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Baptists. Pennsylvania. Philadelphia Association, 1780.

**Minutes of the Baptist Association, held at Philadelphia,
October 17 and 18, 1780.**

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M I N U T E S

O F T H E

B A P T I S T A S S O C I A T I O N,

Held at PHILADELPHIA, October 17 and 18, 1780.

Printed by R. AITKEN, Bookfeller, three Doors above the Coffee-House, Market-Street.

Tuesday, October 17.

AT three o'Clock, P. M. Revd. SAMUEL JONES, pursuant to Appointment, preached the introductory Sermon from Matthew xvi. 18. "*And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church; and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.*"

2. After divine Service, Revd. ISAAC STELLE was elected Moderator, and Revd. WILLIAM ROGERS, Clerk.

3. Letters from *Twenty-one* Churches were read, complaining in general of great Declension in Religion and vital Piety, also, of amazing prevailing Stupidity, which are such Tokens of the divine Displeasure, as do loudly call for deep Humiliation of Spirit.

N. B. The ASSOCIATION ardently wish to hear from *all* the other Churches in *Union*, who have, at this our annual Meeting, *neglected* writing to us—Likewise, request an EXACT RETURN of their full Number in Communion, to be forwarded to the next Association, in order that the State of our Churches may be published as formerly.

4. Revd. OLIVER HART of Charlestown, South-Carolina, and Revd. WILLIAM ROGERS of this City, being present, also our Brethren Thomas Fleson and John Pitman, *they were*, by the *Association*, admitted to the full Privilege of Members.

5. A Letter from the WARREN Association held the 12th Ult. brought by their Messenger Revd. ELHANAN WINCHESTER, was read—giving a most pleasing Account of the Work of God's Spirit in many Parts of NEW-ENGLAND.—*Seven Hundred and Sixty-five* Members were added to their last Association, and upwards of *One Thousand* had, within one Year, been baptized in Massachusetts's State only, who had not then joined that Body.

6. The

6. The Minutes of CHARLESTOWN Association held in November, 1779, were read.—Near *Three Hundred* were baptized among them that Year; *Two Hundred and Thirty-nine* in three Months, at PEDEE, by one Minister. God grant, that the several Churches of this our Sister Association may be speedily delivered from *British Oppression!*

Adjourned to nine o'Clock To-Morrow Morning.

Wednesday, October 18.

Met agreeable to Adjournment.

7. A Letter from *Cow-Marsh*, Kent County, on Delaware, was read—desiring *Supplies*, as they are destitute of a stated Ministry.—The *Association* approve the Request, and purpose helping them as much as possible.

8. The circular Letter prepared by the Revd. ABEL MORGAN was read, and unanimoously adopted. Revd. SAMUEL JONES appointed to compose one for next Year. Subject—GOD'S COVENANT.

9. Revd. WILLIAM VAN HORNE, who was requested to write to the *WARREN* Association, and Revd. JOHN BLACKWELL to that in *VIRGINIA*, brought in their Letters respectively, which, after Examination, were approved.

The Messengers appointed to visit the *former*, at their next annual Meeting, are Revd. Messrs. WILLIAM ROGERS and ELHANAN WINCHESTER, with Mr. JOHN PITMAN.—To the *latter*, Mr. THOMAS FLEESON.

10. The Members of this *Association*, on Consideration of the awful Declension in Religion in these *middle States*, and our *national Distresses*—recommend to *all* our Churches to continue the Observation of the *second Thursdays* in November, February, May and August, as Days of FASTING, HUMILIATION and PRAYER.

11. After some Conversation on the State of the *Association Library*, it was thought proper to nominate a LIBRARIAN: Accordingly having made Choice of Revd. WILLIAM VAN HORNE, he accepted, and full Power is hereby given him to collect *all* the Books *now out*, and distribute *them* with *those now on Hand*, as he sees proper—and render an Account thereof at our *next Meeting*.

12. Resolved, That our next Association be held in PHILADELPHIA the Tuesday after the third Lord's Day in October.

Sermon, at usual Time, by Revd. JOHN BLACKWELL.—On Failure, by Revd. NICHOLAS COX.

13. Revd. OLIVER HART was unanimoously requested to preach this Evening.

Thus, having through *divine Favour* enjoyed a comfortable Interview together, upon finishing *our Business*, we closed at one o'Clock in christian Love and Fellowship.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

The ELDERS and MESSENGERS of the several Baptist Churches, meeting at

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| Pennepack, | Brandywine, | Salem, |
| Middletown, | Montgomery, | Newtown, |
| Piscataway, | Southampton, | Dividing Creek, |
| Cohansey, | Philadelphia, | New Mills, |
| Tredyffrin, | Cranberry, | Upper Freehold, |
| Cape May, | Scots Plains, | Lyons Farms, |
| Hopewell, | New Britain, | Pittsgrove, |

To the said CHURCHES send our christian SALUTATION.

Beloved Brethren,

AT the Close of our annual Association, we now address you, on the solemn Subject of the sixth Chapter of our Confession of Faith, which treats of the Fall of Man.

Such is the Excellency and Usefulness of divine Revelation contained in that sadly neglected Book, *the BIBLE*, that it affords us an infallible Certainty respecting Things past, present, and to come, which do so nearly concern us to know; among other Articles—Man's Creation—who was made upright, righteous and holy, after the Likeness, or Image of God—happy in the Favour of God, and Communion with him—endued with Power to fulfil the Law, given him for the Rule of his Obedience to his Creator, in that perfect State.

Moreover, by the same Word of Truth, we are assured of the *sorrowful Change* which befel our first Parents, by their acting contrary to the Command of God—beguiled by Satan, the Father of Lies; Man fell:—Lost his Creation Excellencies, his Honour, his God, his Favour, Knowledge of him, Communion with him, Fitness for his Service, and Ability to perform it: Lost his Life—his Life to God; even his natural, or animal Life being forfeited, he became subject to Death, the Sanction of the Law, the Penalty denounced in case of Disobedience.—Then the Consequents of his evil Deed immediately took Place, which are *Guilt* and *Depravity*, with all the Miseries which do accompany the same, both present and future. Thus Man became separated from God,—an Enemy unto him, to his Glory and Government, from the first Sin, even until now—obnoxious to the Curse of a just Law violated, and under the Wrath of God due to Transgressors:—Also, wofully polluted throughout Soul and Body: “We are all as an unclean Thing.” Isa. lxiv. 6. Man, by his Departure from God, is become idolatrous,—turned from the only true God unto *Self*, which is the grand Idol of the whole World ever since Adam's Revolt: Self was the very alluring Bait, wrapped up in the first Temptation: “Ye shall be as Gods.” Now it cannot be otherwise, but that He (who will not give his Glory to another) should always abhor and detest any one, and every one, that

that sets up another God in the room of the true God, and lives to him, as Man doth to *Self*. Again, what further aggravates the Evil of this first Sin of Man, is the Capacity which Adam stood in, viz. a publick Head and Representative of all his Posterity, that in him, and with him, all have sinned, and fell from Happiness in his first Transgression: "All have sinned." Rom. v. 12. which is evident not only by divine Testimony, but is also universally manifest by the Aversion to Good, the Ignorance, Stupidity, Selfishness, and Propensity to Evil apparent in every one by Nature. Eph. ii. 3.

May we all therefore, Brethren, not only assent to the Truth of the historical Narration of these Things, but also know the absolute Necessity of a *real, abiding convincing Sense* of our Case thus ruined, guilty and depraved: In order, 1. To suppress all Pride, and high Conceits of our own selves, our supposed Excellency and Goodness.—2. Truly to acknowledge whatever Favours Mankind receive, that they are every Way gratuitous, and wholly undeserved.—3. For our Humiliation before God, Confession of our Sins, and deep Distress of Soul.—4. To raise in our Minds a becoming Admiration of God's Patience and Forbearance with a sinful World, in that vindictive Justice is not immediately executed on Transgressors.—5. To learn the true and proper Cause of his Forbearance, viz. the Interposition of the Mediator, Christ Jesus, between the Execution of the Penalty and Man's Desert.—6. To give us enlarged Views of rich Mercy and Grace with God, in constituting a Way whereby to restore Creatures so unworthy from present Ruin and future Misery, even by his own beloved Son.—7. To teach us the Necessity we are under of Renovation—again, an abiding Sense of our Case is necessary, in order to make us all anxiously inquisitive about our Acquaintance with, and an Interest in Christ the Mediator.—Lastly, To excite all Believers in Him, to continued Thanksgivings and Praise, that they should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again.

God, who is wise in Counsel, and excellent in Working, suffered or permitted Man to fall, and thence took Occasion to bring the greatest Good out of the Worst of Evils, or over-ruled the Fall of Man, to the more abundant Display of his divine Perfections—to the everlasting Disappointment and Confusion of his Enemies—the Security of his Elect—and to the endless Praise of his glorious Name.

By Order,

ISAAC STELLE, Moderator,
WILLIAM ROGERS, Clerk.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

OF Revd. WM. ROGERS may be had *History of the Baptists in New-England*, by the Revd Mr. BACKUS; also, the Two following Pamphlets by the same Author, viz. "*Policy and Honesty*," Ditto, "*Government and Liberty*," &c. both being ANTIDOTES against *Ecclesiastical Tyranny*. Likewise may be had of Mr. ROGERS, and Mr. ROBERT AITKEN, Bookseller in Market-Street, three Doors above the Coffee-House, the *Baptist Confession of Faith, and Church Discipline*, by the Dozen or Single. *Watt's Psalms and Hymns*.