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“A Prey to Their Teeth”: Puritan Sermons and Ministerial Writings on Indians During King Philip’s War

Cover Page Footnote

Gregory Michna is Assistant Professor of History in the College of Arts and Humanities at Arkansas Tech University, Russellville, Arkansas. This article is adapted from a chapter in my doctoral dissertation, “A Communion of Churches: Indian Christians, English Ministers, and Congregations in New England, 1600-1775” (PhD diss., West Virginia University, Morgantown, 2016). I would like to thank Tyler Boulware, Matt Vester, Brian Luskey, Joe Hodge, and Ted Andrews for their comments on this article in its original form, as well as Kate Viens and Conrad Wright at the MHS for their comments during my brown bag presentation as a fellow. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their insight: the article is much improved due to their careful review and extensive comments. This research was made possible in part by a doctoral research fellowship from West Virginia University and the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship from the Massachusetts Historical Society.

"A Prey to Their Teeth": Puritan Sermons and Ministerial Writings on Indians During King Philip's War

Gregory Michna

The Lord hath performed all his work, his purging work, upon us, he can easily, and will lay by the rod... to exhort them to humiliation and repentance to be patient is meete in the sight both of God & men¹

John Eliot

The Indian Christians of Nashobah tried to make the best of their fearful remove to Concord, where they lived with John Hoare and labored in the workhouse that doubled as a nighttime shelter. Roughly sixty in number, the refugees had taken what belongings they could carry since the violence of King Philip's War had spiraled out of control and threatened to consume their community.² One Sunday morning while the Nashobah congregation gathered for their weekly sermon and prayers with Hoare, a mob led by Captain Samuel Mosely approached the building and demanded that the Indians, whom they called "barbarians," "savages," and "heathens," be released as their captives.³ Mosely had already stirred up trouble in Boston where he took it upon himself to capture a group of Indians guarding a fort at Okonhonesitt, which stood near the town of Marlborough. He and his soldiers fell on the Indian Christians there and bound them, looping interconnected nooses around their necks to lead their choking captives to Boston where a crowd called for their execution. When news of this reached Daniel Gookin, he went to the General Court to remind the magistrates that these were friendly Indians who were subject to English law, a point which convinced the magistrates to prevent their execution on that day and remove the Indians to safety.⁴ Despite this failed attempt at carrying out martial law, Mosely continued in this pattern of Indian-hating and lashing out against Indian Christians when he could, turning his attention to the refugees at Concord.

¹ John W. Ford, ed., *Some Correspondence Between the Governors and Treasures of the New England Company in London and the Commissioners of the United Colonies in America, the Missionaries of the Company and Others Between the Years 1657 and 1712 to Which Are Added the Journals of the Rev. Experience Mayhew in 1713 and 1714* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), 53.

² *Ibid.*, 54. Neal Salisbury, "Introduction," in *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God by Mary Rowlandson with Related Documents*, ed. by Neal Salisbury (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1997), 34, 43. I have made the stylistic decision to use the phrase "Indian Christian" rather than "Christian Indian" in keeping with the notion that, despite affiliation with Englishmen, Algonquian men and women identified primarily as Indians and incorporated aspects of Christianity secondarily, rejecting the European prerogative that Christianity triggered a complete apotheosis of identity in the individual that is inherent in the phrase "Christian Indian." The absence of personal journals by Indian "converts" in the seventeenth century makes the latter a more perilous assumption.

³ Daniel Gookin, *An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians in New England, In the Years 1675, 1676, 1677 Impartially Drawn By One Well Acquainted With That Affair, and Presented Unto the Right Honourable the Corporation Residing in London, Appointed By the King's Most Excellent Majesty for Promoting the Gospel Among the Indians in America* (Cambridge, 1836), 495-96.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 455-62.

When Mosely and his men arrived at Concord, they stopped first at the village meetinghouse to address the community once their religious service had ended. According to Daniel Gookin, Mosely stated: “I understand that this town is plagued by heathens under the protection of one Mr. Hoare, and if you would tell me where I might find them, I will remove them for you to Boston. For word has traveled to me that they are troubling you, and that you receive little rest with such foul neighbors living so close.” The church was deathly silent, though men encouraged him with shouts of consent, and others gave tacit nods of approval. Mosely returned with an even greater crowd on Monday after his rebuff from Hoare the previous day and ordered his men to break down the door, which quickly fell to English axes and allowed his men to drag the Nashobah women and children outside. The bound captives watched in dismay as English men pilfered their scant belongings, despite Mosely’s orders to stop looting and return their attention to the Indian Christians. With a guard of twenty men, they trekked to Boston where the court decided to confine them to Deer Island with the Natick and Punkapoag Indians. In his chronicle of the war, Gookin wrote that the Nashobahs went “to pass into the furnace of affliction with their brethren and countrymen,” likening their experiences and wartime tribulation to the famous biblical trials of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego under Nebuchadnezzar.⁵ Despite their peaceful behavior and willingness to help their English neighbors, the “Christian Indians” of Nashobah—along with the other mainland Praying Indians (the name utilized in puritan promotional tracts for the New England mission)—were unable to override English hysteria and anger toward Indians in the colony.⁶

The psychological threat of housing potential enemies in their midst serves as a potent explanation for the activities of Mosely and his men, an analysis that falls neatly within the growing historiography of borderlands warfare and violence.⁷ This essay complicates the wartime narrative by demonstrating the prominent role ministers and wartime sermons played in creating rhetorical and literary constructions of Indians as barbarians within the Old Testament story of the Exodus and the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, illustrating the conceptual shift that accompanied and frequently encouraged the rise in temporal violence. This proved devastating to the Indian Christians who affiliated with English missionaries and strove to attain a degree of parity within the colony through the creation of hybridized “Praying Towns,” the highly-publicized experimental communities pioneered by John Eliot and Thomas Mayhew that sought to introduce Indian families to English domestic arrangements and agriculture. The broad nature of this rhetoric allowed colonists to apply conceptions of barbarism not only to clear enemies like the Wampanoag, but to Indians within the colony indiscriminately. As a more wide-ranging and devastating engagement in comparison to the earlier Pequot War, this conflict more effectively laid the groundwork for colonists to imagine barbarism as an endemic characteristic of Indians, even their “Praying Indian” allies. This development proved fatal to evangelical efforts to convert and Christianize Indians, creating a conceptual objection to missions and obstructing a means of affiliation that remained ambiguous yet promising for Indian Christians during the previous two decades when ministers like Thomas Mayhew and John Eliot had made the case for the inclusion of Indians within the colony’s ecclesiological body.

⁵ Ibid., 495-97.

⁶ I have elected to decapitalize “puritan” in keeping with the recent scholarly trend avoiding the proper noun “Puritan” to break with the twentieth-century trend to view puritans or Congregationalists as monolithic in thought.

⁷ Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008), xviii; Ned Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 1-3; Patrick Griffin, *American Leviathan: Empire, Nation, and Revolutionary Frontier* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), 10-15.

I. Sermon Selection and Methods

Sermons punctuated the religious and sociopolitical lives of New England Congregationalists. Election-day sermons provided ministers the opportunity to reflect on the divine components of proper governance before an audience of colonial representatives and magistrates, while special sermons delivered at the election of militia captains provided the opportunity to stress temporal and spiritual components of godly soldiery. The death of a renowned minister often prompted the publication of the final message delivered to his congregation to be read by the wider populace. Sermons urged moral and social reform, warning of God's impending judgment, and they added interpretive weight and urged introspection during church activities such as fast and thanksgiving days, the observance of the Lord's Supper, and the renewal of Congregationalist church covenants. Publication of sermons took them beyond their initial audience and presented their messages to the colony at large. Analysis of thirty-five sermons that fall within the categories noted above forms the evidentiary basis of this essay, drawn from the Evans Collection in *Early American Imprints*.⁸ Published between 1669 and 1689, eclipsing the traditional dates of King Philip's War and extending into the next decade, these texts provide the opportunity to analyze the imagery and rhetoric employed when alluding to or directly engaging with the concept of physical and spiritual enemies within the conventions of sermonic literature. During wartime, these sermons were used to explain the reasons for the war, to summon martial courage within inexperienced soldiers, and to urge moral and spiritual reform to secure God's providential hand in victory.⁹ As published sermons they enjoyed a wide audience and served as sources for ministers to utilize in their own weekly messages. Most importantly, they refined colonists' understanding of their enemies in comparison to themselves.

Of equal importance are two of the principal narratives of the war, both authored by prominent ministers: Increase Mather's *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England* (1676), and William Hubbard's *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians in New-England* (1677). While it is now conventional to observe the multivalent and contested nature of interpretive struggles between the laity and clergy, ministers still maintained a prominent position as learned expositors of both scripture and God's providential design, a characteristic of the Reformed tradition amplified by the primacy of the biblical text that shaped the movement's origins in Europe during the sixteenth century.¹⁰ Within Massachusetts Bay colony, ministers like Mather and Hubbard maintained this prominence and exclusive access to the printing presses until the decades following King Philip's War. Imagining that Indians were permanently barbaric and cut off from God's salvation became easier after the war. By demonizing the colony's enemies during the conflict, ministers drew potent typological connections between Indians and the barbarians of the Old Testament that offered explanatory power for the horrors of their lived experiences and carried the weight of scriptural authority. This conceptual shift proved influential in altering the ecclesiological standing of Indian Christians within the colony, curtailing their

⁸ The Evans Collection was published initially as microfilm by Readex as part of the *Early American Imprints* series, in cooperation with the American Antiquarian Society, and has since been digitized and expanded.

⁹ James Byrd, *Sacred Scripture, Sacred War: The Bible and the American Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3-5. Byrd identifies the interpretive role of the clergy and the biblical text as a whole as an essential aspect of colonial warfare stretching from King Philip's War through the Revolution.

¹⁰ Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 12-13. See also Francis J. Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994), 17-40.

access to religious communities until a brief efflorescence during the “Indian Great Awakening” of the eighteenth century.¹¹

II. Providence and “Praying Indian” Status before King Philip’s War

Natural wonders and phenomena served as significant forces in both English and Indian religious culture, so Pokanokets who observed the appearance of a total lunar eclipse in June 1675 likely viewed the event as a portent validating their recent attack on the English settlement of Swansea. English commentators viewed the phenomenon as a sinister omen despite almanac predictions heralding its arrival: the vanishing sliver of the moon transformed the heavenly body first into an Indian scalp and then into a warrior’s bow. Totally obscuring the moon, the eclipse blanketed the colonists in foreboding darkness.¹² Providentialism and a sense of anticipation for the coming millennium formed a common thread within Congregationalist thought despite a range of interpretive opinions on finer details. While conjecture varied amongst theologians like Thomas Brightman and Joseph Mede as to the physical location of God’s millennial kingdom, puritans in New England had reason to believe that the events foretold in the Book of Revelation unfolded with the Thirty Years War, English Civil War, and Sabbatianist movement.¹³ If an orthodox “New England Mind” dutifully focused on the colonists’ “errand into the wilderness,” Congregationalist ministers nevertheless observed the world around them for signs of God’s will and looked to the Old Testament as a guide to aid in their interpretive efforts.¹⁴ Increase Mather and his fellow ministers worried that God might become displeased with the colonists and punish impiety with destruction, making typological interpretations of the Old Testament an essential means of discerning these warnings rather than validation of any supposed special calling, a point of clarification insisted upon by Reiner Smolinski.¹⁵

The formation of an ecclesiastical covenant served as a unique hallmark of the “New England Way” and undergirded Congregationalist understandings of God’s providential activity. Drawing inspiration from the story of the Hebrews in the Old Testament, covenanting as a church body forged a special relationship with God modeled on this earlier typological example without claiming to assume the mantle of God’s chosen people, a status reserved exclusively for the descendants of the Hebrews.¹⁶ In a 1670 election-day sermon, William Stoughton warned that this

¹¹ Linford D. Fisher, *The Indian Great Awakening: Religion and the Shaping of Native Cultures in Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 37-51, 65-83.

¹² William Hubbard, *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians In New-England, from the First Planting thereof in the year 1607, to this Present Year 1677. But Chiefly of the Late Troubles in the Two Last Years, 1675 and 1676. To which is added a Discourse about the Warre with the Pequods In the year 1637* (Boston, 1677), 18.

¹³ Richard W. Cogley, “The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Restoration of Israel in the ‘Judeo-Centric’ Strand of Puritan Millenarianism,” *Church History* 72 (2003): 307, 325-27; Michael P. Winship, *Seers of God: Puritan Providentialism in the Restoration and Early Enlightenment* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 24-26, 141.

¹⁴ Matthew H. Edney and Susan Cimburek, “Telling the Traumatic Truth: William Hubbard’s ‘Narrative’ of King Philip’s War and His ‘Map of New-England,’” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 61 (2004): 324-27; Michael P. Winship, “What Puritan Guarantee?,” *Early American Literature* 47 (2012): 411-12.

¹⁵ Reiner Smolinski, “Israel Redivivus: The Eschatological Limits of Puritan Typology in New England,” *The New England Quarterly* 63 (1990): 357-61, 370; David A. Boruchoff, “New Spain, New England, and the New Jerusalem: The ‘Translation’ of Empire, Faith and Learning (*translation imperii, fidei ac scientiae*) in the Colonial Missionary Project,” *Early American Literature* 43 (2008): 5-7, 15; Byrd, *Sacred Scripture, Sacred War*, 7-8. Despite Smolinski’s criticism of puritans and typology, the socio-political nature of church covenants is widely established in primary sources from the period. See Edmund S. Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma: The Story of John Winthrop*, Second Edition (New York: Longman, 1999), 61-64.

¹⁶ Benedict, *Christ’s Churches Purely Reformed*, 390-92; Smolinski, “Israel Redivivus,” 361-62, 374.

relationship was "a *Covenant with Conditions*" that entailed a probationary period in which "The Lord will make a *trial* whether they will keep and be steadfast in his Covenant."¹⁷ Cambridge pastor Jonathan Mitchel noted that "religion is the chief and last end of Civil Policy," for maintaining this covenant required the cooperation of civil magistrates working in conjunction with ministers and individuals to promote godliness.¹⁸

Midcentury sermons frequently noted the conditional nature of God's relationship with his people and the potential for destruction if warnings went unheeded. In *Balm in Gilead to Heal Sions Wounds* (1669), Thomas Walley warned that "a people perish, or continue sick, because they do not finde out the reason of their sickness," condemning the colonists for their spiritual lethargy and contentious bickering. Taking up a similar refrain, John Davenport reminded his readers that it would be a just punishment for God to "give us up to foreign Enemies," and John Oxenbridge warned that "God will lay [the unrepentant] fast upon a Bed of Destruction."¹⁹ The example of Israel's wayward relationship with God and the results of their impiety during the Exodus served as the foundational illustration for Samuel Danforth's sermon entitled *A Brief Recognition of New-Englands Errand Into the Wilderness* (1671). In *Eye-Salve, Or a Watch-Word From our Lord Jesus Christ unto his Church* (1673), the younger Thomas Shepard developed an extensive wilderness metaphor drawing on the Exodus and the Babylonian captivity to posit that God might punish the colonists by uniting the French and Indians to "lay waste this vineyard, and turn it into a wilderness again."²⁰ Lacking this special relationship as God's chosen people, ministers feared that an unresolved breach of the covenant might prompt God's punitive wrath and lead to spiritual and civil degeneration.

Fears of degeneration played directly into ministerial understandings of Indians and their position within the colony. Englishmen on both sides of the Atlantic vacillated on an exact understanding of Native American origins: Thomas Thorowgood's popular *Jewes in America* (1650) suggested that Indians were the remnant of the lost tribes of Israel, while Joseph Mede and others speculated that Indians were simply barbarian thralls of the Devil.²¹ This notion of degeneration into a form of barbarism exemplified by Indian culture surfaced recurrently within sermons during this time. Increase Mather ascribed to Thorowgood's view and noted that with the passage of time these people were "swallowed up by *Gentilisme*, being (as to the Body of them) degenerated into meer Heathens."²² Mather worried that the colonists might experience similar "decayes of Grace," a position stressed almost a decade earlier by Samuel Torrey who warned "these degenerating generations" that libertine attitudes "would even destroy our very Religion, and reduce this Wilderness-People unto a kind of Heathenism."²³ In developing the importance of

¹⁷ William Stoughton, *New-Englands True Interest; Not to Lie: A Treatise Declaring from the Word of Truth the Terms on which We Stand, and the Tenure by which We Hold our Hitherto-Continued Precious and Pleasant Things. Shewing What the blessed God Expecteth from his People, and what They May Rationally Look for from Him* (Cambridge, 1670), 8, 10-11. All emphasis is in the original.

¹⁸ Jonathan Mitchel, *Nehemiah on the Wall in Troublesom Times* (Cambridge, 1671), 3.

¹⁹ Thomas Walley, *Balm in Gilead to Heal Sions Wounds* (Cambridge, 1669), 6; John Davenport, *Gods Call to His People To Turn unto Him; Together with His Promise to Turn unto them* (Cambridge, 1669), 16; John Oxenbridge, *A Quickening Word For the Hastening a Sluggish Soul to a seasonable Answer to The Divine Call* (Cambridge, 1670), 14.

²⁰ Samuel Danforth, *A Brief Recognition of New-Englands Errand Into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, 1671), 5; Thomas Shepard, *Eye-Salve, Or a Watch-Word From our Lord Jesus Christ unto his Church* (Cambridge, 1673), 34; emphasis in the original.

²¹ David S. Lovejoy, "Satanizing the American Indian," *The New England Quarterly* 67 (1994): 607-08.

²² Increase Mather, *Returning unto God the great concernment of a Covenant People* (Boston, 1680), 5.

²³ *Ibid.*, 2. Samuel Torrey, *An Exhortation unto Reformation* (Cambridge, 1674), 17, 23.

the covenant relationship, William Stoughton contrasted Indians and Englishmen: “God had his *Creatures* in this Wilderness before we came, and his *Rational Creatures* too, a multitude of them; but as to *Sons* and *Children* that are Covenant-born unto God, Are not we the *first* in such a Relation?” While Indian existence in the region predated the arrival of the colonists, their special relation gave them primacy as “the Lords *first-born* in this Wilderness.”²⁴ Despite the favored position developed by such a comparison, the colonists were not immune to spiritual degeneration and faced even harsher punishment if they faltered in their devotion to God, which led Eleazar Mather to warn in his *Serious Exhortation* (1671): “Oh! you may fear that your Children one day will curse you, and wish that they had been the Children of *Indians* rather!”²⁵ Anxiety regarding the provisional nature of their experiment and the potential to devolve into a state of barbarism undergirded ministerial reflection on the nature of the covenant and Indian barbarism.

When John Eliot, Thomas Mayhew, and other missionaries advocated for the inclusion of Massachusetts Indians as full members of the Congregationalist church system, they implicitly made important claims regarding the status of these men and women in comparison to themselves. These converts demonstrated sufficient mastery over Congregationalist doctrine and evidence of an inward transformation of grace, making them spiritual kin. Despite the continued differences in temporal customs and practices, recognition of Indian Christianity suggested a spiritual transformation from heathenism toward civilization that made Indians more like Englishmen. The founding of an Indian-led church at Natick in 1660 marked an important move toward spiritual parity that continued to generate momentum with the rapid expansion of Praying Towns into Nipmuc territory throughout the decade. Indian conversions excited millennialists like John Eliot because they represented a required step in the sequence of events that preceded Christ’s return, guaranteeing Indians an integral part in God’s plan for humanity.

III. God’s Pawns: Indians as Agents of Chastisement for Colonial Sins

As King Philip’s War unfolded, Increase Mather and his fellow ministers sought to demonstrate God’s providential stratagem in punishing the colonists for their sins of complacency and backsliding. Divine providence served as a poignant explanation for the hardships, bloodshed, and profound losses that rocked the colony during the formative months of the conflict. Drawing on the biblical story of the Exodus, Mather concluded that sin bred by the founding generation in the colony ripened to produce “so dreadfull a judgment” for the second generation as a call to repentance, prompting English colonials to adopt a posture of penitence through a series of fast and thanksgiving days over the course of the war. Sermons delivered on the eve of the conflict and other wartime narratives similarly developed and supported this interpretation. This notion of divine punishment and the urgent need for repentance shaped puritan understandings of the origins and nature of the war. By casting their Wampanoag enemies as heathen pawns, this sermonic rhetoric offered a new theological understanding of their Native American neighbors as agents of God’s providence.

In a 1672 sermon delivered at the election of militia captains, Urian Oakes devoted his exposition of Romans 8:37 to the dual nature of soldiering in the need to prepare to do battle with Satan and sin. When Oakes referenced the conquest of Canaan, it was metaphorical rather than a specific allusion to contemporary events due to the growing nature of the conflict, unlike later

²⁴ Stoughton, *New-Englands True Interest*, 17; emphasis in the original.

²⁵ Eleazar Mather, *A Serious Exhortation to the Present and Succeeding Generation in New-England* (1671), 20; emphasis in the original.

sermons delivered on the eve of the war.²⁶ While Congregationalists presumed a particular relationship with God embodied in a federal covenant similar to that of Israel in the Old Testament, its probationary nature ensured that backsliding and impiety would result in the sternest of punishments. In his 1667 election sermon (pub. 1671) entitled *Nehemiah on the Wall*, Jonathan Mitchel stressed the generational aspect of the colony's covenant: "if we will own Gods Covenant but for one generation onely, (when as *Gen.17.7* the *Covenant* runs to us and our seed after us in their generations) how justly may the Lord tarry with us but for *one generation*, and then break up house, and leave us to *confusion*."²⁷ By 1674 this omen took on a contemporary relevance, as James Fitch delivered an election sermon that year warning that the colonists risked "being deprived of the Wall of fire" of God's protection, alluding to the supernatural protection the Hebrews received during the Exodus. Fitch distinguished between two types of protection, total and considerable, suggesting that the colonists might lose great numbers in the coming conflict if they did not make amends.²⁸ If this covenant and God's protection were conditional, then renegeing on their duties and expectations might bring about their demise at the hands of Native American enemies, echoing Israelite destruction recorded in the Old Testament.

Increase Mather most explicitly developed this understanding of the Wampanoag before the war in his jeremiad for a day of humiliation in the colony entitled *The Day of Trouble is Near*, which took the text of Ezekiel 7:7 to describe God's use of the Chaldeans, "the *worst of the Heathen*," to punish Israel. God had historically allowed Satan to use Egyptians, Babylonians, pagans, and Catholics to persecute his faithful, as "War is the greatest of all outward Judgements, and thence is by way of eminency termed *Evil*."²⁹ Linking the persecution of the Hebrews to their present circumstances, Mather wrote: "so must we wade through a Red Sea of Troubles, and pass through a Wilderness of Miseries, e're we can arrive at the heavenly *Canaan*." By framing the Wampanoag conflict in this way, Mather and other ministers encouraged colonists to relate their troubles to the story of the Exodus and their enemies as heathens under God's providential direction. Wartime narratives also developed this strand of thought, reinforcing Wampanoag heathenism by describing their wartime behavior as barbaric.³⁰

Writing about the famous siege at Quaboag in 1676, Thomas Wheeler marveled at God's deliverance of the company from the "Heathen who *hates us without a Cause*," arguing that God providentially allowed these horrors so that they might "humble ourselves before him, and with our *whole hearts to return to him*, and also to improve all his mercies which we still enjoy." Wheeler concluded that God's anger would subside with true repentance and that he "may be pleased either to make our Enemies at *peace with us*, or more, *destroy them*" as a fitting resolution to the conflict.³¹ In the sermon included with Wheeler's narrative, Edward Bulkley chose the text of Psalm 116:12 as his focus, which read "What shall I Render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me." Bulkley also draws heavily on Psalm 18, in which David thanked God for delivering

²⁶ Urian Oakes, *The Unconquerable All-Conquering, & More-then-Conquering Souldier* (Cambridge, 1674), 5, 11.

²⁷ Jonathan Mitchel, *Nehemiah on the Wall in Troublesom Times* (Cambridge, 1671), 28; emphasis in the original.

²⁸ James Fitch, *An Holy Connection, Or a true Agreement Between Jehovahs being a Wall of Fire to his People, and the Glory in the midst thereof* (Cambridge, 1674), 3-4.

²⁹ Increase Mather, *The Day of Trouble is near* (Cambridge, 1674), 1, 5-6; emphasis in the original.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

³¹ Thomas Wheeler, *A Thankfull Remembrance of Gods Mercy to several Persons at Quabaug or Brookfield: Partly in a Collection of Providences about them, and Gracious Appearances for them: And partly in a Sermon Preached by Mr. Edward Bulkley, Pastor of the Church of Christ at Concord, upon a day of Thanksgiving, kept by divers for their Wonderfull Deliverance there* (Cambridge, 1676), 9-10. All emphases are in the original.

him from King Saul, his men, and “all others that sought his Ruine.”³² Bulkley encouraged readers to place themselves in the position of David and to imagine their Indian enemies as Saul’s men or, more fittingly, as the Philistines. Reminding his readers that God would reciprocate when heartfelt penitence was offered, he stated that “God will not take away his mercies from us, from the Country, if we Return praise to him; They giving God his *Rent*, the *Tribute* he expects, he will not turn them out of *doors*.” Bulkley urged his readers to pray and sing with pure hearts, believing that these demonstrations of penitence and fidelity would “open God’s heart and hand to give more” and turn the tide of battle against “the Children of Ammon,” a reference to the biblical descendants born out of incest between Lot and his daughters.³³

Wheeler and Bulkley’s combined narrative/sermon on the Brookfield siege demonstrates a common thread of puritan understandings of the war’s cause echoed in similar texts. New England’s ministers collectively stressed the need for repentance to prevent God’s further judgment. Thus, when he delivered the election-day sermon on June 5, 1676, Samuel Willard summoned martial imagery to liken an unsubordinated spirit to a city breached during war because it lacked walls. Willard reminded his listeners that Jesus was a conquering king, undefeated in battle, and that the church was to be militant: “every man indeed is a *Souldier*, either under *Christ* or the *Devil*; Engaged in a *Warr*, which will issue either his *Happiness* or *Ruine*.” Though the tide of the war had turned by June 1676, Willard urged his listeners to “beware of growing *Secure* and *Remiss*” in the face of victory and to continue to rely on God’s divine assistance in the war with thankfulness, for “you shall shortly see all your *Enemies* dead at your feet.”³⁴ William Hubbard preached a sermon during the prior month on the necessity of good rulers and leadership, drawing on the examples of David and Gideon, two biblical figures who led Israel to victory during wartime. Reminding his listeners that they were fighting a war in which they “have neither promise nor probability of success,” he urged Boston to reflect on “the solemn Dispensation of God to our selves in the present war with the Indians, that we must say, the God of our Salvation hath not answered us, but by terrible things in righteousness.”³⁵ Samuel Hooker urged his listeners at the 1677 Hartford election day sermon to recall how God utilized “the Inrode of the Heathen” to punish Israel according to Hosea 10:12. When facing God’s wrath, “the *Assyrian* is the rod of his anger, and the staffe in their hand is his indignation, they move not til he sendeth, they make no spoile until he giveth the word of command.”³⁶ Hooker thus impressed upon his audience the refrain of biblical typology: Indians were likened to the Assyrians or Moabites—heathens used by God to punish Israel after the Exodus and Canaanite conquest—as a form of divine punishment and spiritual correction. Puritan ministers continued to interpret the war as a divine form of punishment long after the initial furor subsided, drawing on allusions from the Old Testament’s history of

³² Ibid., 2.

³³ Ibid., 28-29. Matthew P. Brown, *The Pilgrim and the Bee: Reading Rituals and Book Culture in Early New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), ix-xiv, 108, 137-38.

³⁴ Samuel Willard, *The Heart Garrisoned OR, The Wisdome, and Care of the Spiritual Souldier above all things to safeguard his Heart* (Cambridge, 1676), 1, 6, 12, 19-21; emphasis in the original.

³⁵ William Hubbard, *The Happiness of a People In the Wisdome of their Rulers Directing and in the Obedience of their Brethren Attending Unto what Israel ought to do: Recommended in a Sermon Before the Honourable Governour and Council, and the Respected Deputies of the Mattachusetts Colony in New-England. Preached at Boston, May 3d. 1676. Being the day of Election there.* (Boston, 1676), 19-20, 47.

³⁶ Samuel Hooker, *Righteousness Rained from Heaven, Or A Serious and Seasonable DISCOURSE Exciting all to an Earnest Enquiry After, and Continued Waiting for the Effusions of the Spirit, unto a Communication and Increase of Righteousness: That Faith, Holiness, and Obedience May Yet Abound among Us, and the Wilderness become a Fruitful Field, As it was Delivered in a Sermon Preached at Hartford on Connecticut in New-England, May 10. 1677. Being the Day of Election there.* (Cambridge: 1677), 1.

Israel and God's willingness to punish his wayward children through wars with their heathen neighbors.³⁷

As the conflict intensified, Indian Christians joined together in their own fast days amidst these tribulations as a sign of religious solidarity with the plight of their English brethren. Mosely's attack against the Nashobah Indians at Concord, recounted in the introduction of this essay, ironically inverted the formula structuring Mather's wartime history, which sought to link Indian attacks with Sabbath days. The potent symbolism in these attacks, such as the burning of Deerfield (Pacomtuck) to "ruinous heaps" on September 1, 1675, led Mather to exclaim: "That which addeth solemnity and awfulness to that Desolation, is, that it happened on the very day when one of the Churches in *Boston* were seeking the face of God by Fasting and Prayer before him."³⁸ Religious activity buttressed more pragmatic expressions of fidelity and drew on the Praying Indian identity as fellow citizens and Christians within the colony. Daniel Gookin recorded that the Praying Indians "had put themselves into a posture of defence, and had made forts for their security against the common enemy" at the beginning of the war. In addition to this move of self-defense, they also asked the magistrates to send Englishmen to join them at these forts in an effort to secure the colonial hinterland, which Gookin stressed was "the earnest desire of some of the most prudent of the Christian Indians, who in all their actions declared that they were greatly ambitious to give demonstration to the English of their fidelity and good affection to them and the interest of the Christian religion." Gookin linked the fates of both English and Indian Christians in his account of the war, arguing that "the purging and trying the faith and patience" of them "certainly was another end God aimed at in this chastisement."³⁹ Interpreting Indian Christian tribulations as providential scourging that mirrored the punishments meted out to the wider colony, Gookin and Eliot attempted to console and protect their Indian friends as colonists grew indiscriminately hostile toward all Indians within their domain.

Fear and suspicion regarding the loyalty of the Praying Indians peaked by August 1675, forcing magistrates in Massachusetts to order two or three Englishmen to serve as observers at the Praying Towns. They convinced only two men, John Watson, Sr. and Henry Prentiss, to reside at Natick and a small, rotating group of men to observe at Punkapoag for a number of weeks before the colony interned the Punkapoag on Deer Island. Gookin solicited Watson and Prentiss to write a certificate regarding the conduct of the Praying Indians at Natick, wherein they stated that "they behaved themselves both religiously towards God, and respectively, obediently, and faithfully to the English." He further contended that the behavior of the Praying Indians convinced Watson to abandon his previous pattern of prejudice toward the Christian Indians in favor of defending them before the Massachusetts governor and General Court.⁴⁰ While the opinions of individuals could clearly change, this did not prevent colonial magistrates from interned the Praying Indians (essentially as prisoners of war) to placate colonists like Mosely who called for their execution.

³⁷ John Wilson, *A Seasonable Watch-Word Unto Christians Against the Dreams & Dreamers Of this Generation: Delivered in a Sermon November 16th 1665. And Being the Last Lecture, which was Preached By that Reverend, Faithful and Eminent Man of God Mr. John Wilson. Sometime Pastor of the Church of Christ in Boston in New-England.* (Cambridge, 1677), ii, 3, 8. Hooker, *Righteousness Rained from Heaven*, i, 3, 8. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 65, 83-84.

³⁸ Increase Mather, *A Brief History of the Warr with the Indians in New-England* (Boston, 1676), 18. Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 97-99, 104.

³⁹ Gookin, *Doings and Sufferings*, 436, 438.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 452.

Efforts to link the fate of Indian Christians and Englishmen faltered in the face of the notion that Indians were heathens acting in accordance with God's providential plan. The brutality of warfare created tangible ruin and desolation as homes were immolated; stripped and scalped bodies moldered where they fell; fields lay fallow and smoldering; and Indians continued to terrify and push the vanguard of colonial settlement back toward the Atlantic. The raw emotion and rage engendered by the violence of war reinforced the colonists' perception of indigenous barbarity, which was buttressed by another strand of wartime rhetoric encouraging soldiers to fight and kill their Indian enemies with even greater ferocity. As wartime actions occasionally blurred or broke with European notions of "just warfare," portraying Indian enemies as Canaanite barbarians in colonial sermons reinforced English moral superiority. Martial sermons on the spiritual nature of warfare and soldiering similarly reinforced the dichotomy between Indians and Englishmen, exploring the potentially demonic nature of the conflict and sacred violence.

IV. Typological Barbarism: King Philip's War as Just Warfare

Wartime sermons took on another important objective: establishing the just nature of colonists' actions by stressing their response to barbaric enemies and encouraging Englishmen to fight. Rising to the occasion to defend their loved ones also led ministers to conceptualize the conflict as an opportunity for Englishmen to demonstrate their martial capability and conquer their heathen enemies. If history often revolved around typological patterns that echoed into later times, then violence took on the characteristic of a sacred performance condoned by God.⁴¹ As puritans sojourned into an American "wilderness," they frequently described their experiences through allusions to the Israelite journey into Canaan. In his 1671 communion sermon entitled *The Spouse of Christ Coming out of Affliction, Leaning upon Her Beloved*, John Allin described the wilderness as a "desolate place" and grounded his sermon in a description of "what can we [English colonists] expect to find in a Wilderness." Read in 1675, this message resonated in the context of local events rather than Allin's original intent to frame transatlantic puritan struggles in Scotland, Holland, and Geneva as echoes of the Exodus and Babylonian captivity.⁴² Just as Canaan was wrested from the hands of heathens through sacral violence, so too might the colonists face the test of claiming land in North America. Bill Templer argues that typological hermeneutics served as "the interpretive linking between the visible and invisible worlds, the temporal and the eternal," which led puritans to decode "present events and persons as 'antitypes' of happenings and figures largely from Hebrew scripture."⁴³ An example from Samuel Arnold's election sermon *David Serving his Generation* supports this reading, as Arnold observed that "every Generation hath a common work and something proper, some special Service to do for God." Arnold suggested that the task of this generation might be conquest, for "*Moses* was to bring *Israel* out of *Egypt*, *Joshua* to possess them

⁴¹ Cotton Mather, *Soldiers Counsell'd and Comforted: A Discourse Delivered unto Some Part of the Forces Engaged in the Just War of New-England Against the Northern & Eastern Indians* (Boston, 1689), 35; Ann Kibbey, *The Interpretation of Material Shapes in Puritanism: A Study of Rhetoric, Prejudice, and Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 42-64; Mason I. Lowance, Jr., *The Language of Canaan: Metaphor and Symbol in New England from the Puritans to the Transcendentalists* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 28-40; Theodore Dwight Bozeman, *To Live Ancient Lives: The Primitivist Dimension in Puritanism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 32-50; Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors*, 104-18; Byrd, *Sacred Scripture, Sacred War*, 18-21, 94-95.

⁴² John Allin, *The Spouse of Christ Coming out of Affliction, Leaning upon her Beloved* (Cambridge, 1671), 2, 5-6.

⁴³ Bill Templer, "The Political Sacralization of Imperial Genocide: Contextualizing Timothy Dwight's *The Conquest of Canaan*," *Postcolonial Studies* 9 (2006): 369.

of the promised Land, some are to lay the Foundation for God and others to build thereupon."⁴⁴ Ministers further developed and encouraged this interpretive strand, creating a competing narrative for the conflict that placed God on the side of the colonists and reinforced the notion that Indians served a demonic master.

While puritan ministers stressed the punitive nature of the war for the sins of the colony's rising generation, they simultaneously offered a justification of English actions by framing the conflict on biblical precedent to fit emerging juristic conceptions of a "just war" against barbarian enemies.⁴⁵ In his 1674 martial sermon entitled *Souldiery Spiritualized*, Joshua Moodey stated that the idea that "a *Defensive Warr is lawful* is beyond dispute," offering a panoply of scriptural references in the paragraph that followed to defend the colonists' efforts to "Fight for the Cities of our God."⁴⁶ Increase Mather drew on the story of Jephthah from Judges 11 and 12 as an illustration for the important link between covenants and warfare in a 1677 covenant renewal sermon: "when he [Jephthah] was greatly distressed by reason of the Heathen who made an unjust Warr upon him, that put him upon solemn vowing to the Lord, and so renewing his Covenant in that way." Mather's textual choice resonated in the immediate aftermath of war, reinforcing the idea of a just defense against heathen Indians.⁴⁷ Similarly, one couplet of Benjamin Thompson's poetic *New Englands Crisis* linked "common sence" with the colonists' "just defence."⁴⁸ Both Mather and Thompson ignored grievances raised by Philip and other Indians prior to the war in favor of defending their wartime conduct, which coincides with Jill Lepore's analysis of wartime writing as a means of sanitizing and downplaying puritan atrocities in an effort to reinforce unstable colonial identities.⁴⁹

Rhetoric of just warfare became common parlance by the end of the war, as Samuel Nowell wrote in his famous martial sermon of 1678 entitled *Abraham in Arms*: "Hence our late War was justifiable, though the Quarrel was firstly with our neighbours." Nowell penned these words in an interpretation of Abraham's taking up arms in order to rescue his cousin Lot and family from captivity, continuing this interpretation of King Philip's War with the following: "Hence consequently, it is lawfull by war to defend what we have lawfully obtained and come by, as our possessions, lands and inheritance here, to which we have as fair a title as any ever had, since Israels title to Canaan."⁵⁰ Earlier in 1674 Joshua Moodey encouraged his listeners to "*Be strong and of a good Courage*, and it was on the same account that we are, when he [Joshua] was going to Warr for *Canaan*."⁵¹ Nowell and Moodey both projected Old Testament typologies onto the contemporaneous conflict and encouraged audiences to imagine themselves in the company of

⁴⁴ Samuel Arnold, *David Serving his Generation* (Cambridge, 1674), 3; emphasis in the original.

⁴⁵ Lepore, *The Name of War*, 106-113.

⁴⁶ Joshua Moodey, *Souldiery Spiritualized, Or the Christian Souldier Orderly, and Strenuously Engaged in the Spiritual Warfare* (Cambridge, 1674), 33; emphasis in the original.

⁴⁷ Increase Mather, *Renewal of Covenant the Great Duty Incumbent on Decaying or Distressed Churches. A Sermon Concerning Renewing of Covenant with God in Christ, Preached at Dorchester in New-England, the 21. Day of the I. Moneth 1677. Being a Day of Humiliation There, on that Occasion* (Boston, 1677), 8.

⁴⁸ Benjamin Thompson, *New Englands Crisis: Or a Brief Narrative, Of New-Englands Lamentable Estate at Present, Compar'd with the Former (but few) Years of Prosperity. Occasioned by Many Unheard of Crueltyes Practised upon the Persons and Estates of its United Colonies, without Respect of Sex, Age or Quality of Persons, by the Barbarous Heathen thereof. Poetically Described. By a Well Wisher to his Countrey* (Boston, 1676), 13.

⁴⁹ Lepore, *The Name of War*, 12-13.

⁵⁰ Samuel Nowell, *Abraham in Arms, Or The First Religious General With His Army Engaging in A War For which He had Wisely Prepared, and by which, Not Only an Eminent Victory Was Obtained, but A Blessing Gained Also. Delivered in an Artillery-Election-Sermon, June 3. 1678* (Boston, 1678), 3-4; Ann M. Little, *Abraham in Arms: War and Gender in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 24.

⁵¹ Moodey, *Souldiery Spiritualized*, 21; emphasis in the original.

Abraham and other biblical warriors who engaged in holy wars against heathen enemies over land that was theirs by right of solemn covenant with God.

Impulses to disavow English culpability in the conflict supported the interpretation that Indians were barbarians under the captivity of Satan, whom God had left unchecked in order to satisfy his punishment against the colonists while providing them the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to him through divinely-sanctioned violence. As he encouraged soldiers to kill their Indian enemies, Moodey positively referenced the “Black Legend” and Cortes’ decision to sink his ships to force his men forward. Arguing that they were similarly at a point of no return, he declared that “God hath set us here in our *Enemies Country* where we must either *Fight manfully*, or *die shamefully*.”⁵² Increase Mather similarly urged his audience to recall the story of Nehemiah in his 1677 covenant renewal sermon when he argued that Israel under Nehemiah was “delivered from the Heathen Nations, who had sorely wasted and destroyed them, in order to a *Reformation* of those evils that had provoked the Lord against them.” Further on, Mather stressed orthodox Calvinist doctrine when he stated that “natural man is a servant to sin and Satan, and not to God.”⁵³ Colonists could implicitly connect “natural man” with Indians who, with their unchurched status and cultural differences, fit this conception and were thus firmly in Satan’s grasp.

Nowell again provided the most explicit connection in *Abraham in Arms* when he argued that God allowed the people of Canaan to remain unsubdued in order to teach Israel the art of war. With this in mind, he stated: “so the Lord hath dealt with us by his Providence here in this wilderness, *these are the Nations which the Lord left to prove Israel by*, those that had not known the Wars of Canaan.”⁵⁴ Likewise, John Richardson’s sermon on the need for soldiering delivered in June 1675 stressed that skill in warfare was imperative “while Sin and the Sons of *Anak* are unsubdued, while the *Philistims are in the Land*.”⁵⁵ Reflecting on biblical history, Richardson wrote: “The Bow was a principall Instrument then used in their wars, by the more acute, nimble and skilfull managing whereof the Philistims [very likely] then gained their Victory over Israel,” again forging an obvious connection between Philistines and Indians. Richardson continued this analogy by stating that David made use of his enemy’s weapons to win the war and that the colony should utilize the same tactic in order “to match, or rather excel them in their own Art.”⁵⁶ Desiring to prepare colonists to partake in the worst of wartime violence, Moodey suggested the possibility of infanticide as a wartime strategy, writing “The *Bratts of Babylon* may more easily be *dasht against the Stones*, if we take the *Season* for it, but if we let them grow up they will become more *formidable*, and *hardly Conquerable*.”⁵⁷ Biblical typology once again provided a template by which New England ministers could superimpose the role of the Old Testament barbarian upon their Native American enemies while downplaying their own actions and urging colonial soldiers to fight aggressively in order to conquer the region.

The earliest ministerial histories of the war similarly advanced the typology of Indian barbarism in their narration and interpretation of wartime events while extending this idea to its logical conclusion: Indians were barbaric children of the Devil. In this sense, they were acting out

⁵² Ibid., 20; emphasis in the original. This affirms Cañizares-Esguerra’s argument in *Puritan Conquistadors* regarding a shared set of demonological and crusading tropes between the Iberian and Puritan worlds.

⁵³ Mather, *Renewal of Covenant*, 1, 11, 13; emphasis in the original.

⁵⁴ Nowell, *Abraham in Arms*, 10; emphasis in the original.

⁵⁵ John Richardson, *The Necessity of a Well Experienced Souldiery: Or, A Christian Common Wealth Ought to be Well Instructed & Experienced in the Military Art* (Cambridge, 1679), 1; emphasis in the original.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 3.

⁵⁷ Moodey, *Souldiery Spiritualized*, 22; emphasis in the original.

their natural, unregenerate ways and were barely more than animals in the divine order of creation. Thomas Wheeler utilized this language when recounting the Brookfield siege, which included words such as "perfidious," "treacherous," and "blood-thirsty" to describe the "Heathen" attack against them. Wheeler claimed that "they did *roar against us* like so many *wild Bulls*" when describing the position of the English within the home where they were garrisoned. Filtered through puritan symbolism, the fires Indians set at Brookfield to destroy the physical markers of English civilization drew implicit connections to demonic hellfire and biblical attacks by heathens against Israel. After the Brookfield garrison escaped, Wheeler rejoiced that God "kept us from being all a *prey to their Teeth*," reinforcing Indian barbarism by alluding to the common European association between barbarism and cannibalism found throughout the Atlantic in accounts of exploration.⁵⁸

Increase Mather's history drew on similar language to describe the colony's enemies, calling them "barbarous Creatures," and further described them as "sunk down into the pit that they made" once the tide of the war had turned, musing that nobody "knoweth how cruelly a *dying Beast* may bite before his expiration."⁵⁹ Mather offered a ghastly description of Indian torture methods which included a naked run through a gauntlet of tormentors: "whipping them after a cruel and bloody manner, and then [they] threw hot ashes upon them; cut out the flesh of their legs, and put fire into their wounds, delighting to see the miserable torments of wretched creatures. Thus are they the perfect children of the Devill."⁶⁰ Clergyman William Hubbard's narrative of the war ascribed an even greater role to demonic forces: "in the year 1671 the Devill, who was a Murderer from the beginning, had so filled the heart of this salvage Miscreant [Philip] with envy and malice against the English, that he was ready to break out into open war against the Inhabitants of *Plimouth*."⁶¹ For Hubbard, Satan was the mastermind behind the entirety of the conflict, and Indians rose to do his bidding as his children. While colonists had begun to forge this association more explicitly after the 1637 Pequot War, the demonic linkage reached its crescendo during King Philip's War with great effect: casting Indian enemies as demonic heathens reinforced the righteousness of their actions and suggested that Englishmen fought and died martyrs' deaths in God's plan to wrest New England from the Devil himself.⁶² This narrative construction contributed to the runaway success of William Hubbard's publication as the standard history of the war.

Returning once more to sermons and their impact in this arena, the most substantial application of this rhetoric is found once again in Samuel Nowell's martial sermon *Abraham in Arms*. Recognizing that Israel bested its Canaanite enemies with the help of miraculous intervention, Nowell argued that God's refusal to act in such overt ways during the current era suggested that the present war was a challenge orchestrated to test their martial skills and religious commitment. Nowell then penned the most directly exclusionary statement found in all of wartime sermons: "The inhabitants of the land will not joyn or mix with us to make one Body, which is the more likely they are preserved to be thorns in our sides." Nowell justified this exclusion by drawing on the example of Hamor and Shechem from Genesis 34 to harangue the French for their tendency

⁵⁸ Wheeler, *A Thankfull Remembrance*, ii, 2-3, 6, 12; emphasis in the original. Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors*, 40-42.

⁵⁹ Mather, *Brief History of the Warr*, 10, 60-61; emphasis in the original.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁶¹ William Hubbard, *A Narrative of the Troubles with the Indians In New-England, from the First Planting thereof in the Year 1607. to this Present Year 1677. But Chiefly of the Late Troubles in the Two Last Years, 1675 and 1676. To which is added a Discourse about the Warre with the Pequods In the year 1637* (Boston, 1677), 11; emphasis in the original.

⁶² Edney and Cimburek, "Telling the Traumatic Truth," 325.

to take Indian wives and to suggest Indians were similarly deceptive. In this chapter, Jacob's daughter Dinah is raped by the Canaanite Shechem, whose father Hamor meets with Jacob and tricks him into marrying off his daughter. After learning of Dinah's defilement, a topic suggestive in this context of colonial fears regarding sexual commingling between Englishwomen and Indians, Jacob and his sons similarly deceive the Canaanites by circumcising all of their men and then slaughtering them as they convalesced. Nowell continued his analysis with the following:

When God intended the Canaanites to be destroyed, he did forbid Israel to marry with them: they were to be thorns to them, and Israel was to root them out in the conclusion: therefore frequent trouble, we may probably and rationally reckon of, to meet with from the heathen. Two Nations are in the womb and will be striving.⁶³

The final line of the above quotation paraphrases Genesis 25:23, which is a divine message to Isaac's wife Rebekah about the fate of her children as Jacob and Esau fight within the womb. The verse concludes that "the one people shall be mightier than the other, and the elder shall serve the younger." Buoyed by divine providence, Nowell suggested that the soldiers hearing his message live up to their martial destiny in a similarly fatalistic struggle. Typologically, *Abraham in Arms* argues that God had given the puritans a unique opportunity to conduct their own version of the Canaanite conquest correctly by sparing no barbarian and maintaining a strict policy of sexual and marital separation. Framing King Philip's War and the ongoing borderlands warfare in Maine (the immediate context in which Nowell delivered his sermon) as a providential conquest, Nowell suggested that martial service honored the covenant forged between Englishmen and their creator and actualized their colonizing destiny through the destruction of barbaric enemies.

IV. Conquest Rhetoric and Indian Christians

Indian Christians were divided over how to respond to the growing war, as Nipmuc who had recently organized into Praying Towns and trusted allies like James Printer, typesetter of the Cambridge printing press and part-time Bible translator for John Eliot, defected and joined Philip's faction. Colonists frequently took these decisions personally and understood Indian actions not as a response to the realities of warfare, but as evidence that their spiritual migration toward Christianity remained incomplete or feigned as part of a demonic scheme to betray the colony from within. Growing hostility toward Indian Christians likely exacerbated the tendency to defect, which led colonists to question the sincerity of their conversions in light of the decision to cast their lots with barbaric enemies. As one of the most popular narratives of captivity authored in the wake of the conflict, Mary Rowlandson's *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* (1682) exemplifies the wartime animus aimed at Praying Indians in particular. Despite the inherent risk of soldiering and spying on behalf of the English, Praying Indians experienced the brunt of this rhetoric.

Descriptions of indigenous barbarism were supported theologically through key tenets of puritanism, such as man's inherent depravity. In the case of Indian Christians, this axiom, along with distrust toward outward signs of piety and the potential for false assurance of election, served to explain away their defections. In his sermon on the necessity of spiritual soldiery, Samuel Willard reminded his audience that a soul left untouched by God remained "a *Lump* of *unserviceable matter*, a *meer piece of Corruption*." Indeed, if every man and woman soldiered

⁶³ Nowell, *Abraham in Arms*, 10, 14.

under Christ or the Devil in this cosmic war, then enemy Indians remained enslaved to the unredeemed and corrupting nature of their sin.⁶⁴ When Samuel Hooker described wicked men as "foolish and simple, vile, and loathsome," he likely reinforced colonial opinions about Indians as much as led his audience to reflect on their own state of salvation. Covenant theology also suggested that it was possible for a people to become cut off from God's favor. "A forsaken condition, is the condition of the Offspring of *Abraham*," wrote Lancaster minister Joseph Rowlandson. Such a state was the harshest punishment God could unleash upon a people. Rowlandson raised the rhetorical question regarding the difference between "a sinner forsaken and a Saint forsaken" in a 1678 sermon, concluding that the Saint pursued God until he returned to him, but the sinner was "left in darkness."⁶⁵ Colonists in 1678 could reflect on their victory and conclude that the destruction of their enemies validated their status as forsaken barbarians, cut off from God's saving grace and punished for their idolatry.

When a number of Nipmuc chose to defect to Philip's side, attacking the colonists at Brookfield and other major battles, colonial sentiments that Indian conversion to Christianity was incomplete or part of a wider ruse against the colony were validated. A raid on the town of Nashaway, which was near the Nipmuc Praying Towns, convinced Englishmen that the Praying Indians had colluded with the colony's enemies intentionally.⁶⁶ Furthermore, the capture of men and women from the younger Nipmuc Praying Towns generated a spate of rumors that they had willingly defected to the enemy's side, indicating that Indian affiliation with Christianity remained an outward sham rather than an inward transformation despite the claims of missionaries and their supporters. Dissent with the Anglican Church over the role of external behavior and adherence to ritual, a perceived vestige of Catholicism that corrupted the pure church, generated a set of theological points which ministers could apply to Praying Indians in order to invalidate the identity they had crafted, in cooperation with Eliot, over the previous decades. Samuel Willard wrote that "*Satan* is willing men should do, and take pains in doing outward Services, he suffers them to *read, hear, pray, give Alms, &c.* they may go as farr as they will in bodily Service, only let him have the *Homage* of their *hearts*."⁶⁷ The puritan concern for outward behavior without inward regeneration was a common theological point, as Thomas Thatcher reminded his audience:

You may be outwardly a Christian, and inwardly an heathen in the sight of God, all these are uncircumcised in heart says the Prophet, when he reckons up the Nations together with *Judah*, you may be a Heathen in heart, whilst you are in the outward man a Christian, your Circumcision may become uncircumcision before God; alas what's an outward Baptisme, if your Souls never reach after spiritual Baptisme.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Willard, *The Heart Garrisoned*, 4-6; emphasis in the original. Brown, *The Pilgrim and the Bee*, 186-93.

⁶⁵ Joseph Rowlandson, *The Possibility of Gods Forsaking a People, That have Been Visibly Near & Dear to Him... Set Forth in a Sermon, Preached at Weathersfield, Nov. 21. 1678* (Cambridge, 1682), 7, 10-11, 15-16.

⁶⁶ Daniel R. Mandell, *King Philip's War: Colonial Expansion, Native Resistance, and the End of Indian Sovereignty* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 82; Cathy Rex, "Indians and Images: The Massachusetts Bay Colony Seal, James Printer, and the Anxiety of Colonial Identity," *American Quarterly* 1 (2011): 77-87; J. Patrick Cesarini, "What Has Become of Your Praying to God?" Daniel Gookin's Troubled History of King Philip's War," *Early American Literature* 44 (2009): 496-98.

⁶⁷ Willard, *The Heart Garrisoned*, 5; emphasis in the original.

⁶⁸ Thomas Thatcher, *A Fast of God's Chusing, Plainly Opened, For the Help of those Poor in Spirit, whose Hearts are set to Seek the Lord their God in New-England, in the Solemn Ordinance of A Fast Wherein is shewed 1. The Nature of Such a Fast, 2. The Testimony God Will Give Thereunto of his Gracious Acceptation 3. The Special Seasons wherein God will Bear Witness to such A Fast. 4. Some Helps to Faith that it Shall Be So. 5. Why Such a*

Despite his direct role in the missionary project as a member of the Boston-based New England Company, Increase Mather vacillated on how to interpret Indian Christian actions. In his *Brief History of the Warr* Mather wrote that “The *Praying Indians* did good Service at that time, insomuch as many who had hard thoughts of them all, being to blame themselves, and to have a good opinion of those *Praying Indians* who have been so universally decried,” yet in his *Historical Discourse Concerning the Prevalency of Prayer* (1677), he wrote that the Natick and Punkapoag Indians “do pretend friendship to the English,” suggesting that they masked their deceit with loyalty.⁶⁹ As homes, crops, and haystacks mysteriously caught fire in the night at Chelmsford and Dedham, colonists immediately assumed their Praying Indian neighbors were responsible.⁷⁰ The puritan tendency to distrust outward behavior and the movement’s emphasis on innate corruption served to fuel the particular suspicions against Indian Christians generated by the war.

In a much more visceral sense, Mary Rowlandson’s 1682 captivity narrative merged William Hubbard’s florid descriptions of indigenous savagery with Increase Mather’s providential narration of wartime events. Her narrative is significant because it singles out Praying Indians as the worst traitors during the war and equates all Indians with barbarism, promoting this view to a wider colonial public as the first edition sold thousands of copies across the four printings commissioned in 1682 alone.⁷¹ Rowlandson’s tale merits particular analysis due to the providential nature of its construction and didactic means of translating her experiences into a message for the colony at large: ministerial concerns which lend credence to the current consensus that Increase Mather bore an editorial role in the anonymous introduction and possibly the text itself.⁷² The introduction stressed that readers could not comprehend being enslaved “to such atheistical, proud, wild, cruel, barbarous, brutish (in one word) diabolically creatures as these, the worst of the heathen.” Amidst graphic imagery of blood and entrails with the attack on Lancaster by enemy “Infidels,” Rowlandson likened the scene to “a company of Sheep torn by Wolves. All of them stript naked by a company of hell-hounds, roaring, singing, ranting, and insulting.”⁷³ This scene of barbarism amplified her later polemic against Praying Indians because Rowlandson blamed the Lancaster attack on One-eyed John (the Nipmuc sachem Monoco) and the Marlborough Praying Indians, repeating an earlier and erroneous accusation promoted by both Samuel Mosely and

Fast is so Acceptable and Successful. 6. *How Much this Concerns Gods People in New-England*. (Boston, 1678), 20.

⁶⁹ Mather, *Brief History of the Warr*, 47; emphasis in the original. Increase Mather, *An Historical Discourse Concerning the Prevalency of Prayer Wherein is shewed that New-Englands late Deliverance from the Rage of the Heathen, is an eminent Answer of Prayer* (Boston, 1677), 5.

⁷⁰ Gookin, *Doings and Sufferings*, 463, 475-77, 483, 492.

⁷¹ Salisbury, “Introduction,” 38-41; Michael P. Winship, *Seers of God: Puritan Providentialism in the Restoration and Early Enlightenment* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 149; Lepore, *The Name of War*, 52; Kathryn Zabelle Derounian, “Puritan Orthodoxy and the ‘Survivor Syndrome’ in Mary Rowlandson’s Indian Captivity Narrative,” *Early American Literature* 22 (1987): 82.

⁷² James D. Hartman, “Providence Tales and the Indian Captivity Narrative: Some Transatlantic Influences on Colonial Puritan Discourse,” *Early American Literature* 32 (1997): 71, 73; David Downing, “‘Streams of Scripture Comfort’: Mary Rowlandson’s Typological Use of the Bible,” *Early American Literature* 15 (1980): 252, 254; Kathryn Zabelle Derounian, “The Publication, Promotion, and Distribution of Mary Rowlandson’s Indian Captivity Narrative in the Seventeenth Century,” *Early American Literature* 23 (1988): 240-42.

⁷³ Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, ed. Neal Salisbury (New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1997), 67, 69-70; Alden T. Vaughan and Edward W. Clark, eds. *Puritans Among the Indians: Accounts of Captivity and Redemption 1676-1724* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1981), 3-5, 9; Billy J. Stratton, *Buried in Shades of Night: Contested Voices, Indian Captivity, and the Legacy of King Philip’s War* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013), 20-23, 112-14.

William Hubbard.⁷⁴ It is clear that from the outset of her narrative Rowlandson reserves a particular animus toward the Praying Indians.

Throughout her tale of captivity Rowlandson cast doubt on the notion that Praying Indians were truly committed to the English and transformed into godly Christians. One Indian Christian threatened her with a blade for her sluggishness during her twelfth "remove," or encampment, but what infuriated Rowlandson was that the man had rejoined the English after the war ended and frequented Boston "*under the appearance of a Friend-Indian,*" along with "*severall others of the like Cut,*" which was more likely than not an attack on James Printer and his return to the English. When discussing the negotiations for her redemption, she deviated from her narrative to attack Praying Indians (namely James Printer) for writing the letters for the Indian side of the correspondence, and for other signs of the fragile or facetious nature of their Christianity. In this section she described one Praying Indian who argued with his brother over the merits of eating horse meat, noting that he used the verse of 2 Kings 6:25 and "shewed him that it was lawfull to eat that in a Famine," which convinced the brother to give up his scruples and "eat horse with any *Indian* of them all." The taboo against eating forbidden animals, a marker of innate barbarism, was amplified by a corresponding corruption of scripture. Singling out Praying Indians again, she declared that another was "so wicked and cruel, as to wear a string about his neck, strung with *Christians* fingers," again demonstrating that Indian Christians possessed an inward barbaric nature that manifested itself through the mutilation of Christian bodies.

Within her narrative, Rowlandson continually linked Indian Christian activity with the Devil. When Indians demonstrated kindness or aided in her redemption, she attributed those actions to God's providential schema. At one point in her captivity she observed a Wampanoag war ritual as Indian Christians joined with their barbaric allies and powwows to prepare themselves for battle. To Rowlandson, "they acted as if the Devil had told them that they should gain the victory," but after their defeat the powwow returned with a painted face "as black as the Devil."⁷⁵ While this passage served to reinforce the providential notion that God would triumph over the Devil, it also served to link Indian Christians and unconverted Indians together under the banner of demonic influence. Though Rowlandson expressed appreciation and thanks for the occasional kindness shown to her by Indians, she frequently attributed the behavior of enemy Indians to God's providence rather than their own action, suggesting that God used them to provide her with solace during her hellish captivity and denying Indian agency.⁷⁶ She similarly failed to acknowledge that Tom and Peter, the men who negotiated for her redemption on behalf of the English, were Indian Christian allies who faced substantial risk serving as intermediaries between the two parties.⁷⁷ Ignorant of the complexities of wartime factionalism and incensed at the behavior of Praying Indians who defected, Rowlandson fixated on this issue and offered a powerful indictment of their behavior during King Philip's War despite begrudgingly acknowledging their acts of mercy as providential acts of God.

Though *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* was published after the initial conflict ended, Rowlandson's portrayal of Indian Christians fit with contemporaneous attitudes when the war was ongoing. Having "*been in the midst of those roaring Lyons, and Salvage Bears,*"

⁷⁴ Rowlandson, *Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, 71.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 87, 97-101.

⁷⁶ Tara Fitzpatrick, "The Figure of Captivity: The Cultural Work of the Puritan Captivity Narrative," *American Literary History* 3 (1991): 2, 12.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 97, 102-108; Hilary E. Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 12-13, 50.

Rowlandson recounted firsthand experiences. The personal nature of her account capitalized on common attitudes within the recovering colony and amplified her descriptions of Indian savagery and Praying Indian perfidy. Wartime hostility culminated in the confinement of approximately 200 Indian Christians, ostensibly for their protection, on the cold and wind-swept Deer Island in the Boston harbor where they faced a bleak and ill-supplied winter, digging for clams and shellfish on the shore during low tide.⁷⁸ Margaret Ellen Newell argues that the war led to an outgrowth of captivity and indigenous enslavement, demonstrating that Captain Mosely's extralegal activities often revolved around the capture of Indians for sale.⁷⁹ Mosely's targeting of Indian Christians demonstrates the extent to which wartime collapsed distinctions between Christianized and "heathen" Indians, which was similarly reflected in the Plymouth War Council's attempts to brand all Indians as guilty through their actions or their failure to report on the conflict as it grew. Newell displays uncertainty as to why this led the War Council to sentence Indians to perpetual servitude as punishment for treason, breaking with the seven-year norm for English indentures.⁸⁰ Again, puritan reliance on the Old Testament points to Leviticus 25 as a crucial text: verse 40 stipulates that "hired servants" (defined earlier as fellow Hebrews) be freed upon the Year of Jubilee, while verses 45 and 46 establish the right to Gentile labor as a permanent form of property lasting for the duration of the slave's life.

Drawing on an understanding of perpetual slavery rooted in Old Testament cultural differences, this punishment seemed fitting for barbaric enemies molded through typological wartime constructs as unthinking and murderous barbarians. That the Old Testament served as a model in these matters is confirmed again by a letter from Increase Mather to John Cotton in which he defended the notion that "the children of notorious traitors, rebels and murder-ers, especially of such as have been principal leaders and actors in such horrid villanies . . . may be involved in the guilt of their parents, and may, *salva republica*, be adjudged to death." Referencing Deuteronomy 24:16 as his proof-text, Mather defended those who advocated for the execution of Metacom's son, though colonial magistrates settled on selling the boy, his mother, and a number of other wartime captives to Caribbean slavers.⁸¹ The popularization of this rhetoric through wartime accounts and sermons formed the foundation of a policy of greater marginalization of Indians that played out politically in debates on punishment and slavery. Coupled with the puritan tendency to distrust outward signs as baseless and sinful without inward transformation by God's spirit, these developments overrode Indian appeals to a shared Christianity and membership within the same ecclesiastical polity, and fostered indifference that led many Englishmen to consider Indian Christians categorically similar to their unchurched brethren.

VI. Conclusion

This rhetorical shift reverberated through the postwar years and contributed to declining efforts to further the missionary project begun in the 1640s. The war tempered Eliot's expectations regarding the nature and scope of his work among the Indians. He cited Amos 5:13 and the prophet's decision to "keepe silence in [that] time, for it is an evel time. for my owne pt I keepe off from meddling in those matters, there is a time to be silent & a time to speak" in a letter to Robert Boyle, implying

⁷⁸ Mandell, *King Philip's War*, 83-85; Jason W. Warren, *Connecticut Unscathed: Victory in the Great Narragansett War, 1675-1676* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014), 6-10, 78-89, 92.

⁷⁹ Margaret Ellen Newell, *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 133, 140-43.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 144-45.

⁸¹ Letter, 30 October 1676, Increase Mather to John Cotton. Ms. N-1097, "John Davis Papers, 1627-1846," Box 1, Folder 5, *Massachusetts Historical Society*.

that colonial rancor had chastened him and circumscribed his vision for including Indians within the colony's ecclesiological body. For his part, Eliot shifted his efforts to focus primarily on his literary projects, working to complete the Old Testament, revise his earlier translations, and print new editions of Bayly's *The Practice of Piety* and his *Indian Primer*, though he supported the remaining Praying Indians as a benefactor until his death in 1690.⁸² In a 1683 letter to Boyle, Eliot stressed the good nature of their combined literary endeavors and urged Boyle "to change the object of your bountyfull charity, from their bodys to their soules" as a fitting new direction for the project, given his progress in translation.⁸³ A longstanding proponent of religious instruction delivered in local Algonquian dialects, Eliot too had come to embrace the increasingly rigid cultural attitude of postwar New England by acquiescing to the use of English for future writings and sermons. The only text composed to defend Indian Christian actions during the war, Daniel Gookin's *An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians of New England in 1675, 1676 and 1677*, remained in unpublished manuscript form until the nineteenth century, making efforts to rebut the anti-Indian polemic in the immediate wake of the war impossible.

Millenarian providentialism opened the door for Indian participation in colonial religious life during the decades prior to the war. Ministers utilized Old Testament history and typology to frame Indian missions and their own journey to North America. At the same time, Congregationalists recognized that the covenants they formed with God were conditional, and just punishment at the hands of an angry God would result if they failed to maintain proper piety. This providential theme found throughout the sermons and histories of ministers like Increase Mather framed Indian actions as divine intervention: God used heathen enemies to punish the colonists for their sins. The association of barbarism with Indians overlapped with another current of ministerial thought that encouraged soldiers to fight and cast English wartime conduct as just. The martial sermons of Moodey and Nowell, along with Wheeler and Hubbard's wartime narratives, reinforced the perception of Indians' savage barbarity and concluded that their direction came from the Devil rather than God. This framed King Philip's War typologically as a reenactment of Joshua's conquest of Canaan and transformed Englishmen into holy warriors, battling to drive Satan and his minions from land promised to them by God if they possessed the appropriate mettle. When Increase Mather and Samuel Willard delivered joint sermons for the covenant renewal service in 1679 at Boston's Second Church, Mather reflected on the recent war as evidence of God's wrath and the loss of important congregants "that dyed by the Sword of the Heathen." Willard framed the war more directly in the vein of Joshua's conquest, drawing his text from Joshua 24:22-23 and noting that after "God had given his People of Israel rest in the land of Canaan," it was "an obligation upon them to Renew Covenant with him."⁸⁴ God's providential victory over similarly barbaric enemies in New England demanded a firm recommitment to serving him during their own time of rest and reflected the tendency to associate the war with Joshua's conquest of Canaan.

This sermonic and historical discourse proved absolutely devastating for Indian Christians caught in the contingencies of wartime violence and shifting alliances between various Native

⁸² Ford, *Some Correspondence Between the Governors and Treasurers*, 66, 68; Letters, "John Eliot to Robert Boyle, 4 Sept 1680, 27 Sept 1683, 7 May 1688," RB/3/2/83-93, Robert Boyle Papers, *The Royal Society Archives*, London, United Kingdom.

⁸³ Letter, "John Eliot to Robert Boyle, 27 April 1683," RB/3/2/83-93, Robert Boyle Papers, *The Royal Society Archives*, London, United Kingdom.

⁸⁴ Mather, *Returning unto God*, 10. Samuel Willard, *The Duty of a People that have Renewed their Covenant with God* (Boston: 1680), 1.

American groups.⁸⁵ Despite efforts to forge closer affiliations with the English through the formation of hybridized communities and Indian-led churches deemed sufficient in their piety and understanding of theology in the Congregationalist tradition, wartime invectives against barbaric enemies could expand to accommodate them as well. Puritan animus toward Catholicism engendered profound suspicion toward outward displays of piety, which undercut Indian Christian actions and suggested that their souls remained unregenerate. Despite supposed advances toward English notions of civility, Indians were perceived as likely to lapse if given the opportunity or, even worse, deceive colonists as part of Satan's machinations. This became even more problematic when Indian Christians decided to join Philip's side. The popularity of Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative projected these ideas to a wider readership, so it is no surprise that missionary activity languished in the postwar period as a result. Guilt by association served as a powerful invective against Indian Christians and their inclusion within the colony's religious life, as missionary service became more of a Christian duty or obligation for future generations of ministers. For Indians who sought affiliation with the English through explicitly religious avenues, this growing tendency to underestimate the possibility for conversion and antipathy toward Indians in general proved increasingly difficult to overcome in the wake of the rhetorical and theological legacy of King Philip's War.

⁸⁵ Mandell, *King Philip's War*, 134. Douglas Edward Leach, *Flintlock & Tomahawk: New England in King Philip's War* (Woodstock: The Countryman Press, 2009), 246.