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Minutes . . . at Newtown . . . November 3d  
and 4th, 1808.

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# MINUTES

OF THE

*& Susana 12 Jan 1808*

## Chemung Baptist Association,

HELD BY APPOINTMENT,

AT NEWTOWN,

NOW CALLED

*ALMYRA.*

ON NOVEMBER 3d and 4th, 1808.



*Wednesday, November 3, 1808.*

1 AT 11 o'clock, A. M. brother Jesse Hartwell, a missionary from the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society, preached the introductory Sermon from John x. 27, 28, 29. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," &c.

2 Intermission, twenty minutes.

Met agreeably to adjournment.

3 Brother Roswell Goff prayed.

4 Brother R. Goff chosen Moderator.

5 Brother Smiley, formerly in connexion with us, but now removed, and a member of a newly constituted church, not as yet joined to any associated body; having now met with us, was invited to take a seat with this association as usual, and was chosen clerk.

6 Letters from five churches were read.

7 Several brethren, from different parts being present, were invited to take seats with us.

N. B. Ministers' names are in capitals. Licensed preachers are in italics. Those marked with an \*, were not present. From churches marked thus †, we had no intelligence. A dash — denotes no settled minister.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers and Messengers.</i>	Baptized.	Received by Letter.	Dismissed by Letter.	Excluded.	Deceased.	Total.
<i>Chemung.</i>	{ ROSWELL GOFF, Ebenezer Green, Jesse Moore, Asa Parrshall.	restored 1	1			1	46
<i>Tawanda.</i>	{ _____ Aaron Cook,		1	2	1		25
<i>Owego.</i>	{ David Short, * a licentiate, Elisba Rich, * a licentiate, Joseph Smith.		7	1			50
<i>Bath.</i>	{ AMOS EGGLESTONE, Thomas Streeter, a licentiate, John Kent.	1	1				23
<i>Newtown, now called Almyra.</i>	{ Solomon Moore, Aaron Whitney, Ebenezer Snow.	8					28
† <i>Owego Creek.</i>	{ _____ Jasper Taylor, * a licentiate.						13
<b>Total.</b>		10	9	3	2	0	185

8 The Circular Letter, prepared by brother Smiley, was read, and brethren Hartwell, Jno. Goff, S. Moore, Streeter, and R. Goff, were appointed a committee, together with the author; to revise, and bring it to the association to-morrow morning.

Prayer attended to.

9 Adjourned until 9 o'clock to-morrow, A. M.

10 Sermon in the evening by brother Smiley, from Matt. v. 17, 18.

*Thursday, November 4.*

Met pursuant to adjournment.

11 Brother John Goff preached from Eph. ii. 13.

Prayer after sermon.

Intermission, 15 minutes.

Met agreeably to adjournment.

Brother Streeter prayed.

12 The Circular Letter was read again, and approved of.

13 *Voted*, that this association meet next at *Chemung*, on the first Wednesday in November, in the next year, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

14 *Voted*, that brother R. Goff take the care of our former minutes, and present them to this body next year.

15 *Voted*, that brother Smiley revise our minutes, superintend the printing, and forward them to the churches.

16 *Voted*, that a letter, (already prepared,) be sent by brother Hartwell to the Baptist Massachusetts Missionary Society; requesting missionaries to come to this land, and meet with us at our associations.

17 *Voted*, that brother Smiley shall go as our messenger to the next session of the Philadelphia Association, in order to continue our correspondence with our brethren composing that body; and carry every account from us to them, that otherwise a corresponding letter would do.

18 *Voted*, that brother Solomon Moore, write a Circular Letter for the next session of this association.

19 The Moderator and several of the brethren exhorted.

Closed with prayer by brother Smiley.

Brother Streeter preached in the evening.

### CIRCULAR.

THE Ministers and Messengers, composing the Baptist Association of Chemung, to our Churches in general, wisheth grace, mercy, and peace, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dearly beloved,

While we from this place send you with pleasure an account that we have reason to hope, that we have had a degree of the presence of the great Head of the Church with us at this opportunity; we would in this day of abounding error, wish to present you with a very short sketch of the history of the Church of Christ; a few observations on the leading doctrines which she has always held, and some improvement of the whole. And therefore, In the first place, it appears that the apostles planted christianity in its purity; and notwithstanding that, even then we are told, that Antichrist made his appearance; (see 1 John iv. 3;) yet as for the three first centuries, the civil authority was in the hands of the heathen Roman emperors, who in ten different persecutions, put many thousands to death for professing it: there were not great numbers that owned themselves christians but what were so in-

deed; and it is highly observable; that learned authors \* that nevertheless did not practise it, do tell us, that in the first century, † and since, baptism was administered as we now do. However, in the introduction of the fourth century, the emperor professed himself a Christian; and the civil authority being under his direction, he blended Church and state together: and now Antichrist in a more formal way appeared: popery was introduced; and gradually the doctrines and government of the first Christian Churches were set aside; while Episcopacy, ‡ the heathen church-government, and many of their customs, were introduced in its room: yet we remark, to the praise of sovereign grace, that there was still a remnant that ever kept the faith, for about one thousand years, while popery prevailed: these dwelt in the vallies of Piedmont, and the enemy was never able to extirpate them. Hence we descend to view the reformation from popery: since which time we live. The day-star of this, if we may term it so, was the preaching and writings of John Wickliffe, about 130 years before the reformation by Luther; and it calls our most serious attention, that as the Papists, both then, and now do hold, the same doctrines, that is, as to the most essential things that the present Arminians do: so Wickliffe in that early day, in opposing them, held all the leading doctrines that the Arminians now set themselves against, § and was one with us as to baptism. || This great and godly man was sorely persecuted, but died at last in peace: and, notwithstanding that, the Papists long after dug up his bones, and burned ¶ them, his writings continued in the world; and sowed the seeds of the more general reformation, which took its rise under Luther, as the instrument, in 1517, and was followed, or rather improved upon, by Calvin, and many others, who were raised by God to diminish the Popish power: and we again observe, that the leading points debated on, by these first reformers and the papists, were the same that divide us and the present Arminians: and hence

\* Among many others, see Burlett, and Pool's continuators on Romans vi. 4.  
 † Mosheim's account of how baptism was administered in the first century.  
 ‡ The reader, for this is referred to Delaune's Plea for the nonconformists.  
 § Neal, vol. i. p. 5, and the Life of Wickliffe, in the Evangelical Biography.  
 || Toulmin's notes in Neal, p. 3, and the Life of Wickliffe in the Biography.  
 ¶ 41 years, see Neal, vol. 1, p. 5.

it was, that, when James Arminius first vented Arminianism, about the beginning of the sixteenth century, the whole body of the Protestants opposed it as containing all the essentials of Popery :\* and the Papists also boasted of it, as such, when it became popular in England.† This, dear brethren, is the doctrine that is now promoted with so much zeal, by the well known followers of John Wesley. However, we do not say, that they are the only people that are doing so, for, as the doctrine is agreeable to our fallen nature, it is but too evident, that (as there is no persecution to purge away the dross,) there are many, whose declared creeds are otherwise, who yet in practice, are either in whole or in part, propagating it: neither do we believe that the reformation under Luther, Calvin, &c. was complete; it was indeed great, and according to truth, as far as it went, but at the same time, church and state were incorporated with each other; and Papist-like, one man was made to dictate to the consciences of others, which they must obey or suffer for, as well as infant baptism; and infant church-membership retained. However, it is still clear, and beyond a doubt, that Arminianism, instead of reforming further, is returning back to Popery: and as therefore, the points that stand in the front rank of the separation between all that favour it, and us, are predestination, original total depravity, perseverance of the saints, particular redemption, and irresistible grace; we proceed as we said:

In the second place; to take a view of our leading doctrines, and firstly, it appears, that we might with nearly the same propriety, deny the very being of a God, as to deny predestination; because if we do so, we at once reject the thought of his being almighty, and incomprehensible to us; and attempt to measure Jehovah by the shallow apprehensions, that our fallen nature has of things: and according to this, we never can have just ideas of God; for the prophet tells us, that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his thoughts and ways, more and higher, than ours. Besides, it is grossly absurd to think, that the Almighty, when he formed the creation, did not, like a great architect, see through and comprehend the whole of it: therefore,

\* Neal, vol. 3, p. 195, & 196. vol. 2. p. 176.

† Ibid.

when creation was intended by him, redemption was also in view; and as Christ is God, he was the Redeemer, in the eternal mind, before all worlds; and his elect, were the subjects of the work predestinated for him: or else he would like men, have run the risk of losing all he undertook to work for. In these things the Scriptures are so explicit, that we conclude, that where carnal reasoning is laid aside, and the person makes them the man of his counsel, the matter will soon be decided. Nor again, is the Arminian assertion, that God foreknew all things, but predestinated nothing, more proper, than if we would say, that we foreknew that (with the divine permission) this address would be sent out, but yet had no intent to do it: hence it appears that things cannot be foreknown, and not decreed, on the part of the one that acts in performing what he foreknew. But we now cease, as we hope ye know in whom ye have believed. Secondly, original and total depravity, in a moral sense, is too evident in Scripture, and to daily experience, to be denied. The apostle tells us that sin entered into the world by one man, and death by sin; and it is obvious from what we continually see; for the first actions of the human family, shew forth that they know well how to do evil, but how to do good they have no knowledge. Hence it plainly follows, that ere we can know Christ, we must be born again. Thirdly, the Scriptures put the perseverance of the saints beyond all doubt, for, saith Christ, *I give unto my sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish.* We exult in it, that the doctrines of the blessed Jesus flow with such-like expressions; and that he is God; and therefore it is impossible that he should lie. Therefore, if it is eternal life he gives, that which is eternal can have no end; hence his people are effectually called by his grace, in his own good time.

Fourthly, it is highly unreasonable to deny particular redemption, for if Christ did not die for a chosen number, he might have died for nought; for it might be that none ever would have performed the pre-requisites that the Arminians tell we must do, before we can have the benefit of his death: nay, we are sure, fallen nature of itself never would; but Jesus tells us that he laid down his life for his sheep. Fifthly, irresistible grace is also clear beyond a



doubt ; for our depraved nature must be subdued, and the will renewed, before that the religion of Jesus Christ will become pleasing to us ; and if it is not so, we are strangers to it ; hence the Lord says, he will give his people a new heart, and they shall be willing in the day of his power.

From these truths, therefore, there flows to God's people, the greatest consolation, which we view in the following manner. In predestination, we have high and exalted views of God, in Christ, as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier ; and from this doctrine, the saints have hearts full of thankfulness for their election and effectual calling. From total depravity, we learn our own nothingness, dependence on Christ, and rejoice in his rich grace. From the perseverance of the saints, we have high thoughts of Christ, and comfort ; for that although the devil, the world, and our own wicked hearts, oppose us, that they never shall prevail. From particular redemption, we are led to love Christ, who first loved us ; and therefore we live holy in this perverse world. From irresistible grace, we adore the Lord Jesus for his changing our hearts, and making us new creatures. All of which, and much more, which we have not room to observe, must be wanting in the hearts of all them that deny these precious truths : and therefore, we have every reason to fear that they that deny them, are not the subjects of a saving change. But in the third and last place, we come to improve the whole. Hence dear brethren, we learn, that in our contending for the truths we profess, we are defending the ancient Gospel, preached by the apostles ; and in our bearing testimony against Arminianism, we are doing it, not only against it, but against popery itself : while we rejoice that our sufferings for the truth now, are but small indeed, when compared with the seas of blood, which they that went before us have gone through, and for which, let us lift up our hearts and hands with thankfulness to God in the heavens ; for that the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage. Again, it appears that if we truly understand what our profession leads to, we above all orders of Christians, ought to bear the brightest testimony against error, on account that it is not others for us, but our ourselves, that have made profession of the truth. In this case, believers'

baptism puts us one remove further away from popery and its offspring, than any of the other protestants, because we hereby hold, that saintship is essential to church-membership, (for saith Christ, my kingdom is not of this world,) and that the church is not accessible to the world; but here we have reason to mourn. For, that we but too often find unsound characters among ourselves; and to remedy this, let us, as churches, keep up an unremitted watchfulness concerning whom we admit to baptism; for a person not sound in the faith, wants one evidence of being a child of God; and of course will not live godly in the world, therefore let us teach before we baptize, and if we find such persons can be taught, it gives us more hopes of them; and, as ministers, let us never be afraid of being bold and plain in the truth, for as the work is God's own, we are more likely to succeed when we declare all his counsel, than if we evade a part of it, for fear of offending men. Finally, from the premises, we view the wonderful power of God in supporting a chosen remnant, in all ages: and through the fiery trials they had to encounter with; on which account we fear not, but he will still continue to do so; let us then be humbled in the dust, and esteem Christ as all in all; while we evidently see that a person holding unsound doctrines, cannot fail but to be a stranger to the greatest matter in religion; that is, the setting the crown on the head of Christ. It is set forth by our opponents, that the precious truths which we believe, will lead to all manner of licentiousness; but dear brethren, we fear not that, nay, it is more to be expected, that heresy and immorality will go hand in hand, which may the Lord by his strong arm keep you from; and make this our feeble attempt a blessing to you; that it may be seed sown on good ground, and bring forth fruit unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

ROSWEL GOFF, Moderator.  
THOMAS SMILEY, Clerk.