart-sinking hour. Sometimes I hope God has abundant blessings in store for them and me; but at other times I am so overwhelmed with distress, that I cannot see how his

dealings with me are consistent with covenant love and faithfulness, and I say, “Surely his tender mercies are clean gone for ever.” But, however, I see I *needed* all this *chastisement* already: “it is good for me “that I have endured these trials, and have hitherto little or no apparent success. Do not be discouraged by my distresses. I was under great distress, at Mr. Pomroy’s, when I saw you last, but “God has been with me of a truth,” since that; he helped me sometimes sweetly, at Long Island, and elsewhere. But let us always remember, that we must *through much tribulation* enter into God’s eternal kingdom of rest and peace. The righteous are *scarcely* saved; it is an infinite wonder, that we have well-grounded hopes of being saved at all. For my part, I feel the most vile of any creature living; and I am sure sometimes, there is not such another existing on this side *hell*. Now all you can do for me is, to pray incessantly, that God would make me humble, holy, resigned, and heavenly-minded, by all my trials. “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” Let us *run, wrestle, and fight,*

DAVID BRAINERD. 253

that we may win the prize, and obtain that complete happiness, to be “holy, as God is holy.” So, wishing and praying that you may advance in learning and grace, and be lit for special service for God, I remain, your affectionate brother, DAVID BRAINERD.

2. To the Same.

Kaunaumee, Dec. 27, 1743.

DEAR BROTHER, I long to see you, and know how you fare in your journey through a world of inexpressible sorrow, where we are compassed about with “vanity, confusion, and vexation of spirit.” I am more weary of life, I think, than ever I was. The whole *world* appears to me like a huge *vacuum*, a vast empty space, whence nothing desirable, or at least satisfactory, can possibly be derived; and I long *daily* to die more and more to it, even though I obtain not that comfort from spiritual things which I earnestly desire. *Worldly* pleasures, such as flow from greatness, riches, honours, and sensual gratifications, are infinitely *worse* than none. May the Lord deliver us more and more from these *vanities*! I have spent most of the fall and winter hitherto in a very weak state of body, and sometimes under pressing inward trials and spiritual conflicts; but “having obtained help from God, I continue to this day;” and am now something better in health than I was some time ago. I find nothing-more conducive to a life of *Christianity* than a diligent, industrious, and faithful improvement of precious time. ‘Let us then faithfully perform that business which is allotted to us by divine providence, to the utmost of our bodily strength and mental vigour. Why should we sink, and grow discouraged, with any particular trials and perplexities we are called to encounter in the world? *Death* and *eternity* are just before us; a few tossing billows more will waft us into the world of spirits, and we hope (through infinite grace) into endless pleasures, and uninterrupted rest and peace. Let us then “run with patience the race set before us,” Heb. xii. 1, 2. And O that we could depend more upon the *living God*, and less upon our own wisdom and strength! Dear brother, may the *God of all grace* comfort your heart, and succeed your studies, and make you an instrument of good to his people in your day. This is the constant prayer of your affectionate brother,

DAVID BRAINERD,

3. To his brother ISRAEL, at Haddam.

Kaunaumee, January 21, 1743-4.

MY DEAR BROTHER, There is but *one* thing that deserves our highest care and most ardent desires, and that is, that we may answer the great end for which we were made, —viz., to *glorify* that God who has given us our beings and all our comforts, and do all the *good* we possibly can to our *fellow-men*, while we live in the world; and verily life is not worth the having, if it be not improved for this noble end and purpose. Yet, alas! how little is this thought of among mankind! Most men seem to *live to themselves*, without much regard to the glory of God or the good of their fellow creatures; they earnestly desire and eagerly pursue after the riches, the honours, and the pleasures of life, as if they really supposed that, wealth, or greatness, or merriment, could make their immortal souls happy. But, alas! what false and delusive dreams are these! And how miserable will those ere long be, who are not *awaked* out of them, to see that all their happiness consists in *living to God*, and becoming “holy as he is holy! “O may you never fall into the tempers and vanities, the sensuality and folly, of the present world! You are, by divine providence, left as it were alone in a wide world to act for yourself; be sure then to remember it is a world of *temptation*. You have no earthly parents to be the means of forming your youth to piety and virtue, by their pious examples and seasonable counsels; let this then excite you with greater diligence and fervency to look up to the *Father of mercies* for grace and assistance against all the vanities of the world. And if you would glorify God, answer his just expectations from you, and make your own soul happy in this and the coming world, observe these few *directions*, though not from a father, yet from a brother who is touched with a tender concern for your present and future happiness. And,

First, Resolve upon, and daily endeavour to practise, a life of *seriousness* and strict *sobriety*. The wise man will tell you the great advantage of such a life, Eccl. vii. 3. Think of the life of Christ; and when you can find that *he* was pleased with jesting and vain merriment, then you may indulge it in yourself.

Again, Be careful to make a good *improvement* of precious *time*. When you cease from labour, fill up your time in

DAVID BRAINERD. 255

reading, meditation, and prayer; and while your hands are labouring, let your heart be employed, as much as possible, in divine thoughts.

Further, Take heed that you *faithfully* perform the business you have to do in the world, from a regard to the commands of God, and not from an ambitious desire of being esteemed better than others. We should always look upon ourselves as God’s servants, placed in God’s world, to do his work; and accordingly labour faithfully for *him*, not with a design to grow rich and great, but to glorify God, and do all the good we possibly can.

Again, Never expect any *satisfaction* or *happiness* from the *world*. If you hope for happiness *in* the world, hope for it from God, and not *from* the world. Do not think you shall be more *happy*, if you live to such or such a state of life, if you live to be for yourself, to be settled in the world, or if you should gain an estate in it; but look upon it that you shall then be *happy*, when you can be constantly employed for God, and not for yourself; and desire to live in this world, only to *do* and *suffer* what God allots to you. When you can be of the spirit and temper of angels, who are willing to come down into this lower world, to perform what God commands them, though their desires are *heavenly*, and not in the least set on *earthly* things, then you will be of that temper that you ought to have, Col. iii. 2.

Once more, Never think that you can live to God by *your own* power or strength; but always look to and rely on *him* for assistance, yea, for all strength and grace. There is no greater *truth* than this, that “we can do nothing of ourselves,” John xv. 5, and 2 Cor. iii. 5; yet nothing but our own *experience* can effectually teach it to us. Indeed, we are a long time in learning, that *all* our strength and salvation is in God. This is a life that I think no *unconverted* man can possibly live, and yet it is a life that every *Godly* soul is pressing after, in some good measure. Let it then be your great concern thus to devote yourself and your all to God.

I long to see you, that I may say much more to you than I now can, for your benefit and welfare: but I desire to commit you to, and leave you with, the *Father of mercies* and *God of all grace*, praying that you may be directed safely through an *evil world* to God’s *heavenly kingdom*. —I am your affectionate, loving brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.

255 THE LIFE OF

4. To a Special Friend.

The Forks of Delaware, July 31, 1744.

CERTAINLY the greatest, the noblest pleasure of intelligent creatures must result from their acquaintance with the blessed God, and with their own rational and immortal souls. And O how divinely sweet and entertaining is it to look into our own souls, when we can find all our powers and passions united and engaged in pursuit after God, our whole souls longing and passionately breathing after a conformity to him, and the full enjoyment of him! Verily there are no hours pass away with so much divine pleasure as those that are spent in communing with God and our own hearts. O how sweet is a spirit of devotion a spirit of seriousness and divine solemnity a spirit of gospel simplicity, love, tenderness! O how desirable, and how profitable to the Christian life, is a spirit of. holy watchfulness, and Godly jealousy over ourselves; when our souls are afraid of nothing so much as that we shall grieve and offend the blessed God, whom at such times we apprehend, or at least hope, to be a *father and friend*, whom we then love and long to *please*, rather than to be *happy* ourselves; or at least we delight to derive our happiness *from* pleasing and glorifying him! Surely this is a pious temper, worthy of the highest ambition and closest pursuit of intelligent creatures and holy Christians. O how vastly superior is the pleasure, peace, and satisfaction derived from these

divine frames, to that which we, alas! sometimes pursue in things impertinent and trifling! Our own bitter experience teaches us, that “in the midst of such laughter the heart is sorrowful,” and there is no true satisfaction but in God. But, alas! how shall we obtain and retain this sweet spirit of religion and devotion? Let us follow the apostle’s direction, Phil. ii. 12, and labour upon the encouragement he there mentions, verse 13, for it is God only can afford us this favour, and he will be *sought to*, and it is fit we should wait upon him for so rich a mercy. O may the God of all grace afford us the grace and influences of his divine Spirit, and help us that we may from our hearts esteem it our greatest liberty and happiness, that “whether we live, we may live to the Lord, or whether we die, we may die to the Lord: “that in *life* and *death*, we may be his!

I am in a very poor state of health; I think, scarce ever

DAVID BRAINERD. 257

poorer; but through divine goodness, I am not discontented under my weakness, and confinement to this wilderness. I bless God for this retirement; I never was more thankful for any thing, than I have been of late for the necessity I am under of self-denial in many respects. I love to be a *pilgrim* and *stranger* in this wilderness; it seems most fit for such a poor ignorant, worthless, despised creature as I. I would not change my present *mission* for any other business in the whole world. I may tell you freely, without vanity and ostentation, God has of late given me great freedom and fervency in prayer, when I have been so weak and feeble, my nature seemed as if it would speedily dissolve. I feel as if my *all* was lost, and I was undone for this world, if the poor heathen may not be converted. I feel, in general, different from what I did, when I saw you last; at least, more *crucified* to all the enjoyments of life. It would be very refreshing to me to see you here in this desert, especially in my weak, disconsolate hours; but, I think, I could be content never to see you, or any of my friends again in this world, if God would bless my labours here to the conversion of the poor Indians.

I have much that I could willingly communicate to you, which I must omit, till providence gives us leave to see each other. In the mean time, I rest your obliged friend and servant,

DAVID BRAINERD.

5. To a Special Friend, a minister of the gospel in New Jersey.

The Forks of Delaware, Dec. 24, 1744.

REV. AND DEAR BROTHER, I have little to say to you about spiritual joys, and those blessed refreshments, and divine consolations, with which I have been much favoured in times past; but this I can tell you, that if I gain experience in no other point, yet I am sure I do in this, — viz., that the present world has nothing in it to *satisfy* an immortal soul, and hence, that it is not to be *desired for itself*, but only because God may be *seen* and *served* in it; and I wish I could be more patient and willing to live in it *for this end*, than I can usually find myself to be. It is no virtue, I know, to desire death, only to be freed from the miseries of life: but I want that divine hope, which you observed, when I saw you last, was the very sinews of vital religion. Earth can *do us no good*, and if there be no *hope* of our *doing good*

on earth, how can we desire to live in it? And yet we ought to desire, or at least to be resigned, to tarry in it; because it is the will of our all-wise Sovereign. But perhaps these thoughts will appear melancholy and gloomy, and consequently will be very undesirable to you; and therefore I forbear to add. I wish you may not read them in the same circumstances in which I write them. I have a little more to *do* and *suffer* in a dark, disconsolate world; and then I hope to be as happy as you are. I should ask you to pray for me, were I worth your concern. May the Lord enable us both to “endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ;” “and may we “obtain mercy of God to be faithful to the death,” in the discharge of our respective trusts! I am your very unworthy brother, and humble servant,

DAVID BRAINERD.

6. To his brother JOHN, at College.

Crosweeksung, in New Jersey, Dec. 28, 1745.

VERY DEAR BROTHER, —I am in one continued, perpetual, and uninterrupted hurry; and divine providence throws so much upon me, that I do not see it will ever be otherwise. May I “obtain mercy of God to be faithful to the death!” “I cannot say I am weary of my hurry; I only want strength and grace to do more for God than I have ever yet done.

My dear brother, *The Lord of heaven*, that has carried me through many trials, bless you; *bless you* for time and eternity, and fit you to do service for him in his church below, and to enjoy his blissful presence in his church triumphant. My brother, “the time is short: “O let us fill it up for God; let us “count the sufferings of this present time” as nothing, if we can but “run our race, and finish our course with joy!” O let us strive to live to God! I bless the Lord, I have nothing to do with *earth*, but only to labour honestly in it for God, till I shall “accomplish as an hireling my day.” I think I do not desire to live one minute for any thing that *earth* can afford. O that I could live for none but God, till my dying moment! I am your affectionate brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.

7. To his brother ISRAEL, then a student at Yale College in New Haven.

Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, Nov. 24, 1746.

DEAR BROTHER, —I had determined to make you and my

DAVID BRAINERD. 259

other friends in New England a visit this fall: partly from an earnest desire I had to see you and them, and partly with a view to the recovery of my health, which has, for more than three months past, been much impaired. And in order to prosecute this design, I set out from my own people about three weeks ago, and came as far as to this place; where, my disorder greatly increasing, I have been obliged to keep house ever since, until the day before yesterday; at which time I was able to ride about half a mile, but found myself much tired

with the journey. I have now no hopes of prosecuting my journey into New England this winter, supposing my present state of health will by no means admit it; although I am, through divine goodness, much better than I was some days ago, yet I have not strength now to ride more than ten miles a-day, if the season were warm, and fit for me to travel in. My disorder has been attended with several symptoms of a *consumption*, and I have been at times apprehensive that my great *change* was at hand; yet blessed be God, I have never been *affrighted*, but, on the contrary, at some times much *delighted* with a view of its approach. the blessedness of being delivered from the clogs of flesh and sense, from a body of sin and spiritual *death*! O, the unspeakable sweetness of being translated into a state of complete purity and perfection! Believe me, my brother, a lively view and hope of these things will make the king of terrors himself appear agreeable. Dear brother, let me intreat you, to keep *eternity* in your view, and behave yourself as becomes one that must shortly “give an account of all things done in the body.” That God may be *your* God, and prepare you for his service here, and his kingdom of glory hereafter, is the desire and daily prayer of your affectionate loving brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.

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.

MY 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 what 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. how vast and boundless! O how fixed and unalterable! O of what infinite

260 THE LIFE OF

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, 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.¹

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

DAVID BRAINERD. 261

the grace of God where you are. May he be your guide and counsellor, your sanctifier and eternal portion!

O my dear brother, flee fleshly *lusts*, and the enchanting *amusements*, 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.

9. To a Young Gentleman, a *candidate* for the work of the *ministry*, for whom he had a special friendship; also written at the same time of his great illness and nearness to death in Boston.

VERY DEAR SIR, —How amazing it is, that the *living*, who *know they must die*, should notwithstanding “put far away the evil day” in a season of health and prosperity, and live at such awful distance from a familiarity with the grave, and the great concerns beyond it! and especially it may justly fill us with surprise, that any whose minds have been divinely *enlightened* to behold the important things of *eternity* as they are —I say, that such should live in this manner. And yet, sir, how frequently is this the case? how rare are the instances of those who live and act, from day to day, as on the verge of eternity, striving to fill up all their remaining moments in the service and to the honour of their great *Master*? We insensibly trifle away time, while we seem to have enough of it; and are so strangely amused, as in a great measure to lose a sense of the *holiness* and blessed qualifications necessary to prepare us to be inhabitants of the heavenly *paradise*. But, O dear sir, a *dying bed*, if we enjoy our reason clearly, will give another view of things. I have now, for more than three weeks, lain under the greatest degree of weakness, the greater part of the time expecting daily and hourly to enter into the eternal world; sometimes have been so far gone, as to be wholly speechless, for some hours together. And O of what vast *importance* has a holy, spiritual *life* appeared to me to be in this season! I have longed to call upon all my friends to make it their business to *live to God*, and especially all that are designed for, or engaged in, the service of the

¹ Mr. Brainerd afterwards had great satisfaction concerning the state of his brother’s soul, by much opportunity of conversation with him before his death.

sanctuary. O dear sir, do not think it enough to live at the rate of *common Christians*. Alas, to how little purpose do they often converse when they meet together! The visits, even of those who are called Christians indeed, are frequently extremely barren; and conscience cannot but condemn us for the mis-

262 THE LIFE OF

improvement of time while we have been conversant with them. But the way to enjoy the divine presence, and be fitted for distinguishing service for God, is to live a life of *great devotion* and *constant self-dedication* to him; observing the motions and dispositions of our own hearts, whence we may learn the corruptions that lodge there, and our constant need of help from God for the performance of the least duty. And O dear sir, let me beseech you frequently to attend to the great and precious duties of *secret fasting* and *prayer*.

I have a secret thought, from some things I have observed, that God may perhaps design you for some singular service in the world. O then labour to be prepared and qualified to do much for God. Read Mr. Edward's piece on the *affections*, again and again, and labour to *distinguish* clearly upon experiences and affections in religion, that you may make a difference between the *gold* and the shining *dross*; I say, labour here as ever you would be an *useful minister of Christ*; for nothing has put such a stop to the work of God in the late day, as the false religion, the wild affections that attend it. Suffer me therefore, finally, to entreat you earnestly to "give yourself to prayer, to reading and meditation "on divine truths strive to penetrate to the bottom of them, and never be content with a superficial knowledge. By this means, your thoughts will gradually grow weighty and judicious; and you hereby will be possessed of a valuable *treasure*, out of which you may produce "things new and old," to the glory of God.

And now, "I commend you to the grace of God; "earnestly desiring that a plentiful portion of the divine Spirit may rest upon you, that you may *live to God* in *every* capacity of life, and do abundant service for him in a *public* capacity, if it be his will, and that you may be richly qualified for the "inheritance of the saints in light."

I scarce expect to see your face any more in the body, and therefore entreat you to accept this as the last token of love, from your sincerely affectionate, dying friend,

DAVID BRAINERD.

P.S. —I am now, at the dating of this letter, considerably recovered from what I was when I wrote it; it having lain by me some time, for want of an opportunity of conveyance; it was written in Boston. I am now able to ride a little, and so am removed into the country; but I have no more expectation of recovering than when I wrote, though I am a little

DAVID BRAINERD. 263

better for the present; and, therefore, I still subscribe myself your dying friend, &c., D. B.

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

264 THE LIFE OF

God that he is what he is, that he is unchangeably possessed of infinite glory and happiness. Now, when men thus 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 likewise 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."

God knows, I was heartily willing to have served him longer in the work of the ministry, although it had still been attended with all the *labours* and *hardships* of past years, if he had seen fit that it should be so; but as his will now appears otherwise, I am fully content, and can with utmost freedom say, "The will of the Lord be done." It affects me to think of leaving you in a world of sin: my heart pities you, that those storms and tempests are yet before you, which I trust through grace I am almost delivered from. But "God lives, and blessed be my Rock;" he is the same almighty Friend, and will, I trust, be your Guide and Helper, as he has been mine.

DAVID BRAINERD. 265

And now, my dear brother, "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you inheritance among all them that are sanctified." May you enjoy the divine presence, both in private and public, and may "the arms of your hands be made strong, by the right hand of the mighty God of Jacob!" —which are the passionate desires and prayers of your affectionate, dying brother,

DAVID BRAINERD.

REFLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS ON THE PRECEDING MEMOIRS.

I. WE have here opportunity, as I apprehend, in a very lively *instance*, to see the *nature of true religion*, and the *manner of its operation* when exemplified in a *high degree* and *powerful exercise*. Particularly it may be worthy to be observed,

1. How greatly Mr. Brainerd's religion *differed* from that of some pretenders to the experience of a *clear work* of saving *conversion* wrought on their hearts, who, depending and living on that, settle in a *cold, careless, and carnal* frame of mind, and in a neglect of thorough, earnest religion, in the stated practice of it. Although his convictions and conversion were in all respects exceeding clear, and very remarkable; yet how far was he from acting as though he thought he had *got through his work*, when once he had obtained comfort and satisfaction of his interest in Christ, and title to heaven? On the contrary, that work on his heart, by which he was brought to this, was with him evidently but the *beginning of his work*, his first entering on the great business of religion and the service of God, his first setting out in his race. His obtaining rest of soul in Christ, after earnest striving to enter in at the strait gate, and being violent to take the kingdom of heaven, he did not look upon as putting an end to any further occasion for striving and violence in religion; but these were continued still, and maintained constantly, through all changes, to the very end of life. His work was not finished, nor his race ended, till life was ended; agreeably to frequent *Scripture representations* of the Christian life. He continued pressing forward in a constant manner, forgetting the things that were behind, and reaching forth towards the things that were before. His pains and earnestness in the business of religion were rather in-

DAVID BRAINERD. 267

creased than diminished, after he had received comfort and satisfaction concerning the safety of his state. Those divine principles, which after this he was actuated by, of love to God, and longings and thirstings after holiness, seem to be more effectual to engage him to pains and activity in religion, than fear of hell had been before.

And as his conversion was not the end of *his work*, or of the course of his diligence and strivings in religion; so neither was it the end of the *work of the Spirit* of God on his heart: but on the contrary, the beginning of that work, the beginning of his spiritual discoveries and holy views, the first dawning of the light which thenceforward increased more and more, the beginning of his holy affections, his sorrow for sin, his love to God, his rejoicing in Christ Jesus, his longings after holiness. And the powerful operations of the Spirit of God in these things, were carried on from the day of his conversion, in a continued course, to his dying day. His religious experiences, his admiration, his joy, and praise, and flowing affections, did not only hold up to a considerable height for a few days, weeks, or months, at first, while hope and comfort were new things with him, and then gradually dwindle and die away, till they came to almost nothing, and so leave him without any sensible or remarkable experience of spiritual discoveries, or holy and divine affections, for months together; as it is with many,

who, after the newness of things is over, soon come to that pass, that it is again with them very much as it is used to be before their supposed conversion, with respect to any present views of God's glory, of Christ's excellency, or of the beauty of divine things, and with respect to any present thirstings for God, or ardent outgoings of their souls after divine objects, but only now and then they have a comfortable reflection on things they have met with in times past, and are something affected with them, and so rest easy, thinking all things are well, they have had a good *clear work*, and their state is safe, and they doubt not but they shall go to heaven when they die. How far otherwise was it with Mr. Brainerd, than it is with such persons! His experiences, instead of dying away, were evidently of an increasing nature. His first love, and other holy affections, even at the beginning were very great, but after months and years, became much greater, and more remarkable; and the spiritual exercises of his mind continued exceeding great (though not equally so at all times, yet usually so), without indulged remissness, and without habitual dwin-

268 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

dling and dying away, even till his decease. They began in a time of general deadness all over the land, and were greatly increased in a time of general reviving of religion. And when religion decayed again, and a general deadness returned, his experiences were still kept up in their height, and his holy exercises maintained in their life and vigour, and so continued to be, in a general course, wherever he was, and whatever his circumstances were —among English and Indians, in company and alone, in towns and cities, and in the howling wilderness, in sickness and in health, living and dying. This is agreeable to Scripture descriptions of true and right religion, and of the Christian life. The change that was wrought him at his conversion, was agreeable to Scripture representations of that change which is wrought in true conversion —a great change, and an abiding change, rendering him a new man, a new creature, not only a change as to hope and comfort, and an apprehension of his own good estate, and a transient change, consisting in high flights of passing affections; but a change of *nature*, a change of the abiding habit and temper of his mind. Nor [was it] a partial change, merely in point of opinion, or outward reformation, much less a change from one error to another, or from one sin to another; but an universal change, both internal and external; as from corrupt and dangerous principles in religion, unto the belief of the truth, so from both the habits and ways of sin, unto universal holiness of heart and practice; from the power and service of Satan unto God.

2. His religion did apparently and greatly *differ* from that of many high pretenders to religion, who are frequently actuated by *vehement emotions* of mind, and are carried on in a course of *sudden* and *strong impressions*, and supposed *high illuminations* and *immediate discoveries*, and at the same time are persons of a virulent “zeal, not according to knowledge.”

His convictions, preceding his conversion, did not arise from any frightful *impressions on his imagination*, or any external images and ideas of fire and brimstone, a sword of vengeance drawn, a dark pit open, devils in terrible shapes, &c. strongly fixed in his mind. His sight of his own sinfulness did not consist in any imagination of a heap of loathsome material filthiness within him; nor did his sense of the hardness of his heart consist in any bodily

feeling in his breast something hard and heavy like a stone, nor in any imaginations whatever of such a nature.

DAVID BRAINERD. 269

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 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,

270 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

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 for 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.

Some of the pretenders to an *immediate* witness by suggestion, and defenders of it, with an assuming confidence, would bear us in hand, that there is no full assurance without it, and that the way of being satisfied by signs, and arguing an interest in Christ from sanctification, if it will keep men quiet in life and health, yet will never do when they come to *die*; then (they say) men must have *immediate* witness, or else be in a dreadful uncertainty. But Mr. Brainerd's experience is a confutation of this; for in him we have an instance of one that possessed as constant and unshaken an assurance, through the course of his life, after

DAVID BRAINERD. 271

conversion, as perhaps can be produced in this age; which yet he obtained and enjoyed without any such sort of *testimony*, and without all manner of appearance of it, or pretence to it; yea, while utterly disclaiming any such thing, and declaring against it; and one whose assurance, we need not scruple to affirm, has as fair a claim and as just a pretension to truth and genuineness, as any that the pretenders to *immediate witness* can produce; and not only an instance of one that had such assurance in life, but had it in a constant manner in his last illness, and particularly in the latter stages of it, through those last months of his life wherein *death* was more sensibly approaching, without the least hope of life: and had it too in its *fulness*, and in the height of its exercise, under those repeated trials that he had in this space of time. When brought from time to time to the very brink of the grave, expecting in a few minutes to be in eternity, he had "the full assurance of hope unto the end." When on the verge of eternity, he then declares his assurance to be such as perfectly secluded all fear; and not only so, but; it manifestly filled his soul with exceeding joy, he declaring at the same time that this his consolation and good hope through grace arose wholly from the *evidence* he had of his good estate, by what he found of his sanctification, or the exercise of a holy, heavenly temper of mind, supreme love to God, &c., and not in the least from any *immediate* witness by suggestion; yea, he declares that at these very times he saw the awful *delusion* of that confidence which is built on such a foundation, as well as of the whole of that religion which it usually springs from, or at least is the attendant of, and that his soul abhorred those delusions; and he continued in this mind, often expressing it with much solemnity, even till death.

Mr. Brainerd's religion was not *selfish* and *mercenary*. His love to God was primarily and principally for the supreme excellency of his *own nature*, and not built on a preconceived notion that God loved *him*, had received *him* into favour, and had done great things *for him*, or promised great things *to him*; so his joy was joy in God, and not in himself. We see by his *diary* how, from time to time, through the course of his life, his soul was filled with ineffable sweetness and comfort. But what was the spring of this strong and abiding consolation? Not so much the consideration of the sure grounds he had to think that his state was good, that God had delivered him from hell, and that s

272 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

heaven was *his*; or any thoughts concerning his own distinguished, happy, and exalted circumstances, as a high favourite of heaven; but the sweet meditations and entertaining views he had of divine things *without himself*; the affecting considerations and lively ideas of God's infinite glory, his unchangeable blessedness, his sovereignty and universal dominion; together with the sweet exercises of love to God, giving himself up to him, abasing himself before him, denying himself for him, depending upon him, acting for his glory, diligently serving him; and the pleasing prospects or hopes he had of a future advancement of the kingdom of Christ, &c.

It appears plainly and abundantly all along, from his conversion to his death, that that beauty, that sort of good, which was the great object of the new sense of his mind, the new relish and appetite given him in conversion, and thenceforward maintained and increased in his heart, was HOLINESS, conformity to God, living to God, and glorifying him. This was what drew his heart; this was the centre of his soul; this was the ocean to which all the streams of his religious affections tended; this was the object that engaged his eager, thirsting desires and earnest pursuits. He knew no true excellency or happiness but this; this was what he longed for most vehemently and constantly on *earth*, and this was with him the beauty and blessedness of *heaven*, which made him so much and so often to long for that world of glory; it was to be perfectly holy, and perfectly exercised in the holy employments of heaven, thus to glorify God, and enjoy him for ever.

His religious illuminations, affections, and comfort, seemed, to a great degree, to be attended with *evangelical humiliation*; consisting in a sense of his own utter insufficiency, despicableness, and odiousness, with an answerable disposition and frame of heart. How deeply affected was he almost continually with his great defects in religion, with his vast distance from that spirituality and holy frame of mind that became him, with his ignorance, pride, deadness, unsteadiness, barrenness? He was not only affected with the remembrance of his former sinfulness, before his conversion, but with the sense of his present vileness and pollution. He was not only disposed to think meanly of himself as *before God*, and in comparison of him, but *amongst men*, and as compared with them. He was apt to think other saints better than he, yea, to look on himself as the meanest and

least of saints, yea, very often, as the vilest and worst of mankind. And notwithstanding his great attainments in *spiritual knowledge*, yet we find there is scarce any thing that he is more frequently affected and abased with a sense of than his *ignorance*.

How eminently did he appear to be of a *meek* and *quiet* spirit, resembling the lamb-like, dove-like Spirit of Jesus Christ! how full of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness, and mercy! His love was not merely a fondness and zeal for a party, but an universal benevolence, very often exercised in the most sensible and ardent love to his greatest opposers and enemies. His love and meekness were not a mere pretence, and outward profession and show; but they were effectual things, manifested in expensive and painful deeds of love and kindness, and in a meek behaviour; readily confessing faults under the greatest trials, and humbling himself even at the feet of those from whom he supposed he had suffered most, and from time to time very frequently praying for his enemies, abhorring the thoughts of bitterness or resentment towards them. I scarcely know where to look for any parallel instance of self-denial, in these respects, in the present age. He was a person of great zeal; but how did he abhor a bitter zeal, and lament it where he saw it! and though he was once drawn into some degrees of it, by the force of prevailing example (as it were in his childhood), yet how did he go about with a heart bruised and broken in pieces for it all his life after!

Of how *soft* and *tender* a spirit was he! How far were his experiences, hopes, and joys from a tendency finally to stupify and harden him, to lessen convictions and tenderness of conscience, to cause him to be less affected with present and past sins, and less conscientious with respect to future sins, more easy in the neglect of duties that are troublesome and inconvenient, more slow and partial in complying with difficult commands, less apt to be alarmed at the appearance of his own defects and transgressions, more easily induced to a compliance with carnal appetites! On the contrary, how tender was his conscience! how apt was his heart to smite him! how easily and greatly was he alarmed at the appearance of moral evil! how great and constant was his jealousy over his own heart! how strict his care and watchfulness against sin! how deep and sensible were the wounds that sin made in his conscience! Those evils that are generally accounted small, were almost an insupportable burden to

274 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

him; such as his inward deficiencies, his having no more love to God, finding within himself any slackness or dulness in religion, any unsteadiness, or wandering frame of mind, &c., how did the consideration of such things as these oppress and abase him, and fill him with inward shame and confusion! His love and hope, though they were such as cast out a servile fear of hell, yet they were such as were attended with, and abundantly cherished and promoted, a reverential, filial fear of God, a dread of sin and of God's holy displeasure. His joy seemed truly to be a rejoicing with trembling. His assurance and comfort differed greatly from a false, enthusiastic 'Confidence and joy, in that it promoted and maintained mourning for sin. Holy mourning, with him, was not only the work of an hour or a day, at his first conversion; but sorrow for sin was like a wound constantly running; he was a mourner for sin all his days. He did not, after he received comfort and full satisfaction of the forgiveness of all his

sins, and the safety of his state, forget his past sins, the sins of his youth, that were committed before his conversion; but the remembrance of them from time to time revived in his heart, with renewed grief. That in Ezek. xvi. 63, was evidently fulfilled in him, “That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done.” And how lastingly did the sins that he committed after his conversion affect and break his heart! if he did any thing whereby he thought he had in any respect dishonoured God, and wounded the interest of religion, he had never done with calling it to mind with sorrow and bitterness; though he was assured that God had forgiven it, yet he never forgave himself; his past sorrows and fears made no satisfaction with him, but still the wound renews and bleeds afresh, again and again. And his present sins, that he daily found in himself, were an occasion of daily sensible and deep sorrow of heart.

His religion did not consist in unaccountable *flights* and vehement *pangs* —suddenly rising, and suddenly falling —at some turns exalted almost to the third heavens, and then at other turns negligent, vain, carnal, and swallowed up with the world, for days and weeks, if not months together. His religion was not like a blazing meteor, or like a flaming comet (or a wandering star, as the apostle Jude calls it, ver. 13), flying through the firmament with a bright train, and then quickly going out in perfect darkness; but more like

DAVID BRAINERD. 275

the steady lights of heaven, that are constant principles of light, though sometimes hid with clouds. Nor like a landflood, which flows far and wide, with a rapid stream, bearing down all before it, and then dried up; but more like a stream fed by living springs, which, though sometimes increased by showers, and at other times diminished by drought, yet is a *constant stream*.

His religious affections and joys were not like those of some, who have rapture and mighty emotions from time to time in *company*, but have very little affection in retirement and secret places. Though he was of a very sociable temper, and loved the company of saints, and delighted very much in religious conversation, and in social worship; yet his warmest affections, and their greatest effects on animal nature, and his sweetest joys, were in his closet devotions, and solitary transactions between God and his own soul; as is very observable through his whole course, from his conversion to his death. He delighted greatly in sacred retirements, and loved to get quite away from all the world, to converse with God alone, in secret duties.

Mr. Brainerd’s experiences and comforts were very far from being like those of some persons, which are attended with a spiritual *satiety*, and put an end to their religious desires and longings, at least to the edge and ardency of them; resting satisfied in their own attainments and comforts, as having obtained their chief end, which is to extinguish their fears of hell, and give them confidence of the favour of God. How far were his religious affections, refreshments, and satisfactions from such an operation and influence as this! On the contrary, how were they always attended with longings and thirstings after greater degrees of *conformity* to God! And the greater and sweeter his comforts were, the more

vehement were his desires after *holiness*. For it is to be observed, that his longings were not so much after joyful discoveries of God's love, and clear views of his title to future advancement and eternal honours in heaven; as after more of present holiness, greater spirituality, an heart more engaged for God, to love, and exalt, and depend on him, an ability better to serve him, to do more for his glory, and to do all that he did with more of a regard to Christ as his righteousness and strength; and the enlargement and advancement of Christ's kingdom in the earth. And his desires were not idle wishings and wouldings, but such as were powerful and effectual, to animate him to the earnest, eager pursuit of these

276 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

things, with utmost diligence and unfainting labour and self-denial. His comforts never put an end to his seeking after God, and striving to obtain his grace; but, on the contrary, greatly engaged and enlarged him therein.

His religion did not consist only in *experience* without *practice*. All his inward illuminations, affections, and comforts, seemed to have a direct tendency to practice, and to issue in it; and this, not merely a practice *negatively* good, free from gross acts of irreligion and immorality, but a practice *positively* holy and Christian, in a serious, devout, humble, meek, merciful, charitable, and beneficent conversation; making the service of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the great business of life which he was devoted to, and pursued with the greatest earnestness and diligence to the end of his days, through all trials. 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 in *deed*; 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 pretended, 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 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.”

Nor can it be pretended, that the reason why he condemned these and other things, which this sort of people call the very height of vital religion and the power of godliness, was, that he was a *dead Christian*, and lived *in the dark* (as they

278 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

express themselves); that his experiences, though they might be true, were not great; that he did not live near to God, had but a small acquaintance with him, and had but a dim sight of spiritual things. If any, after they have read the preceding account of Mr. Brainerd's life, will venture to pretend thus, they will only show that *they themselves* are in the *dark*, and do indeed “put darkness for light, and light for darkness.”

It is common with this sort of people, if there is any one whom they cannot deny to exhibit good evidences of true godliness, who yet appears to dislike their notions, and condemn those things wherein they place the height of religion, to insinuate that *they are afraid of the cross*, and have a mind to *curry favour with the world*, and the like. But I presume this will not be pretended concerning Mr. Brainerd, by any one person that has read the preceding account of his life. It must needs appear a thing notorious to such, that he was an

extraordinary, and almost unparalleled instance (in these times, and these parts of the world) of the contrary disposition; and *that*, whether we consider what he has recorded of his inward *experience*, from time to time; or his *practice* how he in fact took up and embraced the *cross*, and bore it constantly, in his great self-denials, labours, and sufferings for the name of Jesus, and went on without fainting, without repenting, or repining, to his dying illness, how he did not only, from time to time, relinquish and renounce the *world* secretly in his heart, with the full and fervent consent of all the powers of his soul, but openly and actually forsook the *world*, with its possessions, delights, and common comforts, to dwell as it were with wild beasts, in a howling wilderness; with constant cheerfulness complying with the numerous hardships of a life of toil and travel there, to promote the kingdom of his dear Redeemer. And besides, it appears by the preceding history, that he never did more condemn the things forementioned —never had a greater sense of their delusion, pernicious nature, and ill tendency —and never was more full of pity to those that are led away with them, than in his last illness, and at times when he had the nearest prospect of death, supposed himself to be on the very brink of eternity, and looked on all this lower world as what he never should have any thing more to do with. Surely he did not condemn those things at these seasons only to *curry favour with the world*.

DAVID BRAINERD. 279

Besides what has been already related of Mr. Brainerd's sentiments in his dying state concerning true and false religion, we have his deliberate and solemn thoughts on this subject further appearing by his *Preface* to Mr. Shepard's diary, before mentioned; which, when he wrote it, he supposed to be (as it proved) one of the *last* things he should ever write. I shall here insert a part of that *Preface*, as follows:

“How much stress is laid by many upon some things as being effects and evidences of exalted degrees of religion, when they are so far from being of any importance in it, that they are really irreligious, a mixture of *self-love*, *imagination*, and spiritual *pride*, or perhaps the influence of Satan transformed into an angel of light —I say, how much stress is laid on these things by many, I shall not determine; but it is much to be feared, that while God was carrying on a glorious work of grace, and undoubtedly gathering a harvest of souls to himself (which we should always remember with thankfulness), numbers of others have at the same time been fatally deluded by the devices of the devil and their own corrupt hearts. It is to be feared that the *conversions* of some have no better foundation than this, —viz., that after they have been under some concern for their souls for a while, and, it may be, manifested some very great and uncommon distress and agonies, they have on a sudden *imagined they saw Christ*, in some posture or other, perhaps on the cross, bleeding and dying for their sins, or it may be smiling on them, and thereby signifying his love to them; and that these and the like things, though mere imaginations, which have nothing spiritual in them, have instantly removed all their fears and distresses, filled them with raptures of joy, and made them imagine that they loved Christ with all their hearts; when the bottom of all was nothing but *self-love*. For when they imagined that Christ had been so good to them as to save them, and as it were to single them out of all the world, they could not but feel some kind of natural gratitude to him; although they never had any spiritual view of his divine glory, excellency, and

beauty, and consequently never had any love to him for himself. . Or that instead of having some such imaginary view of Christ as has been mentioned, in order to remove their distress, and give them joy, some having had a passage, or perhaps many passages of *Scripture* brought to their minds *with power* (as they express it), such as that, “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee,” and the like, they have immedi-

280 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

ately applied these passages to *themselves*, supposing that God hereby manifested his peculiar favour to *them*, as if mentioned by name —never considering that they are now giving heed to new revelations, there being no such thing revealed in the Word of God, as that *this* or *that* particular person has, or ever shall have, his sins forgiven; nor yet remembering that Satan can, with a great deal of seeming pertinency (and perhaps also with considerable power), bring Scripture to the minds of men, as he did to Christ himself, And thus these rejoice upon having some Scripture suddenly suggested to them, or impressed upon their minds, supposing they are now the children of God, just as did the other upon their imaginary views of Christ. And it is said, that some speak of seeing a great light which filled all the place where they were, and dispelled all their darkness, fears, and distresses, and almost ravished their souls. While others have had it warmly suggested to their minds, not by any passage of Scripture, but as it were by a *whisper* or voice from heaven, ‘That God loves them, that Christ is theirs,’ &c., which groundless imaginations and suggestions of Satan have had the same effect upon them, that the delusions before mentioned had on the others. And as is the conversion of this sort of persons, so are their *after-experiences*; the whole being built upon imagination, strong impressions, and sudden suggestions made to their minds; whence they are usually extremely confident (as if immediately informed from God) not only of the goodness of their own state, but of their infallible knowledge, and absolute certainty, of the truth of every thing they pretend to, under the notion of religion; and thus all reasoning with some of them is utterly excluded.

“But it is remarkable of these, that they are *extremely deficient* in regard of true poverty of spirit, sense of exceeding vileness in themselves, such as frequently makes truly gracious souls to *groan, being burdened*; as also in regard of meekness, love, and gentleness towards mankind, tenderness of conscience in their ordinary affairs and dealings in the world. And it is rare to see them deeply concerned about the principles and ends of their actions, and under fears lest they should not eye the glory of God chiefly, but live to themselves; or this at least is the case in their ordinary conduct, whether civil or religious. But if any one of their particular *notions*, which their zeal has espoused, be attacked, they are then so conscientious, they must *burn*, if called to it, for the defence of it. Yet, at the same time, when they are

DAVID BBAINERD. 281

so *extremely deficient* in regard of these precious *divine tempers* which have been mentioned, they are usually full of *zeal*, concern, and fervency in the things of religion, and often *discourse* of them with much warmth and engagement; and to those who do not

know, or do not consider, wherein the *essence* of true religion consists, viz. in being *conformed to the image of Christ*, not in point of zeal and fervency only, but in all divine tempers and practices; I say, to those who do not duly observe and distinguish, they often appear like the best of men.”

It is common with this sort of people to say, that “God is amongst them, his Spirit accompanies their exhortations, and other administrations, and they are sealed by the Holy Ghost,” in the remarkable success they have, in the great affections that are stirred up in God’s people. &c. —but to insinuate on the contrary, that “he is not with their opponents,” and particularly, “that God has forsaken the standing ministry, and that the time is come, when it is the will of God that they should be put down, and that God’s people should forsake them, and that no more success is to be expected to attend their administrations.” But where can they find an instance among all their most flaming *exhorters*, who has been sealed with so incontestable and wonderful success of his labours, as Mr. Brainerd, not only in quickening and comforting God’s children, but also in a work of conviction and conversion (which they own has in a great measure ceased for a long time among themselves), with a most visible and astonishing manifestation of God’s power, on subjects so unprepared, and that had been brought up and lived, some of them to old age, in the deepest prejudices against the very first principles of Christianity; the divine power accompanying his labours, producing the most remarkable and abiding change, turning the wilderness into a fruitful field, and causing that which was a desert indeed to bud and blossom as the rose! And this although he was not only one of their greatest *opponents* in their errors, but also one of those they call the *standing ministry* first examined and licensed to preach by *such ministers*, and sent forth among the heathen by *such ministers*, and afterwards ordained by *such ministers*, always directed by them, and united with them in their consistories, and administrations, and even abhorring the practice of those who give out that they ought to be renounced and separated from, and that teachers may be ordained by laymen.

282 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

It cannot be pretended by these men, that Mr. Brainerd condemned their religion, only because he was *not acquainted with them*, and had not opportunity for full observation of the nature, operation, and tendency of their *experience*; for he had abundant and peculiar opportunities of such observation and acquaintance. He lived through the late extraordinary time of religious commotion, and saw the beginning and end, the good and the bad of it. He had opportunity to see the various operations and effects, that were wrought in this season, more *extensively* than any person I know of. His native place was about the middle of Connecticut, and he was much conversant in all parts of that colony. He was conversant in the eastern parts of it, after the religion which he condemned began much to prevail there. He was conversant with the zealous people on Long Island, from one end of the island to the other, and also in New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, with people of various nations. He had some special opportunities in some places in this province (Massachusetts Bay), where has been very much of this sort of religion, and at a time when it greatly prevailed. He had conversed and disputed with abundance of this kind of people in various parts, as he told me, and also informed me that he had seen something of the same appearances in some of the Indians whom he had preached to, and had opportunity to see the beginning and end of them.

And besides, Mr. Brainerd could speak more feelingly and understandingly concerning these things, because there was once a time when he was drawn away into an esteem of them, and for a short season had united himself to this kind of people, and partook, in some respects, of their spirit and behaviour.

But I proceed to another observation on the foregoing memoirs.

II. This history of Mr. Brainerd's may help us to make *distinctions* among the high religious *affections* and remarkable *impressions* made on the minds of persons, in a time of great *awakening* and *revival of religion*, and may convince us, that there are not only distinctions in *theory*, invented to save the credit of pretended revivals of religion, and what is called *the experience of the operations of the Spirit*, but distinctions that do actually take place in the course of *events*, and have a real and evident foundation in *fact*.

Many *do* and *will* confound things, blend all together, and say, "It is all alike, it is all of the same sort." So there are

DAVID BRAINERD. 283

many that say concerning the religion most generally prevailing among the Separatists, and the affections they manifest, "It is the same that was all over the land seven years ago." And some that have read Mr. Brainerd's Journal, giving an account of the extraordinary things that have come to pass among the Indians in New Jersey, say, "It is evidently the same thing that appeared in many places amongst the English, which has now proved nought, and come to that which is worse than nothing." And all the reason they have thus to determine all to be the *same work*, and the *same Spirit*, is, that the one manifested high affections, and so do the other; the great affections of the one had some influence on their bodies, and so have the other; the one use the terms *conviction*, *conversion*, *humiliation*, *coming to Christ*, *discoveries*, *experiences*, &c., and so do the other; the impressions on the one are attended with a great deal of zeal, and so it is with the other; the affections of the one dispose them to speak much about things of religion, and so do the other; the one delight much in religious meetings, and so do the other. The agreement that appears in these, and such-like things, make them conclude, that surely all is alike, all is the same work. Whereas, on a closer inspection and critical examination, it would appear, that notwithstanding an agreement in such circumstances, yet, indeed there is a vast difference, both in *essence* and *fruits*. A considerable part of the religious operations, that were six or seven years ago, especially towards the latter part of that extraordinary season, was doubtless of the same sort with the religion of the Separatists; but not all; there were many whose experiences were, like Mr. Brainerd's, in a judgment of charity, genuine and incontestable.

Not only do the opposers of all religion consisting in powerful operations and affections, thus confound things; but many of the *pretenders* to *such* religion do so. They that have been the subjects of some sort of vehement, but vain operations on their mind, when they hear the relation of the experiences of some real and eminent Christians, they say, their experiences are of the same sort; so they say, they are just like the experiences of eminent Christians in former times, which we have printed accounts of. So, I doubt not but there are many deluded

people, if they should read the preceding account of Mr. Brainerd's life, who, reading without much understanding, or careful observation, would say, without hesitation, that some things which they have met

284 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

with are of the very same kind with what he expresses; when the agreement is only in some general circumstances, or some particular things that are superficial, and belonging as it were to the profession and outside of religion; but the inward temper of mind, and the fruits in practice, are as opposite and distant as east and west.

Many honest, good people also, and true Christians, do not very well know how to make a difference. The glistening appearance and glaring show of false religion dazzles their eyes, and they sometimes are so deluded by it, that they look on some of these impressions, which hypocrites tell of, as the brightest experiences. And though they have experienced no such things themselves, they think it is because they are vastly lower in attainments, and but babes, in comparison of these flaming Christians. Yea, sometimes from their differing so much from those who make so great a show, they doubt whether they have any grace at all. And it is a hard thing to bring many well-meaning people to make proper distinctions in this case, and especially to maintain and stand by them, through a certain weakness they unhappily labour of, whereby they are liable to be overcome with the glare of outward appearances. Thus, if in a sedate hour they are by reasoning brought to allow such and such distinctions, yet the next time they come in the way of the great show of false religion, the dazzling appearance swallows them up, and they are carried away. Thus the devil, by his cunning artifices, easily dazzles the feeble sight of men, and puts them beyond a capacity of a proper exercise of consideration, or hearkening to the dictates of calm thoughts, and cool understanding. When they perceive the great affection, earnest talk, strong voice, assured looks, vast confidence, and bold assertions, of these empty, assuming pretenders, they are overcome, lose the possession of their judgment, and say, "Surely these men are in the right, God is with them of a truth: "and so they are carried away, not with light and reason, but (like children) as it were with a strong wind.

This confounding all things together that have a fair show, is but acting the part of a child, that going into a shop, where a variety of wares are exposed to sale (all of a shining appearance; some vessels of gold and silver, and some diamonds and other precious stones; and other things that are toys of little value, which are of some base metal, gilt, or glass polished, and painted with curious colours, or cut like diamonds), should esteem all alike, and give as great

DAVID BRAINERD. 235

a price for the vile as for the precious: or it is like the conduct of some unskilful, rash person, who, finding himself deceived by some of the wares he had bought at that shop, should at once conclude, all he there saw was of no value, and pursuant to such a conclusion, when afterwards he has true gold and diamonds offered him, enough to enrich him and enable him to live like a prince all his days, he should throw it all into the sea.

But we *must* get into another way. The want of distinguishing in things that appertain to experimental religion, is one of the chief miseries of the professing world. It is attended with very many most dismal consequences; multitudes of souls are fatally deluded about themselves, and their own state, and so are eternally undone; hypocrites are confirmed in their delusions, and exceedingly puffed up with pride; many sincere Christians are dreadfully perplexed, darkened, tempted, and drawn aside from the way of duty, and sometimes sadly tainted with false religion, to the great dishonour of Christianity, and hurt of their own souls; some of the most dangerous and pernicious enemies of religion in the world (though called bright Christians) are encouraged and honoured, who ought to be discountenanced and shunned by every body; and prejudices are begotten and confirmed in vast multitudes, against every thing wherein the power and essence of godliness consists, and in the end Deism and Atheism are promoted.

III. The foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd's life may afford matter of conviction, that there is indeed such a thing as true *experimental religion*, arising from immediate divine influences, supernaturally enlightening and convincing the mind, and powerfully impressing, quickening, sanctifying, and governing the heart; which religion is indeed an amiable thing, of happy tendency, and of no hurtful consequence to human *society*; notwithstanding there having been so many pretences and appearances of what is called experimental vital religion, that have proved to be nothing but vain, pernicious *enthusiasm*.

If any insist, that Mr. Brainerd's religion was *enthusiasm*, and nothing but a strange heat and blind fervour of mind, arising from the strong fancies and dreams of a notional, whimsical brain I would ask, if it be so that such things *MS* these are the fruits of enthusiasm, viz., a great degree of honesty and simplicity, sincere and earnest desires and en-

286 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

deavours to know and do whatever is right, and to avoid every thing that is wrong, a high degree of love to God, delight in the perfections of his nature, placing the happiness of life in him, not only in contemplating him, but in being active in pleasing and serving him, a firm and undoubting belief in the Messiah, as the Saviour of the world, the great Prophet of God, and King of God's church, together with great love to him, delight and complacency in the way of salvation by him, and longing for the enlargement of his kingdom, earnest desires that God may be glorified and the Messiah's kingdom advanced, whatever instruments are made use of, uncommon resignation to the will of God, and that under vast trials, great and universal benevolence to mankind, reaching all sorts of persons without distinction, manifested in sweetness of speech and behaviour, kind treatment, mercy, liberality, and earnest seeking the good of the souls and bodies of men, attended with extraordinary humility, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, and love to enemies, and a great abhorrence of a contrary spirit and practice, not only as appearing in others, but whereinsoever it had appeared in himself, causing the most bitter repentance and brokenness of heart on account of any past instances of such a conduct, a modest, discreet, and decent deportment, among superiors, inferiors, and equals, a most diligent improvement of time, and earnest care to lose no part of it, great watchfulness against all sorts of sin, of heart, speech, and action, and this

example and these endeavours attended with most happy fruits, and blessed effects on others, in humanizing, civilizing, and wonderfully reforming and transforming some of the most brutish savages, idle, immoral, drunkards, murderers, gross idolaters, and wizards, bringing them to permanent sobriety, diligence, devotion, honesty, conscientiousness, and charity — and the foregoing amiable’ virtues and successful labours all ending at last in a marvellous peace, unmoveable stability, calmness, and resignation, in the sensible approaches of death, with longing for the heavenly state, not only for the honours and circumstantial advantages of it, but above all for the moral perfection, and holy and blessed employments of it, and these things in a person indisputably of good understanding and judgment —I say, if all these things are the fruits of *enthusiasm*, why should not *enthusiasm* be thought a desirable and excellent thing? for what can true religion, what can the best philosophy do more? If vapours and whimsy will bring men to the most

DAVID BRAINERD. 287

thorough virtue, to the most benign and fruitful morality, and will maintain it through a course of life (attended with many trials) without affectation or self-exaltation, and with an earnest, constant bearing testimony against the wildness, the extravagances, the bitter zeal, assuming behaviour, and separating spirit of enthusiasts, and will do all this more effectually, than any thing else has ever done in any plain known instance that can be produced; if it be so, I say, what cause then has the world to prize and pray for this blessed whimsicalness, and these benign sort of vapours?

It would perhaps be a prejudice with some against the whole of Mr. Brainerd’s religion, if it had begun in the time of the *late religious commotion*, being ready to conclude (however unreasonably) that nothing good could take its rise from those times. But it was not so; his conversion was *before* those times, in a time of general deadness (as has been before observed), and therefore at a season when it was impossible that he should receive a taint from any corrupt notions, examples, or customs that had birth in those times.

And whereas there are many who are not professed opposers of what is called *experimental religion*, who yet doubt of the reality of it, from the *bad lives* of some professors, and are ready to determine that there is nothing in all the talk about being *born again*, being *emptied of self*, *brought to a saving close with Christ*, &c., because many that pretend to these things, and are thought by others to have been the subjects of them, manifest no abiding alteration in their moral disposition and behaviour, are as careless, carnal, and covetous, &c., as ever, yea, some much worse than ever — it is to be acknowledged and lamented, that this is the case with some — but by the preceding account they may be sensible that it is not so with all. There are some indisputable instances of such a change as the Scripture speaks of, an abiding great change, a “renovation of the spirit of the mind,” and a “walking in newness of life.” In the foregoing instance particularly, they may see the abiding influence of such a work of conversion as they have heard of from the Word of God, the fruits of such experiences through a course of years, under a great variety of circumstances, many changes of state, place, and company, and may see the blessed issue and event of it in life and death.

IV. The preceding history serves to confirm those doc-

trines usually called the *doctrines of grace*. For if it be allowed that there is truth, substance, or value in the main of Mr. Brainerd's religion, it will undoubtedly follow, that those doctrines are divine; since it is evident, that the whole of it, from beginning to end, is according to that scheme of things; all built on those apprehensions, notions, and views, that are produced and established in the mind by those doctrines. He was brought by doctrines of this kind to his awakening, and deep concern about things of a spiritual and eternal nature; and by these doctrines his convictions were maintained and carried on; and his conversion was evidently altogether agreeable to this scheme, but by no means agreeing with the contrary, and utterly inconsistent with the Arminian notion of conversion or repentance. His conversion was plainly founded in a clear, strong conviction, and undoubting persuasion of the truth of those things appertaining to these doctrines, which Arminians most object against, and which his own mind had contended most about. And his conversion was no confirming and perfecting of moral principles and habits, by use and practice, and his own labour in an industrious disciplining himself, together with the concurring suggestions and conspiring aids of God's Spirit; but entirely a supernatural work, at once turning him from darkness to marvellous light, and from the power of sin to the dominion of divine and holy principles; an effect, in no regard produced by *his* strength or labour, or obtained by *his* virtue, and not accomplished till he was first brought to a full conviction, that all his own virtue, strength, labours, and endeavours, could never avail any thing to the producing or procuring this effect.

A very little while before, his mind was full of the same cavils against the doctrines of God's sovereign grace, which are made by Arminians, and his heart full even of a raging opposition to them. And God was pleased to perform this good work in him just after a full end had been put to this cavilling and opposition, after he was entirely convinced that he was dead in sin, and was in the hands of God, as the absolutely sovereign, unobliged, sole disposer and author of true holiness. God's showing him mercy at such a time, is a confirmation that this was a preparation for mercy, and consequently, that these things which he was convinced of were true. While he opposed these things, he was the subject of no such mercy; though he so earnestly sought it, and prayed for it with so much painfulness, care, and strictness

DAVID BRAINERD. 289

in religion; but when once his opposition is fully subdued, and he is brought to submit to the truths which he before had opposed, with full conviction —then the mercy he sought for is granted, with abundant light, great evidence, and exceeding joy, and he reaps the sweet fruit of it all his life after, and in the valley of the shadow of death.

In his conversion he was brought to see the glory of that way of salvation by Christ, that is taught in what are called the *doctrines of grace*; and thenceforward, with unspeakable joy and complacency, to embrace and acquiesce in that way of salvation. He was in his conversion in all respects brought to those views, and that state of mind which these doctrines show to be necessary. And if his conversion was any real conversion, or any thing

besides a mere whim, and if the religion of his life was any thing else but a series of freaks of a whimsical mind, then this one grand principle —on which depends the whole difference between Calvinists and Arminians —is undeniable, viz., that the grace or virtue of truly good men not only differs from the virtue of others in *degree*, but even in *nature* and *kind*. If ever Mr. Brainerd was truly turned from sin to God at all, or ever became truly religious, none can reasonably doubt but that his conversion was at the time when he supposed it to be; the change he then experienced was evidently the greatest moral change that ever he passed under; and he was then apparently first brought to that kind of religion, that remarkable new habit and temper of mind, which he held all his life after. The narration shows it to be different, in *nature* and *kind*, from all that ever he was the subject of before. It was evidently wrought at once, without fitting and preparing his mind by gradually convincing it more and more of the same truths, and bringing it nearer and nearer to such a temper —for it was soon after his mind had been remarkably full of blasphemy, and a vehement exercise of sensible enmity against God, and great opposition to those truths, which he was now brought with his whole soul to embrace, and rest in, as divine and glorious, and to place his happiness in the contemplation and improvement of. And he himself (who was surely best able to judge) declares, that the dispositions and affections which were then given him, and thenceforward maintained in him, were (most sensibly and certainly) perfectly different in their *nature* from all that ever he was the subject of before, or that he ever had any conception of. This he ever stood to, and was peremptory in (as what he certainly knew), even to his death. He

290 REFLECTIONS OF THE MEMOIRS OF

must be looked upon as capable of judging; he had opportunity to know; he had practised a great deal of religion before, was exceeding strict and conscientious, and had continued so for a long time; had various religious affections, with which he often flattered himself, and sometimes pleased himself as being now in a good estate; and after he had those new experiences, that began in his conversion, they were continued to the end of his life; long enough for him thoroughly to observe their nature, and compare them with what had been before. Doubtless he was *compos mentis*, and was at least one of so good an understanding and judgment as to be pretty well capable of discerning and comparing the things that passed in his own mind.

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

DAVID BRAINERD. 291

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?

And here is worthy to be considered, not only the effect of Calvinistical doctrines (as they are called) on Mr. Brainerd himself, but also the effect of the same doctrines, as taught and inculcated by him, on *others*. It is abundantly pretended and asserted of late, that these doctrines tend to undermine the very foundations of all religion and morality, and to enervate and vacate all reasonable motives to the exercise and practice of them, and lay invincible stumbling blocks before Infidels, to hinder their embracing Christianity; and that the contrary doctrines are the fruitful principles of virtue and goodness, set religion on its right basis, represent it in an amiable light, give its motives their full force, and recommend it to the reason and common sense of mankind. But where can they find an instance of so great and signal an effect of their doctrines, in bringing Infidels, who were at such a distance from all that is civil, human, sober, rational, and Christian, and so full of inveterate prejudices against these things, to such a degree of humanity, civility, exercise of reason, self-denial, and Christian virtue? Arminians place religion in *morality*; let them bring, an instance of their doctrines producing such a transformation of a people in

292 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

point of *morality*. It is strange, if the all-wise God so orders things in his providence, that reasonable and proper *means*, and *his own* means which he himself has appointed, should in

no known remarkable instance be instrumental to produce so good an effect, an effect so agreeable to his own word and mind, and that very effect for which he appointed these excellent means —that they should not be so successful as those means which are *not* his own, but very contrary to them, and of a contrary tendency —means that are in themselves very absurd, and tend to root all religion and virtue out of the world, to promote and establish Infidelity, and to lay an insuperable stumbling block before Pagans, to hinder their embracing the gospel: I say, if this be the true state of the case, it is certainly pretty wonderful, and an event worthy of some attention.

I know that many will be ready to say, “It is too soon yet to glory in the work that has been wrought among Mr. Brainerd’s Indians; it is best to wait and see the final event; it may be, all will come to nothing by and by.” To which I answer (not to insist, that it will not follow, according to Arminian principles, they are not now true Christians, really pious and godly, though they *should* fall away and come to nothing), that I never supposed every one of ‘those Indians, who in profession renounced their heathenism and visibly embraced Christianity, and have had some appearance of piety, will finally prove true converts; if two-thirds, or indeed one-half of them (as great a proportion as there is in the parable of the *ten virgins*) should persevere, it will be sufficient to show the work wrought among them to have been truly admirable and glorious. But so much of permanence of their religion has already appeared, as shows it to be something else besides an Indian humour or good mood, or any transient effect in the conceits, notions, and affections of these ignorant people, excited at a particular turn, by artful management. For it is now more than *three years* ago that this work began among them, and a remarkable change appeared in many of them; since which time the number of visible converts has greatly increased, and by repeated accounts, from several hands, they still generally persevere in diligent religion and strict virtue. I think worthy to be here inserted a *letter* from a young gentleman, a candidate for the ministry, one of those before mentioned, appointed by the honourable commissioners in Boston, as missionaries to the heathen of the Six Nations, so called; who, by their order,

DAVID BRAINERD. 293

dwelt with Mr. John Brainerd among these Christian Indians, in order to their being prepared for the business of their mission. The letter was written from thence to his parents here in Northampton, and is as follows:

Bethel, in New Jersey, Jan. 14, 1747-8.

HONOURED AND DEAR PARENTS, After a long and uncomfortable journey, by reason of bad weather, I arrived at Mr. Brainerd’s the 6th of this instant, where I design to stay this winter; and as yet, upon many accounts, am well satisfied with my coming hither. The state and circumstances of the Indians, spiritual and temporal, much exceed what I expected. I have endeavoured to acquaint myself with the state of the Indians in general, with particular persons, and with the school, as much as the short time I have been here would admit of. And notwithstanding my expectations were very much raised, from Mr. David Brainerd’s journal, and from particular informations from him; yet I must confess that in many respects they are not equal to that which now appears to me to be true, concerning the glorious work of divine grace amongst the Indians.

The evening after I came to town, I had opportunity to see the Indians together, whilst the Rev. Mr. Arthur preached to them; at which time there appeared a very general and uncommon seriousness and solemnity in the congregation; and this appeared to me to be the effect of an inward sense of the importance of divine truths, and not because they were hearing a stranger—which was abundantly confirmed to me the next Sabbath, when there was the same devout attendance on divine service, and a surprising solemnity appearing in the performance of each part of divine worship. And some, who are hopefully true Christians, appear to have been at that time much enlivened and comforted, not from any observable commotions then, but from conversation afterwards; and others seemed to be under pressing concern for their souls. I have endeavoured to acquaint myself with particular persons, many of whom seem to be very humble and growing Christians, although some of them (as I am informed) were before their conversion most monstrously wicked.

Religious conversation seems to be very pleasing and delightful to many, and especially that which relates to the exercises of the heart. And many here do not seem to be real Christians only, but growing Christians also, as well in doc-

294 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

trinal as experimental knowledge. Besides my conversation with particular persons, I have had opportunity to attend upon one of Mr. Brainerd's catechetical lectures, where I was surprised at their readiness in answering questions which they had not been used to, although Mr. Brainerd complained much of their uncommon deficiency. It is surprising to see this people, who not long since were led captive by Satan at his will, and living in the practice of all manner of abominations, without the least sense even of moral honesty, yet now living soberly and regularly, and not seeking every man his own, but every man, in some sense, his neighbour's good; and to see those, who but a little while past, knew nothing of the true God, now worshipping him in a solemn and devout manner, not only in public, but in their families and in secret; which is manifestly the case, it being a difficult thing to walk out in the woods in the morning, without disturbing persons at their secret devotions. And it seems wonderful that this should be the case, not only with adult persons, but with children also. It is observable here, that many children (if not the children in general) retire into secret places to pray. And, as far as at present I can judge, this is not the effect of custom and fashion, but of real seriousness and thoughtfulness about their souls.

I have frequently gone into the school, and have spent considerable time there amongst the children, and have been surprised to see, not only their diligent attendance upon the business of the school, but also the proficiency they have made in it, in reading and writing, and in their catechisms of divers sorts. It seems to be as pleasing and as natural to these children to have their books in their hands, as it does for many others to be at play. I have gone into a house where there has been a number of children accidentally gathered together, and observed that every one had his book in his hand, and was diligently studying of it. There is to the number of about thirty of these children who can

answer to all the questions in the Assembly's catechism; and the bigger part of them are able to do it with the proofs, to the fourth commandment. I wish there were many such schools. I confess that I never was acquainted with such an one, in many respects. O that what God has done here, may prove to be the beginning of a far more glorious and extensive work of grace among the heathen! —I am your obedient and dutiful son,

JOB STRONG.

DAVID BRAINERD. 295

P.S. Since the date of this, I have had opportunity to attend upon another of Mr. Brainerd's catechetical lectures; and truly I was convinced, that Mr. Brainerd did not complain before of his people's defects in answering to questions proposed without reason, for although their answers at that time exceeded my expectations very much, yet their performances at this lecture very much exceeds them.

Since this, we have had accounts from time to time, and some very late, which show that religion still continues in prosperous and most desirable circumstances among these Indians.

V. Is there not much in the preceding memoirs of Mr. Brainerd to teach, and excite to duty, us who are called to the work of the *ministry*, and all that are *candidates* for that great work? What a deep sense did he seem to have of the greatness and importance of that work, and with what weight did it lie on his mind! how sensible was he of his own insufficiency for this work, and how great was his dependence on God's sufficiency! how solicitous that he might be fitted for it! and to this end, how much time did he spend in prayer and fasting, as well as reading and meditation, *giving himself to these things*! how did he dedicate his whole life, all his powers and talents to God, and forsake and renounce the world, with all its pleasing and ensnaring enjoyments, that he might be wholly at liberty to serve Christ in this work, and to "please him who had chosen him to be a soldier, under the Captain of our salvation! "With what solicitude, solemnity, and diligence did he devote himself to God our Saviour, and seek his presence and blessing in secret, at the time of his *ordination*! and how did his whole heart appear to be constantly engaged, his whole time employed, and his whole strength spent in the business he then solemnly undertook and was publicly set apart to! And his history shows us the right way to *success* in the work of the ministry. He sought it as a resolute soldier seeks victory in a siege or battle, or as a man that runs a race for a great prize. Animated with love to Christ and souls, how did he "labour always fervently," not only in word and doctrine, in public and private, but in *prayers* day and night, "wrestling with God" in secret and "travailing in birth," with unutterable groans and agonies, "until Christ were formed" in the hearts of the people to whom he was sent! how did he thirst

296 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

for a blessing on his ministry; and "watch for souls, as one that must give account!" how did he "go forth in the strength of the Lord God;" seeking and depending on a special influence of the *Spirit* to assist and succeed him! and what was the happy fruit at last, though after long waiting, and many dark and discouraging appearances! Like a true son of Jacob, he persevered in wrestling, through all the darkness of the night, until the breaking of the day.

And his example of labouring, praying, denying himself, and enduring hardness, with unfainting resolution and patience, and his faithful, vigilant, and prudent conduct in many other respects (which it would be too long now particularly to recite), may afford instructions to *missionaries* in particular.

VI. The foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd's life may afford instruction to *Christians in general*; as it shows, in many respects, the right way of *practising* religion, in order to obtaining the *ends* of it, and receiving the *benefits* of it; or how Christians should "run the race set before, them," if they would not "run in vain, or run as uncertainly," but would honour God in the world, adorn their profession, be serviceable to mankind, have the comforts of religion while they live, be free from disquieting doubts and dark apprehensions about the state of their souls, enjoy peace in the approaches of death, and "finish their course with joy." In general, he much recommended, for this purpose, the *redemption of time*, great *diligence* in the business of the Christian life, *watchfulness*, &c. And he very remarkably exemplified these things.

But particularly, his example and success with regard to one duty in special, may be of great use to both ministers and private Christians; I mean the duty of *secret fasting*. The reader has seen how much Mr. Brainerd recommends this duty, and how frequently he exercised himself in it; nor can it well have escaped observation, how much he was owned and blessed in it, and of what great benefit it evidently was to his soul. Among all the many days he spent in secret fasting and prayer, that he gives an account of in his *diary*, there is scarce an instance of one, but what was either attended or soon followed with apparent success, and a remarkable blessing, in special incomes and consolations of God's Spirit; and very often, before the day was ended. But it must be observed, that when he set about this duty, he did

DAVID BRAINERD. 297

it in good earnest; "stirring up himself to take hold of God," and continuing instant in prayer," with much of the spirit of Jacob, who said to the angel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me."

VII. There is much in the preceding account to excite and encourage God's people to earnest prayers and endeavours for the *advancement* and *enlargement* of the *kingdom of Christ* in the *world*. Mr. Brainerd set us an excellent example in this respect; he sought the prosperity of Zion with all his might; he preferred Jerusalem above his chief joy. How did his soul long for it, and pant after it! and how earnestly and often did he wrestle with God for it! and how far did he, in these desires and prayers, seem to be carried beyond all private and selfish views! being animated by a pure love to Christ, an earnest desire of his glory, and a disinterested affection to the souls of mankind.

The consideration of this not only ought to be an *incitement* to the people of God, but may also be a just *encouragement* to them, to be much in seeking and praying for a general outpouring of the Spirit of God, and extensive revival of religion. I confess, that God's giving so much of a spirit of prayer for this mercy to so eminent a servant of his, and exciting him,

in so extraordinary a manner, and with such vehement thirstings of soul, to agonize in prayer for it, from time to time, through the course of his life, is one thing among others which gives me great hope, that God has a design of accomplishing something very glorious for the interest of his church before long. One such instance as this, I conceive, gives more encouragement than the common, cold, formal prayers of thousands. As Mr. Brainerd's desires and prayers for the coming of Christ's kingdom, were very *special* and *extraordinary*; so I think we may reasonably hope, that the God who excited those desires and prayers, will answer them with something *special* and *extraordinary*. And in a particular manner do I think it worthy to be taken notice of for our encouragement, that he had his heart (as he declared) unusually, and beyond what had been before, drawn out in longings and prayers for the flourishing of Christ's kingdom on earth, when he was in the approaches of *death*; and that with his dying breath he did as it were breathe out his departing soul into the bosom of his Redeemer, in prayers and pantings after this glorious event, expiring in a very great hope that it would soon begin to be fulfilled.

298 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

And I wish that the thoughts which he in his dying state expressed, of that explicit agreement and visible union of God's people, in extraordinary prayer for a general revival of religion, lately proposed in a memorial from Scotland which has been dispersed among us, may be well considered by those that hitherto have not seen fit to fall in with that proposal. But I forbear to say any more on this head, having already largely published my thoughts upon it, in a discourse written on purpose to promote that affair.

VIII. One thing more may not be unprofitably observed in the preceding account of Mr. Brainerd; and that is, the *special* and *remarkable disposal* of divine providence, with regard to the *circumstances* of his last *sickness and death*.

Though he had been long infirm, his constitution being much broken by his fatigues and hardships, and though he was often brought very low by illness, before he left Kaunaumee, and also while he lived at the Forks of Delaware —yet his life was preserved till he had seen that which he had so long greatly desired and sought, a glorious work of grace among the Indians, and had received the wished-for blessing of God on his labours. Though as it were “in deaths oft,” yet he lived to behold the happy fruits of the long continued travail of his soul and labour of his body, in the wonderful conversion of many of the heathen, and the happy effect of it in the great change of their conversation, with many circumstances which afforded a fair prospect of the continuance of God's blessing upon them —as may appear by what I shall presently further observe. Thus he did not “depart, till his eyes had seen God's salvation.”

Though it was the pleasure of God, that he should be taken off from his labours among that people whom God had made him a spiritual father to, who were so dear to him, and whose spiritual welfare he was so greatly concerned for; yet this was not before they were well initiated and instructed in the Christian religion, thoroughly weaned from their old heathenish and brutish notions and practices, and all their prejudices and jealousies, which tended to keep their minds unsettled, were fully removed, and they were confirmed and fixed in the

Christian faith and manners; were formed into a church, had ecclesiastical ordinances and discipline introduced and settled, were brought into a good way with respect to the education of children, had a schoolmaster sent to

DAVID BRAINERD. 299

them in providence, excellently qualified for the business, and had a school set up and established in good order among them, had been well brought off from their former idle, strolling, sottish way of living, had removed from their former scattered, uncertain habitations, and were collected in a town by themselves, on a good piece of land of their own, were introduced into the way of living by husbandry, and begun to experience the benefits of it, &c. These things were but just brought to pass by his indefatigable application and care, and then he was taken off from his work by illness. If this had been but a little sooner, they would by no means have been so well prepared for such a dispensation, and it probably would have been unspeakably more to the hurt of their spiritual interest, and of the cause of Christianity among them.

The time and circumstances of his illness were so ordered, that he had just opportunity to finish his journal, and prepare it for the press, giving an account of the marvellous display of divine power and grace among the Indians in New Jersey, and at the Forks of Delaware; his doing which was a thing of great consequence, and therefore urged upon him by the *correspondents*, who have honoured his journal with a preface. The world being particularly and justly informed of that affair by Mr. Brainerd, before his death, a foundation was hereby laid for a concern in *others* for that cause, and proper care and measures to be taken for the maintaining it after his death. And it has actually proved to be of great influence and benefit in this respect; it having excited and engaged many in those parts, and also more distant parts of America, to exert themselves for the upholding and promoting so good and glorious a work, remarkably opening their hearts and hands to that end —and not only in America, but in Great Britain, where that journal has been an occasion of some large benefactions, made for promoting the interest of Christianity among the Indians. If Mr. Brainerd had been taken ill but a little sooner, he had not been able to complete this his journal, and prepare a copy for the press.

He was not taken off from the work of the ministry among his people, till his *brother* was in a capacity and circumstances to succeed him in his care of them; who succeeds him in the like spirit, and under whose prudent and faithful care his congregation has flourished, and been very happy, since he left them, and probably could not have been so well provided for otherwise. If Mr. Brainerd had been disabled

300 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF

sooner, his *brother* would by no means have been ready to stand up in his place, having taken his first degree at college but about that very time that he was seized with his fatal consumption.

Though in that winter that he lay sick at Mr. Dickinson's in Elizabeth Town he continued for a long time in an extremely low state, so that his life was almost despaired of, and his state was sometimes such that it was hardly expected he would live a day to an end —yet his life was spared a while longer; he lived to see his brother arrived in New Jersey, being come to succeed him in the care of his Indians, and he himself had opportunity to assist in his examination and introduction into his business, and to commit the conduct of his dear people to one whom he well knew and could put confidence in, and use freedom with, in giving him particular instructions and charges, and under whose care he could leave his congregation with great cheerfulness.

The providence of God was remarkable in so ordering of it, that before his death he should take a journey into New England, and go to Boston; which was, in many respects, of very great and happy consequence to the interest of religion, and especially among his own people. By this means, as has been observed, he was brought into acquaintance with many persons of note and influence, ministers and others, belonging both to the town and various parts of the country, and had opportunity, under the best advantages, to bear a testimony for God and for true religion, and against those false appearances of it that have proved most pernicious to the interests of Christ's kingdom in the land. And the providence of God is particularly observable in the circumstance of the testimony he there bore for true religion, viz. that he there was brought so near the *grave*, and continued for so long a time on the very brink of eternity, and from time to time looked on himself, and was looked on by others, as just leaving the world, and that in these circumstances he should be so particularly directed and assisted in his thoughts and views of religion, to distinguish between the true and the false, with such clearness and evidence; and that after this he should be unexpectedly and surprisingly restored and strengthened, so far as to be able to converse freely, and have such opportunity and special occasions to declare the sentiments he had in these, which were, to human apprehension, his dying circumstances; and to bear his testimony concerning the nature of true religion, and concerning the mischiev-

DAVID BRAINERD. 301

ous tendency of its most prevalent counterfeits and false appearances, as things he had a special, clear, distinct view of at that time, when he expected in a few minutes to be in eternity, and the certainty and importance of which were then, in a peculiar manner, impressed on his mind.

Another thing wherein appears the merciful disposal of providence with respect to his death was, that he did not die in the wilderness, among the savages, at Kaunaraeek, or the Forks of Delaware, or at Susquehannah, but in a place where his dying behaviour and speeches might be observed and remembered, and some account given of them for the benefit of survivors, and also where care might be taken of him in his sickness, and proper honours done him at his death.

The providence of God is also worthy of remark, in so overruling and ordering the matter that he did not finally leave absolute orders for the entire suppressing of his *private papers*, as he had intended and fully resolved, insomuch that all the importunity of his friends could

scarce restrain him from doing it, when sick at Boston. And one thing relating to this is peculiarly remarkable, viz., that his brother, a little before his death, should come from the Jerseys unexpected, and bring his *diary* to him, though he had received no such order. So that he had opportunity of access to these his reserved papers, for reviewing the same, without which, it appears, he would at last have ordered them to be wholly suppressed; but after this, he the more readily yielded to the desires of his friends, and was willing to leave them in their hands to be disposed of as they thought might be most for God's glory, by which means, "he being dead, yet speaketh," in these memoirs of his life, taken from those private writings, whereby it is to be hoped he may still be as it were the instrument of much promoting the interest of religion in this world, the advancement of which he so much desired, and hoped would be accomplished after his death.

If these circumstances of Mr. Brainerd's death be duly considered, I doubt not but they will be acknowledged as a notable instance of God's fatherly care, and covenant-faithfulness toward them that are devoted to him, and faithfully serve him while they live; whereby "he never fails nor forsakes them, but *is with them* living and dying; so that whether they live, they live to the Lord, or whether they die, they die to the Lord; "and both in life and death they

302 REFLECTIONS ON THE MEMOIRS OF DAVID BRAINERD.

are owned and taken care of as *his*. Mr. Brainerd himself, as was before observed, was much in taking notice (when near his end) of the merciful circumstances of his death, and said, from time to time, that "God had granted him all his desire."

And I would not conclude my observations on the merciful circumstances of Mr. Brainerd's death, without acknowledging with thankfulness the. gracious dispensation of providence to me and my family, in so ordering that he (though the ordinary place of his abode was more than two hundred miles distant) should be cast hither, to my house, in his last sickness, and should die here; so that we had opportunity for much acquaintance and conversation with him, and to show him kindness in such circumstances, and to see his dying behaviour, to hear his dying speeches, to receive his dying counsels, and to have the benefit of his dying prayers. May God in infinite mercy grant, that we may ever retain a proper remembrance of these things, and make a due improvement of the advantages we have had in these respects! The Lord grant also that the foregoing account of Mr. Brainerd's life and death may be for the great spiritual benefit of all that shall read it, and prove a happy means of promoting the revival of true religion in these parts of the world. Amen,

THE END.