

## AN EARLY SETTLER ON AMERICAN PREHISTORY AND DESTINY

### Rev. Philip Gatch's Essay Dedicated to the Indians

Edited by Milton McC. Gatch

#### INTRODUCTORY NOTE:

Philip Gatch (1751-1834), an early convert to Methodism and one of the first American-born Methodist Circuit Riders, was born in Maryland. In 1773, he rode circuits in New Jersey; later he was assigned to Maryland; and, during the War of Independence, he served in Virginia until he married and turned to farming in addition to preaching. He moved his family from Virginia to Ohio in 1798 to escape the slave economy and settled on land within the juncture of the Little Miami River and its East Fork, near what is now Milford, Ohio, some twenty miles east of Cincinnati. Continuing to be active in the Methodism, he also served as a member of the first Ohio constitutional convention and sat for a number of years as an associate judge of the Court of Common Pleas for Clermont County.<sup>1</sup>

In 1829, he wrote an "Essay" dedicated to the Native Americans in which he attempted to set American pre-history in Biblical terms and to point to the role of America in preparation for the millennium—the perfection of history. The unique manuscript of the essay covers (after an unnumbered title page) almost thirty pages in a thirty-two-page booklet. Preserved in an archive of materials by and about Gatch and his descendants,<sup>2</sup> the manuscript is apparently not the autograph, for Gatch says

---

<sup>1</sup> Philip Gatch's life has been the subject of several studies, notably, John McLean, *Sketch of Rev. Philip Gatch* (Cincinnati: Swormstedt & Poe, 1854); Elizabeth Connor, *Methodist Trail Blazer: Philip Gatch, 1751-1834, His Life in Maryland, Virginia and Ohio* (Cincinnati: Creative Publishers, Inc., 1970); Virginia Gatch Markham, *Descendants of Godfrey Gatch of Baltimore County, Maryland, and Others of the Surname, with Material on Early Methodist History in Maryland, Virginia, and Ohio* (Baldwin City, Kansas: for the author, 1972); Paul H. Boase, "Philip Gatch: Preacher; Pioneer; Public Servant." *Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio* 13 (1955): 286-96; Arthur Dicken Thomas, "Gatch, Philip." *American National Biography Online* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), accessed 13 July 2012, <http://www.anb.org/articles/08/08--1765.html> (hereafter cited as *ANB Online*).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Gatch Papers, Group III.A (Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio, L. A. Beeghly Library, Archives of Ohio United Methodism). The archive was originally deposited by Virginia Gatch Markham in the John W. Dickhout Library, Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware OH and moved to Ohio Wesleyan in December

in a letter that "I gave the manuscript to a young man to draw of, but he has not put it into that form that I could wish it, as to sentences and sections."<sup>3</sup> On first reading, indeed, the headlong and disjointed prose of the piece seems nearly illiterate, and it is little wonder that correspondence about publishing it came to naught. It is the work of a little-schooled preacher. He has no systematic method for citing and quoting sources, which are mostly scriptural, and the writing (as Gatch confessed) is unorganized. The piece is, nevertheless, marked by a deep knowledge of scripture, to which there are constant quotations and allusions giving it a strongly moralistic, evangelistic tone. The author provides no introductory framework (especially for his purported audience of Native Americans) for his long discourse on biblical history, which is the basis for his hypothesis about American pre-history. He is, in other words, not trained in the arts of exposition and logic.

Yet there are signs of an inquiring mind and impressive humanity. Despite his devotion to Methodism, he knows the larger picture of early American religious history and mentions the chief figures involved in early missions to the Native Americans. He urges an irenic, non-coercive appeal by Christians to the peoples they displaced in the Americas. He propounds something like the later common American notions of American exceptionalism and of a civil religion in his vision of the future of the country and his acceptance of multi-denominationalism (albeit Roman Catholicism and Judaism, then very minor presences in the United States, are not mentioned.) He cites a book of the Apocrypha, which had been denied scriptural status by Luther and almost all subsequent Protestant traditions. And his citation of the apocryphal II Esdras seems to show that he had an annotated edition of a Bible with Apocrypha and marginal notes making a cross reference from II Esdras to Genesis.

---

2012. I am grateful to David R. Powell of the Dickhout Library for providing a scanned copy of the manuscript and for arranging access to the materials during several visits there. The current curator, Carol Holliger of the Archive of Ohio United Methodism, has, more recently given expert assistance.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Gatch to James B. Finley, August 5, 1829, Papers of James B. Finley, Archives of Ohio United Methodism, Ohio Wesleyan University. (I am grateful to the archivist, Carol Holliger, for providing me with a photocopy and useful comments. I owe my awareness of the letter to Boase, "Philip Gatch," 294.) Finley was a prominent Ohio Methodist preacher, notable *inter alia* for his associations with Indian missions and the Methodist Publishing Concern in Cincinnati (*ANB Online*). Gatch suggests that Finley's father, Robert W. (a Princeton graduate, teacher and Indian missionary, who lived until 1840) might be willing to edit the essay for publication. Both father and son had served appointments connected with the church in Milford (J. L. Rockey, *History of Clermont County, Ohio* [Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1880] 480). The manuscript seems to have been returned, unedited and unpublished.

Because it lacks the formal structure of the usual essay, it may be helpful to readers to outline Gatch's argument here. With no introduction or thesis statement, he plunges into a retelling of early human history as recorded in the Bible: "The history from the fall of Adam to Noah is short." Coming to Noah, he asserts that the location of the ark's landing-place, Ararat, is unknown and may even have been America. This early history has as its implicit subject the scattering of peoples throughout the earth: the migrations of the offspring of Noah, the separations following Babel, the Egyptian captivity and Exodus, the north/south division of the Davidic kingdom and the disappearance of the "Lost Ten Tribes" of Israel—the inhabitants of the Northern Kingdom. Gatch posits they may have been the ancestors of the native peoples of North and South America, migrating across the Bering Strait. But there were even earlier occupants of the Americas, as witness their monuments: the prehistoric earthworks of the Ohio Valley, left by people who came to be called the Mound Builders. He posits the first prehistoric Americans may have been the Chinese (and their Tartar enemies), themselves descendants of Noah; their departure to Asia made room for occupation by the Ten Tribes. American Indians, are, thus, of the seed of Abraham: numbered among God's covenant people.

The balance of the "Essay" looks to America after the European settlements. It surveys missions to the Indians, considers the obligation of European-Americans to the people they have displaced. Gatch concludes with observations on his hope for the United States: that the seeds of the millennium have been planted there, although its fulfillment will be difficult, including (among other things) the abolition of slavery and the incorporation of the Indians in the fabric of society. An appended passage returns to the Ten Tribes thesis, apparently in light of a reader's criticism that too many Indians had been destroyed for them to be the Ten Tribes.

The chief interest of this essay lies in Philip Gatch's effort to understand the history of America before the arrival of the European settlers. The Native Americans they encountered in the first colonies on the Atlantic coast and later on the frontiers as they moved westward seemed a people of little culture: they had no significant urban settlements, their customs and dress were utterly alien to Christians of European descent; above all, in conflict with Europeans they seemed barbaric, savage. In Kentucky, Philip Gatch's brother had witnessed a young Indian eating the heart of his own massacred son.<sup>4</sup> Who were these people? How had they come to be

---

<sup>4</sup> According to a later account by Gatch's son, George, quoted by Markham, *Descendants*, 11.

on this continent? How did they fit into the picture of the human race as descended from a single ancestor and brought into existence by a single deity? In view of his family's experience and the general culture, Gatch's view of the Indian question is remarkably equable:

I have had [the Indians] on my mind, by night and by day; and ... they demand our attention. We have entered into their possessions, and are greatly benefited by the same; and as there is a prospect of our being some advantage to them, our government ought to seek their happiness, & all [Americans ought to] labour to minister to them in spiritual things. All can lend a helping hand in prayer and supplication to that God in whom we live, move, and have our being; he has made of one blood all Nations, and his mercies are over all his works.<sup>5</sup>

As the summary of the essay suggests, Gatch's theory on the origin of the people who had been found in possession of the "New World" by invaders from the Old was that the American Indians were all or part of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel. The patriarch Jacob had twelve sons—the "tribes" that escaped together from captivity in Egypt. Later they became divided into two kingdoms: Judah in the south was comprised of two of the tribes, and Israel in the north of the remaining ten. The people of Israel were ultimately defeated by the Assyrians and sent into exile. They disappeared (or were assimilated) in exile and were never again heard from. Gatch, remarkably, knew of the Bering Strait and the possibility (regarded by current scholarship as a likelihood) that the Americas were populated out of the Eurasian lands by peoples who were somehow able to cross the strait to Alaska and make their way southward to both North and South

---

<sup>5</sup> Ms. 20, as below, repunctuated for clarity.

America.<sup>6</sup> Gatch's thesis about the Ten Tribes foreshadows a belief that was to become a central tenet of Mormonism.<sup>7</sup>

But there was a further mystery. In Ohio and many other parts of America there were numerous earthworks, apparently of considerable antiquity. Some were simple conical mounds of earth for burial or other purposes; others were very large and elaborate constructs used as enclosures for fortifications or settlements or as ceremonial, religious sites. These earthworks seemed so sophisticated that it could not be imagined that they had been built by the forebears of the Native Americans: "The Land I bought," says Philip Gatch, "proclaims a great population in past ages, ingenious and powerful; a People innured to hard labor; There is about 50 Acres inclosed by Walls, and Moun[d]s raised; the enquiry is, who hath performed all this; Not the Indians, they know nothing about it, as they say."<sup>8</sup>

There were many theories about the origins of the Mound Builders. A publication on the subject contemporary with Philip Gatch was a long article by Caleb Atwater, a lawyer, legislator, and the postmaster of Circleville, an Ohio village with a large cluster of mounds, published in 1820 by the newly-founded American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts.<sup>9</sup> Atwood's work is respected for his "descriptive sections [that] were unusually good and ahead of the time." But his speculations about the origins of the Mound Builders were fanciful: he thought the mounds "were built by Hindus who had migrated to

---

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Jefferson, thought that the explorations of Captain James Cook in 1776-1779 demonstrated this possibility: "...the late discoveries of Captain Cook, coasting from Kamschatka to California, have proved that, if the two continents of Asia and America be separated at all, it is only by a narrow streight. So that from this side also, inhabitants may have passed into America: and the resemblance between the Indians of America and the Eastern inhabitants of Asia, would induce us to conjecture, that the former are the descendants of the latter, or the latter of the former..." (*Notes on the State of Virginia...* [London: John Stockdale, 1787], 163). An international symposium summarizing more recent scientific thinking on the migrations into America is David M. Hopkins, ed. *The Bering Land Bridge* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1967).

<sup>7</sup> See Robert Silverberg, *Mound Builders of Ancient America: The Archæology of a Myth* (Greenwich CT: New York Graphic Society, Inc., 1968), 88-96.

<sup>8</sup> Philip Gatch, *Condensed Autobiography* (1832): Gatch Papers, Group I.G.

<sup>9</sup> "Description of the Antiquities Discovered in the State of Ohio and Other States," *Archæologia Americana: Transactions of the American Antiquarian Society*, 1 (1820): 107-267; reprinted with an introduction by Jeremy A. Sabloff (New York: AMS Press, for Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 1973). The article on Atwater in *ANB Online* ignores his archaeological work.

North America and the Ohio Valley, built the great mounds and enclosures, and then migrated to Mexico, where they gave rise to the high civilizations of that area."<sup>10</sup> He did, however, believe (unlike most other theorizers) that the Indians preceded the Mound people in America and, after the more sophisticated group had moved on, occupied the territory formerly held by the Mound Builders.

Philip Gatch had a theory that is even more unusual than Atwater's. Nothing comparable occurs in the literature. He knew of the Grand Canal and Great Wall of China, and these were the only analogy he was could find in human history to the earthworks constructed of the Ohio Valley. He was also aware that the Chinese wall had been built as protection against invasion by the Tartars of Mongolia. As he had put his theory succinctly in one of his short autobiographies, written a year before the "Essay":

My own conjectures have been that our continent was once inhabited by the Chines so distinguished by their can[a]ls walls & for industry (for such must have been the character of the race once resident here) and that as they were annoyed by the Tartars they sought for serenity in a western direction and passed over Berrins Straits to China still pursued by their enemy to provide against which they built that famous wall that now separates between the two nations and that that God who controls the destinies of nations brought in [to America] the present natives who are probably the ten tribes of Israel in their dispersed condition.<sup>11</sup>

It does not seem to have occurred to him that there might have been a traffic jam in the Strait or on the Bering Land Bridge as all of these peoples went to and fro. (Current paleontology, in fact, posits two-way traffic.) As to the pre-American origins and whereabouts of the Chinese and the Tartars, Gatch suggests that they might well have been descendants of Noah and that the ark might have landed in the Americas.

A final note: near the end of the "Essay," Philip Gatch sees in the American religious experience the beginnings of the Millennium—the initiation of God's

---

<sup>10</sup> Sabolff in Atwater reprint, x. Atwater's Mexican thesis was hardly unique; Alexander von Humboldt's earlier nineteenth-century reports from Central and South America were frequently cited in support of the theory.

<sup>11</sup> Condensed Autobiography (1828): Gatch Papers, Group I.F See also "Essay," below, at ms. 12-14

kingdom. The “first seed sown of the Millennium,” he believes, was the work of Roger Williams in Rhode Island, establishing a model of religious freedom—unlike the Puritans who exercised “oppressive” control “both in civil and religious matters.” There will be tribulations: Slavery—which he calls “bodily oppression”—must be done away with; indeed, “There is a great deal of rubbish to be destroyed in America before the establishment of Christs Kingdom takes place.” But America can play a leading role in the opening of the millennium.<sup>12</sup>

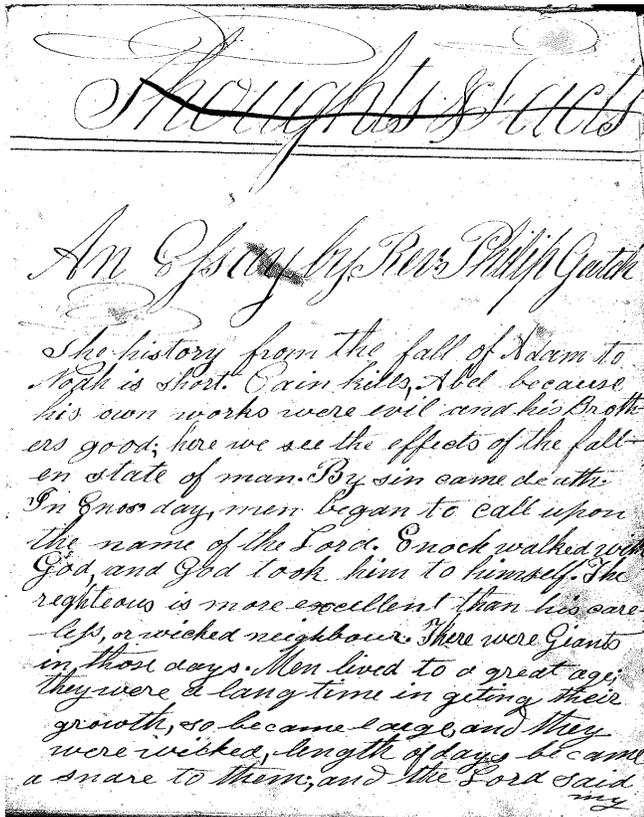
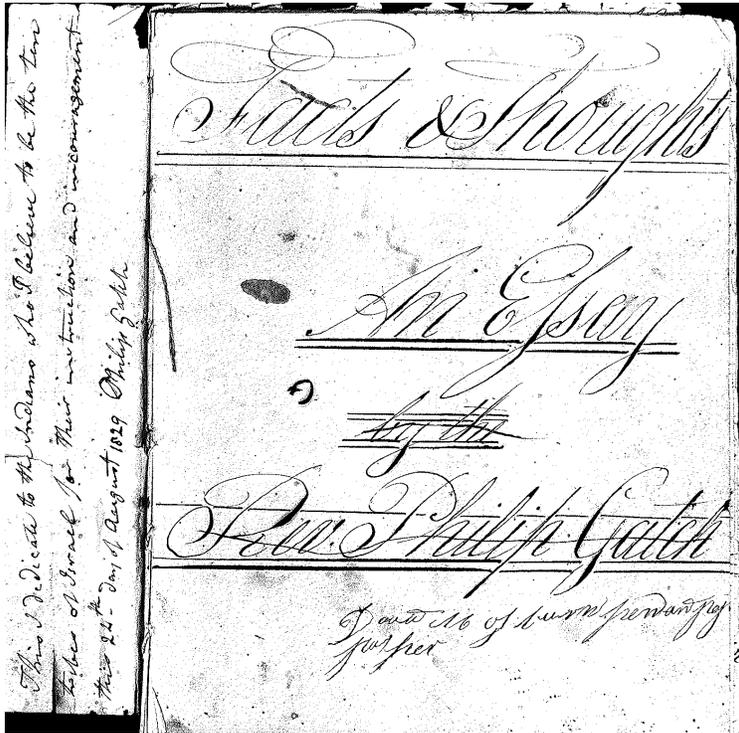
Primitive though it seems at first, then, Philip Gatch’s “Essay” looks at American prehistory and American Christianity from the standpoints both of biblical or universal history and of contemporary challenges faced by the new nation and its potential destiny. The “Essay” offers a an instructive glimpse into the workings of the American religious mind in the early nineteenth century, represented by a fairly simple man’s unusual reading of the sacred texts, surprisingly wide and accurate knowledge of history and geography, and his quest to understand a mysterious world—all illuminated by profound hope for a just future in a new country in the new world. Recent scholarship has tended to see writings such as this as both racist and evincing an imperialist Christianity; perhaps we might more generously regard Philip Gatch’s attitude as a genuine and even generous attempt—albeit not in accord with our present interpretation—to understand his world, its history, and all the peoples in it.

The following is a lightly edited transcription of the manuscript. An effort has been made in footnotes to flesh out historical background, and a number of citations (hardly exhaustive) are added to document the frequent biblical quotations and allusions in the text. To retain a sense of the author’s voice, his spelling and punctuation, both of which are erratic by present-day standards, are retained. He uses colons and semi-colons far more frequently than we, often where we would insert periods. Capitalization is erratic; spelling is inconsistent, often phonetic: *gost* for *ghost*, for example. Some punctuation and emended spellings are inserted in brackets for clarity, but editorial intrusions have been kept to the minimum. Manuscript pagination is indicated in square brackets.

---

<sup>12</sup> Ms. 25-28.

Title page with slip and page 1 (reduced).



## An Essay by Rev. Philip Gatch<sup>13</sup>

The history from the fall of Adam to Noah is short. Cain kills Abel<sup>14</sup> because his own works were evil and his Brothers good; here we see the effects of the fallen state of man. By sin came death. In Enos<sup>15</sup> day, men began to call upon the name of the Lord. Enoch<sup>16</sup> walked with God, and God took him to himself. The righteous is more excellent than his careless, or wicked neighbour. There were Giants<sup>17</sup> in those days. Men lived to a great age; they were a long time in getting their growth, so became large and they were wicked, length of days became a snare to them; the Lord said [p. 2] "my spirit shall not always strive with man" for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the Earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were evil continually, and it repented God that he had made man on the earth. And it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said I will destroy, man whom I have created, from the face of the earth; both man and beast and the creeping things, and the fowls of the air, for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation, and he walked with God, and the Lord informs him of his intentions, and directs him to the building [of] an ark: And Noah being moved with fear, by faith, builds the ark according to the directions the Lord gave him: which answered the purpose according to the intention of God; as stated. It is very uncertain to us where the Ark started from, or where it landed: we may suppose the commotion that was in the flood was very great, the heavens and the earth were combined together to produce the flood. It was raised above the highest mountains; the winds were also in motion, and the ark flo[a]ted on the waters. God was at the helm and

---

<sup>13</sup> Before the unnumbered title page, is a lengthwise strip: "This I dedicate to the Indians who I believe to be the ten tribes of Israel for their instruction and encouragement this 24<sup>th</sup> day of August 1829 Philip Gatch". A canceled title reads "Facts and Thoughts" or "Thoughts and Facts" (see images on page 8).

<sup>14</sup> This account of biblical history generally follows Genesis, Exodus, and the history books of Joshua, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. I have given citations only for specific passages that may be difficult to locate or raise difficulties for readers.

<sup>15</sup> Son of Seth and grandson of Adam. Gen 5:6-11.

<sup>16</sup> Great-grandfather of Noah and reputed author of the apocryphal book, I Enoch.

<sup>17</sup> Gen. 6:4-5:Nephilim were mythological divine/human beings of great size and power.

directed it where it seemed him good[,] I expect a great distance, from where it started, and the ark rested in the seventh month on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat;<sup>18</sup> the country was called Ararat, and not any particular Mountain. Indeed writers are at a loss to fix on any one Mountain in Asia where the ark did rest; they differ in judgement, and no wonder; it is said that the ark moved in a north direction. [p. 4] I [?] suppose these things, are buried in oblivion, for wise purposes. I would as soon think the ark rested on the American Mountains as anywhere else; we have record of the numerous family of Noah after the flood: their stations after God dispersed them, Genesis 10 chap, and 5<sup>verse</sup>. By these were the i[s]les of the Gentiles divided in their Land every one after his tongue, after their families in their Nation. This relates to Japheth.<sup>19</sup> Their language was not at this time confounded: but this is what takes place after it was. We have no account where they were untill as they journeyed from the East they found a plain in the land of Shinar.<sup>20</sup> Nimrod<sup>21</sup> the son of Cush began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: and the beginning of his Kingdom was Babel; the plain of Shinar was a pleasant country, which they had not known before.

Nimrod I expect was their leader, and as he was a great hunter; he went foremost [p. 5] and first discovered this, heretofore unknown, part of the world; how long this was after the Flood we know not. Some writers, suppose between \*2 & 3 hundred years.<sup>22</sup> ~~It is supposed that after the building of the tower, Noah moved to Shinar. He lived 3 hundred and 50 years after the flood;~~ Untill they came to Shinar they had been in a moveing position and many had been left behind, some in distant parts of the world, and some weary of traveling; others worn out with old age & fateague, and they said let us build us a City and a tower, whos top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name lest we be scattered abroad upon the whole face of the earth. This may inform us, that they were considerably detached from each other at this time. It is likely that the of[f]spring of Ham was more particularly embodied with Nimrod their leader. Authors say that they had progressed considerably in the work, and the [p. 6] Lord came down to see the City and the Tower which the Children of men builded

---

<sup>18</sup> Gen. 8:4.

<sup>19</sup> Gen. 10:2-5.

<sup>20</sup> Gen 10:10, 11:2.

<sup>21</sup> Gen. 10:8-10.

<sup>22</sup> Before " 2 & 3", there is an asterisk to a footnote, which is canceled and illegible. There is another canceled note on this page of the ms, for which there seems to be no marker.

and the Lord said, Behold! the people are one and they have all one language, and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.—Let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the earth, and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel, because the Lord did confound the language of all the earth, and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.<sup>23</sup>

Peleg was born 101 years after the flood, he was of the family of Shem; he lived 269 years and died 370 years after the flood.<sup>24</sup> And in his days was the earth divided, at what time in his life we know not. I am led to think it was after there [sic] language was confounded; perhaps after God scattered them into different quarters of the earth. The earth was broken asunder by Seas, lakes, and rivers, so as to separate betwe- [p. 7] en the different Nations. After some generations Abraham is born, and he and his of[f]spring passed through various dispensations, some adverse and some prosperous, which more or less affected the nations. Isaac and Jacob were men of respectable characters. The Lord directed Joseph's way before him into Egypt, and rendered him a blessing to his Father and Brethren in time of grievous famine. Joseph became governor over all the land of Egypt and furnished them with bread: but after this they became subject to Pharaoh and were treated as slaves, but God raised up Moses to deliver them; in which his power and mercy were, made manifest: they passed the red Sea dryshod, and the Egyptians passing after them to destroy them, and while in the midst of the sea, God let the floods loose upon them and drowned them, he gave them [i.e., the Israelites] bread from heaven and water out of the rock; the Lord gave them his ordinances to keep; but they kept them not; but became idolaters: and God at different times destroyed many of them. They were forty years on their [p. 8] journey; all died in the wilderness that came out of Egypt only Joshua and Caleb: God found them to be faithful & he honoured them. After the death of Moses, Joshua became their leader & conducted them over Jordan, and brought them into the promised land, which God had promised to Abraham several hundred years before.

The measure of the iniquities of the Nations, was full, and God had appointed them to destruction; these were the offspring of ham and others, they

---

<sup>23</sup> Gen. 11:1-9

<sup>24</sup> Gen. 10-11. According to Gen. 11:18-19, Peleg lived 239 years.

became servants of Shem, for their possessions came into the hands of his of[f]spring.<sup>25</sup> The children of Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and the Elders that out lived Joshua. After this they mixed themselves with the Nations and became wicked, and suffered much from the Nations about them. [p. 9] And the Lord wrought repeated deliverances for them by the judges that he raised up for the purpose [.] he dealt out mercies and judgements to them. At last he gave them at their request, Saul, for their king, and after him David, who ruled well; next Solomon, a wise man, but he went astray. After him the kingdom was divided, between Rehoboam King of Judah, and Jeroboam King of Israel. A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand.<sup>26</sup> Judah and Benjamin followed Rehoboam and the other ten tribes Jeroboam. From this time great desolation attends them. There were some good Kings over Judah and Benjamin, but most of them were wickid, and they were wicked to a great degree that reigned over Israel; and the Lord cut them both short: they became more idolatrous than the nations that were before them, and the Lord, by his Prophets, warned them repeatedly of the miseries that they were bringing on themselves; but they regarded it not: so it became worse and worse with them, untill they were destroyed out of their Inheritance by other Nations. [p. 10] And they them selves one against the other, and there were wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days. 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 14—15. For the Lord shall smite Israel as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their Fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river. Pekah slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand in one day; and the children of Israel carried away of their brethren two hundred thousand, but they let them go free in mercy. 2<sup>nd</sup> of Chron 28 begin at the 6 verse. Efraim vest Judah and Judah vest Efraim.<sup>27</sup> At last Shalmanezar King of Assyria took Samaria and did carry away Israel unto Assyria and put them in Halak and in Habor by the river of Gazan and in the cities of the Medes; 2<sup>nd</sup> Esdras beginning at the 40<sup>th</sup> verse of the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter. These are the ten tribes which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of Hoshea the King whom Shalminesar the King of Assyria led away captive, and he carried them over the waters and so came they, into another

---

<sup>25</sup> This sentence is out of place. It harkens back to the sons of Noah at Gen. 9:18-27.

<sup>26</sup> Mark 3:24, here applied to the division of the united kingdom of David into the southern kingdom Judah ("Judah and Benjamin followed Rehoboam") and the northern Israel (the remaining ten tribes of Israel under Jeroboam).

<sup>27</sup> The meaning of this sentence is unclear. It pertains to the conflict between Judah and Israel, the latter allied with Syria (II Chron. 28:8). *Vest* seems to be used with the sense, *took power over*.

land, and they took this council amongst themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen and go forth into a further country where never Man had dwelt; [p. 11] that they might there keep their Statutes which, they never kept in their own Land: and they entered into the Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river for the Most High then showed signs for them and held still the flood, till they were passed over for through that country there was a great way to go; namely of a year and a half: and the same region is called Arsarath, in the margin Ararath and then points to Genesis 8-5[?] and 4<sup>verse</sup> Ararat.<sup>28</sup> Then dwelt they there untill the latter times.

Asia on the north east and America on the Northwest are closely connected, and it is the opinion of Men of information that the ten tribes of Israel passed over from Asia to America at the Bhering straits. Now where are we to look for the country of Ararat, is it in Africa, Europe or Asia? there is an uncertain mountain in Asia called Ararat, but they can not determine which it is, but we must pursue a country of that Name: why may we not conclude that it must be in America? This country was known before the Indians settled here, and it with the Ancients had a name, as Esdras tells us. If the Indians are the ten tribes of Israel, a covenant-keeping God, with Abraham brought them here, in a state of poverty and distress, in order to purge out of them that [p. 12] idolatrous spirit that they had been under the influence of. Here he stript them of their superfluities and reduced them to a state of poverty. They are strip[p]ed, and healed, and like Nebuchadnezzar, turned out of their own country among, the wild beasts. It is said that the Indians in South and North America, are the same people. They are a hidden people, or have been so for many generations; but there has been such notice taken of them, for some years that it is now believed that they are the ten tribes of Israel. Where can we find them? In scripture they are spoken of as being remote from the Jews, who are scattered among the nations. America was certainly settled before the Indians inhabited it: the vast enclosures by walls and the mounds raised some of them to a great height; which are made with great exactness, assure us that a laborious and ingenious People, once inhabited this country.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Gatch is here referring to the apocryphal book, II Esdras 13:44-45, and the edition he is using apparently has a marginal notation that points to Gen. 8:4, justifying his association of Arsarath with Ararat. (The apparent reference to Gen. 8:5 must be an error.)

<sup>29</sup> Gatch is here referring to the so-called Mound Builders, pre-historic Americans whose constructions were ubiquitous in the area of southern Ohio where he settled in

I am inclined to think that the Chinese & Tartars once dwelt here: the Chinese are a laborious people possessed of mechanical ingenu [p. 13] ity. The Indians know nothing of these establishments, as a man informed me that lived with them many years. History says that China surpasses all other countries in roads and canals, the great canal that connects Pekin with Nankin is 500 miles long; there is the great wall, which they built along the whole of their frontiers, to preserve them from the intrusions of the Tartars (who were a troublesome people)[;] it is said to be 1500 miles in length, built of brick and stone 25 feet high and so thick that six horsemen can ride abreast on the top of the wall.<sup>30</sup> The Tartars have been the enemies of the Chinese, and by a breach made in their wall they have interrupted them; but they are now divided and many of them have been destroyed.<sup>31</sup> The Chinese are very cautious of let[t]ing any other people among them. And my thoughts are that the Chinese and Tartars once lived in America, and the Tartars so harassed the Chinese that they left this country, and the Tartars followed them for the sake of plundering them. Here is something like Ezekiel's vision; a wheel in a wheel.

[p. 14] # God has his way in the whirlwind,<sup>32</sup> and all things obey his might; by these means, God has made room for the ten captive tribes of Israel.<sup>33</sup> [5 lines of text about the Chinese migration canceled:] ~~China and Tartary both lay on the North East of Asia, and on the North West of America, both being on the Bhering straits, which must have been the crossing place from one Continent to the~~

---

1798. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European-Americans thought the mounds, some very elaborate and extensive, gave evidence that prehistoric America had hosted a civilization far superior to that of the Indians, whom they had encountered and displaced. In all three of his autobiographical writings, Philip Gatch describes an extensive mound complex, part of which was on his farm at Milford. His association of the Mound Builders with the canal- and wall-building Chinese is apparently unique. It was more common to posit that the Mound Builders were precursors of the Aztecs of Mexico, and the Incas of Peru whose pyramids seemed analogous with the earthen mounds of midwestern North-America. It would be interesting to know the sources of his information about China and the Bering Strait.

<sup>30</sup> The Grand Canal and Great Wall of China are of greater length and antiquity than Gatch posits.

<sup>31</sup> The Tartars are Turkic people who, with Mongols, conquered and ruled much of Asia in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>32</sup> Nahum 1:3.

<sup>33</sup> I.e., the return of the Chinese (and the Tartars) to Asia, opened America to settlement by the Indians (the Ten Tribes).

~~other.~~ I am inclined to think these Nations to be the offspring of Japheth.<sup>34</sup> I do not understand that the Chinese have ever suffered much from any other Nation since, they have been settled in China [inserted above the line] only the Tartars. God has preserved them. It is said that Noah moved to China after the overthrow of Babel (he lived 350 years after the flood) we may suppose, he had been there aforetime. It is said to be a pleasant country and it may be that as they had left at [space left for a word.] God had it in view, by his providence to transplant the ten tribes of Israel in this retired part of the world; and has made the Chinese secure in the country which he has given them. All writers that I have read on the subject say that the ark rested [p. 15] on Mount Arrarat, but Moses he says that it rested on the Mountains of Arrarat; the country was called Arrarat, and not the mountain. I am surprised that writers and people have taken things on trust as they have done: Calling a Mountiain in Asia or N. Carolina Arrarat, does not establish the resting of the Ark there.<sup>35</sup> There are different Mountains in Asia that, they call Mount Arrarat; one is said to be so high that the top is always covered with snow, and so steep that it cannot be assended. I do not think that God would have landed the Ark in such a frozen spot, nor do I think that man or beast could have got down in safety. I do not hear of any likelier place for God to land the Ark than on the mountains of A—. <sup>36</sup> Here he has made provision for both man and beast; see the extensive Pararies<sup>37</sup> made by the Saviour of Noah and all with him in the ark. In ancient times the people lived mostly by their flocks and herds; and as the flood destroyed the timber they [p. 16] inclosed their property by walls; great and astonishing are the works here performed. This is common in

---

<sup>34</sup> Noah's son Japheth (Gen 5:32) was traditionally thought to be the progenitor of Europeans and Asians.

<sup>35</sup> A mountain and river in the Blue Ridge of North Carolina were named Ararat: see Joshua Fry and Peter Jefferson, *A Map of the most Inhabited part of Virginia containing the whole province of Maryland with part of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and North Carolina* (London: Thos. Jefferys, 1755), reproduced as of May 7, 2013 at [www.raremaps.com/gallery/enlarge/12607](http://www.raremaps.com/gallery/enlarge/12607).

<sup>36</sup> Here and below the abbreviation seems to imply America.

<sup>37</sup> A phonetic spelling of *prairie*. The word, a loan from French, may have been first encountered by settlers after they moved to the west. Philip Gatch's brother-in-law, James Smith used the *pararas* in his journals ("Tours into Kentucky and the Northwest Territory: Three Journals by the Rev. James Smith of Powhatan County, Va., 1783-1795, edited by Josiah Morrow," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 16 (1907): 348-401): "large tracts of fine, rich land, without trees and producing as fine grass as the best meadows." Jedidiah Morse in *The American Geography...* (Elizabethtown NY: Shepard Kollock), 463, also uses *parara*; but in the 7<sup>th</sup> ed. of *The American Universal Geography...*, 2 vols. (Charlestown MA: Lincoln & Edmands, et al.), 1: 629, he uses *prairie* for these "extensive meadows."

all the western countrys. Does any part of the world promise greater accomadations to Noah than A—? His family is large and all require sustenance. A— from N— to S— takes in an extensive climate. The flood commensed on the second month the seventeenth day of the month, and on the second month and twenty-seventh day of the month, after being in the Ark one year and ten days, Noah with his large family came out of the Ark: this was on the twelfth day of May according to our calculation of time; the beginning of their year was at the middle of March.<sup>38</sup> The Parairies were now springing forth with grass, and the earth bearing fruit both for man and beast, and fish in abundance.

The testimonies of the Lord are sure, and holiness becometh the house of the Lord forever. The seed of Abraham has been highly favoured of the Lord above all other Nations in the world and the Lord could in justice, expect or require more of them than any other Nation. But they greatly rebelled against the Lord. [p. 17] By Moses & Joshua the Lord did set life and death before them, and exhorted them to choose life that they might live, but informed them that if they refused to obey God; that great distress should follow and so it has been with them for many generations: Whoever will read the Scriptures may see them fulfilled in the threatenings of the Lord against them for their disobedience; and if the Scriptures are fulfilled in punishing them, why not in the gracious visitations God as a covenant-keeping God, has promised to favour them with in the later days. What has already come to pass may declare unto us, that the Scriptures are to be depended on, and will be fulfilled as time and Eternity roll on: both as they relate to the Righteous & the wicked. God has set to his seal, that they are true. All the promises and prophecies, relating to our Savior, have been fulfilled so far: and we may be sure that not a word that he has spoken will fall to the ground. The heavens and the earth will pass away, but the word of the Lord abideth forever. In the books of the Prophets, there are many gracious promises relating to the Jews, that are scattered abroad among many Nations: and also to the ten tribes of Israel; who unless they are the Indians, we cannot say where they are.

[p. 18] But the eye of the Lord is over them for good according to his word The judgements of the Lord are a great deep and his ways past finding out. Every work has its beginning and so advances on to maturity, trace it on through the Old and New Testament, and we shall find it so, humility generally precedes

---

<sup>38</sup> Gen. 7:11, 8:14. Again, Gatch seems to make reference to an annotated Bible.

exhultation. The first settlement of America was attended with great difficulty;<sup>39</sup> but the Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad. The ways of God are misterious. A small branch of the Church of God as with the wings of an eagle, crossed the waters deep, with Jesus in their view, and to this wilderness did their way persue from persecution, and arrived in N- America among a strange Nation no doubt but their prospects were gloomy; some among them aimed at the conversion of the Natives: and Elliot<sup>40</sup> was in some measure successful, also M<sup>r</sup> Williams;<sup>41</sup> but wars and bloodshed prevailed and so they moved on in strife. David Branard,<sup>42</sup> that great man of God laboured heartily among the Indians and was an instrument of the conversion of many of them, but wars continue. Daniel Marshal<sup>43</sup> and others, forsook all and laboured amongst them, untill wars broke out amongst the Indians and the Whites. [p. 19] This is the Draggon seeking to destroy the infant Church, but since the first war with England the prospect is better than it was afore time. After the Revolution the establishment of Religion with the United States became free, former obstructions being removed, and the Gospel has spread, and has been made manifest in the conversion of many precious souls. Every Church may now with equal privilege sit under her own vine and fig tree,<sup>44</sup> and there is none dare interrupt her.

The disposition of the United States towards the Indians, is now generous, and this affords a nearer access to them: and now there is the greatest prospect of their being civilized and christianized that ever has been. The Missionary stations established by different denominations, through the help of God, are

---

<sup>39</sup> I.e., the European settlements.

<sup>40</sup> John Eliot (1604-90), Puritan missionary to the Indians. Eliot is best known for his translations of the Bible into an Indian language, Algonquian –the first complete Bible printed in America (Cambridge MA 1661-63)—and other tracts. His efforts were ended by King Phiip’s War in 1675 (*ANB Online*).

<sup>41</sup> Roger Williams (1603-83), founder of Rhode Island, wanted to undertake a mission to the Indians and believed Native Americans should be treated as members of the human family, not savages (*ANB Online*).

<sup>42</sup> David Brainerd (1718-47), a Puritan who devoted his life to missions to the Indians. Greatly admired by Jonathan Edwards, he sadly contracted tuberculosis and was responsible for the spread of the disease among the Native Americans and Whites (*ANB Online*).

<sup>43</sup> Daniel Marshall (1706-84) was a Baptist itinerant influenced by the Methodist preacher of the Great Awakening, George Whitefield. He worked with Indians until the outbreak of the French and Indian War in 1754. He lived 1754-60 in Frederick County, Virginia, in the area where Philip Gatch itinerated during the Revolution (*ANB Online*).

<sup>44</sup> Micah 4:4.

proving successful: And I hope the Gospel will prevail amongst them throughout N— & S— America. The Lord has a just claim, on the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession. And now he is sending his servants to the dark regions of the earth, to spread his Gospel among them that a long time have [p. 20] been in darkness and in a state of spiritual death, and [?] they are favoured with encouraging success. And they are also translating the Scripture into different languages for their instruction. The Lord I believe is about to bring in the future of the Gentiles: and he will prepare his way before the gospel; so that it may have free course to all Nations, and kindreds of people in the world; there will be a great deal of rubbish removed out of the way. I suspect wickedness will be removed, tyranny cease, and equality be established in the earth, and all Nations know that he is God. But to return to the Indians: I have had them on my mind, by night and by day, and whether they be the ten tribes of Israel or not, they demand our attention; we have entered into their possessions, and are greatly benefited by the same:<sup>45</sup> and as there is a prospect of our being some advantage to them, our government ought to seek their happiness, & all labour to minister to them in spiritual things; all can lend a helping hand in [p. 21] prayer and supplication to that God in whom we live, move, and have our being; he has made of one blood all Nations: and his mercies are over all his works.<sup>46</sup> If we possessed those gracious powers that God at first favoured us with we should love, as brethren and act accordingly. Though great afflictions for many ages, have been their lot for their sins; yet the Lord is a covenant keeping God, and these visitations are for their good. The Lord has spoken good concerning them by the prophets in the latter days, which will surely come to pass. The prospect is encouraging, and it looks like the daybreak of the Millennium, is visible, the arm of the Lord is stretched out to gather in the fullness of the Gentiles, and then he will turn the captivity of the seed of Abraham. But I have thought, and still think, that many will be mistaken in that gracious visitation when it comes; like the Jews were in the coming of the Messiah, he came a helpless infant, into the world. The Jews looked for a Mighty Sovereign coming as directly down [p. 22] from God to deliver them from all their distress with an irresistible power; but there was no form or comeliness in him to lead them to desire him but was as a root springing out of the dry ground, therefore they did not improve the kind visitation. So, I am inclined to think, it

---

<sup>45</sup> This recognition that the Euro-American settlers had dispossessed the Native Americans, if not unparalleled, is unusual.

<sup>46</sup> "God in whom ... all his works": a catena of biblical allusions from Acts 17:28 and 26 and Psalm 145:9.

may be in the Millennium. What can the Lord do more for his vineyard than what he is doing in the United States of N— America to convert people, whether they will or not, is contrary to Deity and our maker [?].<sup>47</sup> I believe the time to favour God's ancient Zion is approaching near, as he is takeing them one of a City and two of a family,<sup>48</sup> and converting them to himself: the Gospel is preached to them and they are beginning so to hear as to live. I think the Millennium is in its commencement, and has its beginning in the United States of A—. Great tribulation will pass on before this great day of the Lord: the Nations must be subdued pe[r]haps by war, famine, or pestilence. The [p. 23] wickedness that is in the world must be subdued and removed and the way of the Gospel be prepared before it; then the Gentiles will come in and the family of Abraham, return unto the Lord; and his Kingdom rule over all Nations; and his people be all one under the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.<sup>49</sup>

The United States are greatly favoured; there is nothing to prevent us from serving the Lord, if we make it our choice. The Gospel has free course it seems and is glorified in the conversion of precious souls. I think the salvation of God has come out of Zion unto us. Different Denominations are engaged on the Lords side, nevertheless, there are many evil doers, but their blood will be on their own heads. We must be willing and obedient or God will not save us and if we do refuse and rebell, strong delusions will swallow us up in eternal ruin.<sup>50</sup> God for many years and by different means, has been saving the good seed of the kingdom, in North- [p. 24] America, first by the Puritans or non conformers so called, next by the Baptists and Quakers, and in due time George Whitefield,<sup>51</sup> a Minister of the Established Church of England, several times passed through the Continent, crying aloud, behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.<sup>52</sup> By these men and means, God has laid a good foundation in this formerly unknown part of the world.

---

<sup>47</sup> An awkward sentence, which masks its remarkable meaning: the forced conversion of Native Americans is not God's will.

<sup>48</sup> Jeremiah 3:14 on the restitution of the exiled peoples.

<sup>49</sup> "Great Shepherd ... souls": I Peter 2:25.

<sup>50</sup> "Strong delusion": II Thess. 2:11.

<sup>51</sup> An Anglican minister and evangelist, Whitefield (1714-70) came to Philadelphia in 1739 and made a number of later visits. His preaching, with that of Jonathan Edwards, was the most important and effective of the Great Awakening, the first great revivalist movement in America in the eighteenth century (*ANB Online*).

<sup>52</sup> John 1:29, John the Baptist speaking of Jesus.

Here we may see the goodness of the Lord extended to us. Next the Methodists (a people of later date who are running to and fro, and the knowledge of God is increasing in the Earth) In the year 1773 when I traveled & Preached in the Jerseys, I had the opportunity of the use of many books of different Denominations, and by this means, I saw that, religion is the same in all people that enjoy it in its realities.<sup>53</sup> Many I fear content themselves, with a name to live, when they are dead to the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the holy Gost. When we enjoy the consolations of religion, we see eye to eye, and we all shall [p. 25] know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. The Church of God is one and although there are different branches of it yet all the living branches will be useful, as they are now. So I expect it will be throughout that season we call the Millennium; all ought to contend for that faith which is given unto us by the spirit of God, and strive to better ourselves and others up in it: praying in the holy Ghost; keeping ourselves in the love of God; looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto Eternal life.

I think the first seed sown of the Millennium was sown by Roger Williams a Baptist Preacher in Rhode Island; when he came to N. America. The first settlers claimed the prerogative, both in civil and religious matters; this was oppressive both to the souls & bodies of the after comers. Mr. Williams went home to England and obtained a charter for Rhode Island: when he offered a relief for the oppressed and well disposed. No [p. 26] doubt this was of God. William Penn's (~~a Quaker~~) establishment was the same in Pennsylvania. These names are better than precious ointment. God has ever been mindful of these two settlements.<sup>54</sup> Since the Revolutionary war, the different States have submitted to a partial liberty of conscience, for which we ought to be thankful to God: but bodily oppression still remains, in a considerable degree (Slavery) but this must be removed; and I hope it will, for it is an opposition to the Millennium, in its progress. There is a great deal of rubbish to be destroyed [over corrections, deletions] In America before the establishment of Christs Kingdom takes place there. All those tolerating acts must be laid aside, with the restrictions included in them: England must come a little lower. But it will be necessary for civil government to be established, in equity for the well government of the human family. Moses and Joshua laid before [p. 27] the people, what God had done for them in time past: we ought never to forget the Rock from whence we were

---

<sup>53</sup> Philip Gatch's first assignment as a circuit rider was in New Jersey in 1773, shortly after his conversion (see Connor, *Methodist Trail Blazer*, 28-30).

<sup>54</sup> I.e., Rhode Island and Pennsylvania.

hewn, nor the pit from whence we were dug, but keep in memory the years of the right hand of the Most High: we ought never to forbid any from casting out devils in the name of Jesus, though they do not follow us; the work of saving souls belongs to God, and he has a right to send such labourers, into his vineyard as he sees good and when we take into view the extent of the human family, we shall see that the harvest is great and the labourers are few, when compared to it; therefore let us pray the Lord of the harvest to raise up more labourers, and send them forth everywhere to offer a precious Jesus to a fallen race; crying out behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. O! when shall all that profess the Chri- [p. 28] stian Religion possess the realities thereof: and the heathen nation be converted to God, and so the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in; and the captive seed of Abraham be gathered into the Church of God; and all be one in Christ Jesus.

Then will Christ reign in his spiritual kingdom; and the spirits of the just, redeemed from among men, by the blood of Jesus will associate with Jesus in the Church Militant; will they not all, with the holy angels, be ministering spirits, and be engaged in the work of God?

FINIS.

[Added note: ms. pages 28-30]<sup>55</sup>

some may suppose that the Indians in N. and S. America taking into view the vast numbers that have been destroyed are too numerous to be the ten tribes of Israel, according to calculation it has been 2555 years [p. 29] since Shalmanaser captivated them and carried them and carried them into the northeastern parts of Assiria and it is supposed that some of the Is[raelites?] past over to America with them, perhaps under the government of Providence (?) as ----- and mixt with them. The seed of Abraham was to be as the sand of the sea, wonderful are the works of God that governs the world. The ofspring of Japheth came to dwell in the Tents of the, that is the Church of God, under the Gospel Dispensation when the gentiles were gathered into the new Testament Church of God by the ministry of the appostels, where they have been for near 1810 years as to

---

<sup>55</sup> Pagination in the ms. ends with 28. This note seems to have been an amplification of the text or responding to criticism the theory that Native Americans descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.

priveledge while the offspring of the have been excluded because of unbelief, but there is a prospect of their being reclaimed and their being brought back again to dwell in the tents with the gentiles and their being one fold under the one Shephard [p.30] and thus the prediction of Noah as it relates to his three sons is fulfilled Gen.9 Chapter

---

### An essay on Justification and Sanctification<sup>56</sup>

without Faith it is impossible to please God. There is no real conviction without faith. it is the root of all religion that is pleasing to God, if received by the Spirit and improved it produces in us a sence or a conviction of the necessity of being saved, it directs our way through the path of repentance to the precious blood of Jesus and Faith realises [?] it to our souls by which our sins are washed away and the Spirit of God proclaims peace to our souls by sheding the love of God abroad in our hearts. two things are implied in Justification, that is the pardon of our sins, and the witness of the spirit of God witnessing with our spirits that we are the Children of God.

Two things are implied in Sanctification that is to be emptied of evil and to be filled with good. [p. 33] \ the carnal mind which is enmity against God must be purged out, and by the renewing grace of our hearts must be purified and the thoughts thereof cleansed by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, and the Love of God shed abroad therein by the Holy Gost, which is given to all them that obey God. The work of sanctification is both progressive and instantanius [sc. 'instantaneous'], in that degree grace influences us in that degree we are sanctified[.] the work begins at an early period and as we advance in the will of God, so sin ceases and grace prevails, when converted some are much more renewed in their souls than others are, and have become deder [? 'deader'] to sin. The deeds of the body are to be mortified, the flesh with the afflictions and lusts thereof must be crucified and thus the struggle continues untill the old man is put of[f] with his deeds and the new man put on, which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of him [p. 34] that created him, and that ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

---

<sup>56</sup> This unrelated essay treats the central theological tenets of Wesley's Methodism.

Ephesians 4<sup>c</sup> 22<sup>vs</sup> and being cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit we are now to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. Peter after saying almost everything that he could in his second Epistle concludes with these words, But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to him be glory both now and forever. Amen. To this part of sanctification there will be no end in time nor Eternity.