

**Samuel Marsden, Blinkered Visionary:
A re-examination of his character and circumstances through the study of
his sermons**

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Summary

Many people have written about the Rev Samuel Marsden, from old time hagiographers to modern day pottery experts and all those in between. There are those who, in writing any history of colonial New South Wales, have blindly accepted a negative legend developed by Marsden's opponents. There are those who have written hagiography and those who have attempted a more balanced assessment. And yet there remains a gaping hole in the literature. None of Marsden's opponents and none of his friends have had any significant interaction with the one activity Marsden himself declared to be his primary focus. Despite a large body of Marsden's sermons available to us, there has been a surprising lack of study of and interaction with them. Through an examination of all these known sermons of Marsden this dissertation discusses what Marsden said in his own preaching about many of the controversial issues he faced. This discussion reveals some of the complexities of Marsden's character. In various collections there are 135 sermons in all. There are 98 in the Moore College collection, 25 in the Family Collection and the remainder scattered in ones and twos in various libraries and archives in Australia and New Zealand.

Polarisations that have led individuals to be avid supporters or decided enemies of Marsden have been far too simplistic. To some extent these faults may have been redressed if there had been more interaction with Marsden's preaching. Where some scholars have made attempts at a more balanced study of Marsden even they have fallen at critical points and failed to understand him because they also have not interacted with his preaching. The things Marsden has said in his sermons give a deeper understanding of his personality and motivations than has previously been available to us. A study of his sermons alerts us to arguably the greatest influences on him, remedying some mistakes made by previous biographers. A study of his sermons opens to us a better understanding of his character and circumstances, allowing a more balanced understanding of the man so that we are not polarised to see him just as the 'Flogging Parson' or as the 'Apostle to the Māori'. His preaching shows that he is both of these and much in between.

Statement of Work and Length

This work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution and falls within the word limits set by the University.

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Introduction

The Reverend Samuel Marsden, second chaplain to the colony of New South Wales, remembered both as the ‘Flogging Parson’ and the ‘Apostle to the Māori’, remains an enigmatic figure. Those who have written about Marsden can generally be divided into two very different camps. There are those who want to emphasise the ‘Flogging Parson’ and see a vengeful cleric, neglecting his duties and being more concerned about his own wealth than the souls of convicts and Aborigines. Then there are those who see his evangelical faith and his mission to the New Zealand Māori, and believe the man could do no wrong as he struggled in the darkest corner of the Lord’s vineyard to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to an evil and adulterous generation.

This dissertation is based on an analysis of the sermons of Samuel Marsden, never before attempted. The methodology of how historians are to use sermons is only now beginning to be explored seriously. Recent research on the role of the sermon in history has established that Britain as late as the nineteenth century was ‘a sermonic society in which preaching was one, if not the principal, shared experience of all classes and conditions of people’.¹ It was the commonest form of public communication in Britain. As a British colony, the same can be said of New South Wales at that time. A study of Marsden’s sermons will therefore give a better understanding, not only of the character of the man, but also of the circumstances in which he preached.

There are two major themes that will be highlighted by this study of Marsden’s sermons. The first is the character of Marsden himself. As a clergyman of the Church of England, was he out of character as a harsh magistrate? Further, by directing his missionary

¹ Keith A. Francis and William Gibson, (Eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of the British Sermon 1689-1901*. 1st ed, Oxford Handbooks in Religion and Theology. Oxford. Oxford University Press. 2012. p. xiii.

efforts to the people of New Zealand, was Marsden interested more in his own reputation as a successful missionary and in his increasing wealth than he was in serving the Aboriginal people of New South Wales? These questions can be summarised in a larger question about the value of Marsden's sermons: What do the sermons reveal about the character of Samuel Marsden? A second major theme highlighted by a study of Marsden's sermons leads to a reconsideration of the controversies in which he became embroiled. This study will throw new light on three specific controversies: 1. Marsden's role as a magistrate and the lasting negative affect this has had on his reputation, 2. His role in farming and trade which gave him great wealth and led to public criticism that he therefore neglected his duties as chaplain, 3. His neglect of the Aboriginal people of New South Wales as he concentrated missionary efforts towards the Māori of New Zealand.

Bringing the two themes of Marsden's character and the controversies he faced together as a focus, the specific aim of this current work is to seek an answer to the following question: What do the sermons of Samuel Marsden reveal about his character and the controversies he faced and what corrections to the historiographical record are suggested by these revelations?

Amongst those who remain implacably opposed to Marsden is one modern New Zealand author who has gone as far as attempting to destroy Marsden's reputation in New Zealand as the Apostle to the Māori. Richard Quinn in his book *Samuel Marsden: Altar Ego* declares that Marsden was 'evil and corrupt' in his dealings with both the Māori and the missionaries he supervised there.² Quinn is described in his book as 'New Zealand's foremost expert in Crown Lynn pottery'. Quinn is apparently no historian and interprets Marsden with a historiography informed by his own clear prejudices, constantly applying twenty-first

² Richard Quinn. *Samuel Marsden: Altar Ego*. Wellington. Dunmore Publishing Ltd. 2008. p. 184.

century values and understanding to early nineteenth century incidents. In the Epilogue to this book Quinn again turns from the area of his own expertise and becomes a psychologist, diagnosing Marsden as a psychopath.³ It is hard to take this work seriously but it highlights the fact that there are still those today who fixate on one side or the other when it comes to Samuel Marsden. It further highlights that in the tradition of Marsden interpretation some scholars have accepted a negative evaluation of Marsden without any further investigation.⁴

In the historiography of research on Marsden, Quinn sits at the end of a line of secular writers whose tendency is to minimise the place and influence of people of Christian faith. Added to this there are those who hold some prejudice against Marsden where he has taken a stand opposite to one they may hold. Writing a few years before Quinn is another Marsden detractor, Robert Hughes, author of *The Fatal Shore*.⁵ Hughes' focus is larger than Marsden but when he writes of him Hughes reveals much of his own prejudices against

³ Quinn. *Altar Ego*. pp. 171 – 174. Despite protesting that, 'I am no psychologist and may not label SM a psychopath. I have not.' (p. 174), over these four pages Quinn tells us how he has consulted psychologists and learned from them the traits of the psychopathic personality. He constantly refers to Marsden's behaviour (as explained to us by Quinn's jaundiced account) to show that Marsden fits the definition. For example, 'Full-blown psychopaths lack empathy. This lack was one of the most obvious features of SM's life.' (p. 172). Donald W. Black in *Bad Boys, Bad Men: Confronting Antisocial Personality Disorder (Sociopathy)*. London. OUP. 2013. says, 'Self-interest is a natural component of the human makeup, but it is especially strong in antisocials and leaves many of them unable to develop full compassion, conscience, and other attributes that make for successful social relations.' p. 144. There are many instances in Marsden's sermons that show Marsden's compassion for his people. In speaking of the sins he condemns, Marsden's language is often inclusive, an indication of his pastoral concern. His heartfelt compassion for those in the Colony, who had entered bigamous marriages, having left a spouse in England, is palpable in his evidence at the Bigge Enquiry. See Marsden's evidence to the Bigge Enquiry 27 December, 1820.

⁴ In her book *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2009, Grace Karskens shows herself to be one such scholar. Her treatment of Marsden is discussed later in this introduction.

⁵ Robert Hughes. *The Fatal Shore: A History of Transportation of Convicts to Australia, 1787-1868*. London, The Havill Press. 1987

evangelical Christians. Hughes describes Marsden as, ‘a grasping Evangelical missionary with heavy shoulders and the face of a petulant ox’. He declares that Marsden’s ‘hatred for the Irish Catholic convicts knew no bounds. It spilled into his sermons’.⁶ However, a close examination of all the extant copies of Marsden’s sermons reveals that he makes no reference at all to the Irish or Catholics in any sermon.

In the course of my research I have found that there are those from an evangelical background who have said of Marsden, ‘his reputation needs to be rescued’.⁷ There are those among his biographers who have written hagiography and can see no wrong in the man. Without exception these biographers are writers who hold the same evangelical faith as Marsden and have written in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One such hagiographer is J. B. Marsden, not a relative, but an Anglican cleric of the late nineteenth century who has written on Marsden as well as the Puritans, and on the Rev. Hugh Stowell (1799–1865), another Anglican cleric who was Rector of Christ Church, Salford in the U.K. in the mid-1800s. J. B. Marsden describes Marsden as a man ‘who, in the simplicity of his faith as well as in zeal and self-denying labours, was truly an apostolic man.’⁸ J. B. Marsden was an author who loved and valued the Evangelical party of the Church of England. He has nothing but high praise for Marsden and Stowell.

⁶ Hughes. *Fatal Shore*. p.187.

⁷ Some modern writers, Quinn chief among them, believe that A. T. Yarwood is one of these, but a closer reading of what Yarwood states his purpose to be will show that his attempt in writing the definitive biography of Marsden was to bring a more balanced view. See, A. T. Yarwood. *Samuel Marsden: The Great Survivor*. Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1977.

⁸ Marsden, S. and J. B. Marsden. *Memoirs of the life and labours of the Rev. Samuel Marsden of Paramatta, senior chaplain of New South Wales, and of his early connection with the missions to New Zealand and Tahiti*. London, Religious Tract Society 1838. p. 1. J B. Marsden has also written another book in conjunction with James Drummond: John Buxton Marsden and James Drummond. *Life and Work of Samuel Marsden*. London: Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1913.

Later historians and scholars who might share Marsden's evangelical position seem to approach the balance Yarwood hoped for. In the preface to *Great Survivor* Yarwood says that he 'became sharply aware of the dichotomy' of 'two separate and conflicting traditions' around Marsden, 'one based on his image as the 'Apostle to the Māori', the other drawn from contemporary writers in New South Wales such as Campbell, Macquarie, Wentworth and Lang, who execrated him as the opponent of a humane and liberal governor, a cruel magistrate, and a self-seeking materialist who neglected the Australian Aborigines and who concentrated on Polynesian evangelism because this was supposed to offer him rich prospects of trade 'cloaked under a surplice'.' While declaring that he 'At no stage ... regarded myself as an apologist for Marsden' Yarwood then says 'It will be a sufficient reward if my book succeeds in linking this colonial churchman to his English origins and confronting the upholders of the two simplistic traditions with the flawed but satisfying reality of what I take to be the true Samuel Marsden.'⁹ Here Yarwood is not trying to rescue Marsden's reputation, but holding to a hope that there will be less polarisation and more balance in studies and comments on Marsden. Unfortunately this cannot be said for those who do not side with or understand evangelical Christianity. They continue to write negatively about Marsden and fail to understand his background and motivations.¹⁰ It is not only his

⁹ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. pp. xi-xii.

¹⁰ These writers will be examined more closely later in this introduction. They include: James Belich. *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*. Auckland: Penguin, 1996. M. H. Ellis. *Lachlan Macquarie: His Life, Adventures and Times*. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1973. Robert Hughes. *The Fatal Shore*. Alison Jones & Kuni Jenkins. *Words between Us - He Korero First Maori - Pakeha Conversations on Paper*. Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2011. Grace Karskens. *The Colony*. Roger McDonald. *The Ballad of Desmond Kale*. Sydney: Random House, 2005. While this book is a work of fiction the lead character is an undisguised portrayal of Marsden who returns to the colony as a convict. Richard Quinn. *Samuel Marsden: Altar Ego*. Annette Salt. *These Outcast Women: The Parramatta Female Factory 1821-1848*. Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1984. Babette Smith. *Australia's Birthstain: The Startling Legacy of the Convict Era*. Crows Nest, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 2008.

detractors, however, who misconstrue Marsden's motivations. Without a clear understanding of what Marsden said in his preaching, even those who are positive towards Marsden and his cause have made mistakes and jump to wrong conclusions about the influences upon him, his self-understanding, his roles as a minister and as a magistrate as well as his motivations.

These monocled views, that look at Marsden through one lens and see him at only one extreme or the other, are strange and it is surprising that they persist because they each, from their own prejudices, want to say that Marsden was just one thing. These polarisations declare that he had no complexities of character or that, completely unlike other human beings, he either had no flaws of character at all or that he was so flawed in character that he could be described as being completely depraved. They express an unrealistic belief that if a man's actions in one area of his life could be described as 'evil', then it is legitimate to make that a blanket label that will apply to everything about the man, not just some of his deeds but his whole being. Equally, on the opposite side, if the label of 'evangelical' fits a person, those from this camp seem to believe that all a person's actions and words must be equally righteous and good. However, there are many things that go into the makeup of the rich tapestry that is the human being and it is beyond time that we see Marsden as both the Flogging Parson and the Apostle to the Māori without forgetting that he is also much in between. Marsden was a complex man. Inevitably we will see that he was both a man who did many things well and a man who made some glaring mistakes. Yet in seeing both these human aspects in Marsden we will also see that he was much more. As Yarwood describes his own response to the polarisations around Marsden, he says that he reacted 'impatiently to the extreme partiality of writers who depict him in terms of black and white, unrelieved by shades of grey'.¹¹ If we can understand how pejorative labels and complimentary labels might be

¹¹ Yarwood. *The Great Survivor*. p. xii.

legitimately applied at the same time to the same man we may gain more insight into the man himself as well as develop a better understanding of the times in which he lived.

It is almost impossible to understand Marsden without understanding his evangelical heritage which some of his most ardent critics fail to do.¹² To fully appreciate what motivated Marsden and what his hopes were some appreciation of his evangelical inheritance is necessary. Marsden's sermons show very clearly that he was rooted in evangelical tradition. It formed the way he viewed the world and can be seen in the way he shaped his thoughts in his preaching. Historian David Bebbington's by now classic 'quadrilateral' definition of the evangelical¹³ is seen in the sermons. Bebbington identifies the first characteristic of evangelical Christianity as *conversionism* which is to believe that people are not naturally Christians but must 'turn to Christ if they are to become true believers.' The idea that a person must be converted to Christ is found throughout Marsden's preaching.¹⁴

¹² See, for example, the glaring mistake John Harman makes in "Australian History". http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/australian_history_and_culture/114365 Accessed 4 May, 2006. Harman says, 'Marsden was an apostle of an evangelical religion, which placed great stress on the efforts of the individual to work on earth for an uncertain salvation.' Harman clearly misunderstands an evangelical theology which places emphasis on salvation by grace through faith alone and which assures a person of salvation by the merits of Jesus Christ alone. Perhaps if Harman had read any of Marsden's sermons he may have come to a better understanding of 'evangelical religion'.

¹³ David Bebbington. "Evangelical Christianity & the Enlightenment." *Crux*: December 1989/Vol. XXV, no. 4. pp. 29-36; cf. D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*. London; Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989, 3.

¹⁴ Bebbington. "Evangelical Christianity". p. 29. For just some examples in Marsden's sermons see: Sermons 82:6 and 93:8 where Marsden speaks of 'true believers', sermon 24:23 'return to Christ', Sermon 50:6-7 where Marsden speaks of the reception God will give to all who will come to him. Sermon 2:1 'Tho all will not obtain salvation thru him, but only those who believe'. See also Sermon 3 where Marsden, heavily reliant on Simeon's outline, nevertheless changes Simeon's wording from 'he hath wrought out eternal redemption for us' to 'he hath wrought out eternal redemption for all that believe in his name.' According to Bebbington's quadrilateral Marsden here expresses more of the idea of *conversionism* than does Simeon which would lead us to believe that Marsden is therefore more of an evangelical than Simeon. This idea will be pursued in Chapter Two.

The second defining aspect of evangelicalism as Bebbington sees it is that of *activism*. He says that ‘Evangelicals went around performing all sorts of humane works of charity.’¹⁵ An understanding of Marsden’s works of charity is given in Chapter Five under the heading *Christian Charity*. Bebbington declares that ‘Their activism consisted primarily in spreading the gospel.’¹⁶ Marsden did this significantly in his preaching and in his mission to New Zealand, also discussed in Chapter Five. Bebbington’s third element is *Biblicism*. Following Simeon’s habit and outlines, Marsden’s sermons are all primarily based on a Bible text. He is not a topical preacher as such though he does pursue topics in his sermons. This is done first from the basis of a Bible passage. As true for all evangelicals, the Bible is the ultimate authority for Marsden’s message. Where he uses enlightenment language in his sermons, and Simeon (whom Marsden uses extensively) does not in his outlines, Marsden is, nevertheless, clear that knowledge comes from revelation and not from a person’s own improvement of thought.¹⁷ Bebbington’s fourth element is *crucicentrism*.¹⁸ Throughout Marsden’s preaching he called his hearers to put their trust in the shed blood of Jesus and his atoning sacrifice for the forgiveness of their sins.¹⁹ While Bebbington may define evangelicalism theologically, and Marsden may be placed within that milieu, the modern scholar Gareth Atkins has made the case that ‘while scholarly orthodoxy defines them by what they *believed*, the period from 1780 to 1830 was a time in which means and methods came to matter almost as much as the proselytizing message Evangelicals endeavoured to convey.’²⁰ Study of Marsden highlights

¹⁵ Bebbington. ‘Evangelical Christianity’. p. 29.

¹⁶ Bebbington. ‘Evangelical Christianity’. p. 29.

¹⁷ Examples are given below in Chapter Two *Influence of the Rev Charles Simeon*.

¹⁸ Bebbington. ‘Evangelical Christianity’. p. 30.

¹⁹ See for example Sermon 3:14 ‘point to the Redeemer’s blood and say behold the way to God.’ Sermon 6:14 ‘He is sure to overcome thru the blood of the lamb.’ In Sermon 12:6 Marsden juxtaposes enlightenment language with the idea of an atoning sacrifice making it clear that the blood of Jesus is superior to mere ‘enlightenment’. He says, ‘Every enlightened person sees as much need of Christ Spirit to wash him from the defilement of sin as of his blood to purge him from its guilt.’

²⁰ Gareth Atkins. *Wilberforce and his milieux: the worlds of Anglican Evangelicalism, c.1780-1830*. Ph.D. Thesis. Cambridge. 2009.

the truth of this claim. History has judged Marsden almost entirely on his ‘means and methods’. Little attention has been paid to his message and to what he believed, both of which are features most readily found in his sermons. A fuller discussion of the evangelical influences on Marsden follows in Chapter Two on Marsden’s debt to Simeon.

A Unique Complexity

The unique complexity of the situation in which Marsden operated cannot be overestimated.

The establishment of the colony of New South Wales was a great experiment of the Enlightenment. The English made the decision to send men and women who needed improvement to a land that also needed improvement if it was going to support husbandry for a western culture. In every aspect the colony was different from what even the settlers themselves had been used to. While it was established as a penal colony with convicts and soldiers to guard them, there were no prisons. Those sentenced to transportation moved about with relative freedom, wore their own clothes, built their own huts and co-habited with whomever they chose. Many of those with energy and initiative who received emancipation became wealthy merchants, farmers and landholders. The local Aboriginal people, while nevertheless being dispossessed of their land, did not flee. Despite early misunderstandings between the British and the Aboriginal people resulting in some killings, ‘early friendliness between Eora and convicts had also been sustained.’²¹ With the notable exception, amongst others, of the Bidjigal man Pemulwuy, who was shot and finally beheaded with his head being sent to Sir Joseph Banks in the U.K., the Aboriginal people were not defeated in battle, but intermingled with the new settlers, some wandering about the streets of the colony in Parramatta and Sydney completely naked as late as the 1830s.²²

²¹ Grace Karskens. *The Colony*. p. 363.

²² This is not to say that the Aboriginal people happily accepted the invasion of their land. As noted throughout her book, Rachel Standfield speaks of the ‘resistance’ the Eora people had toward the white invaders. Rachel Standfield. *Race and Identity in the Tasman World, 1769-1840*. London. Pickering & Chatto. 2012.

The English had expectations of establishing a colony in a far off land amongst a people who were not expected to put up any resistance to their settlement. Indeed this was largely the case, but the situation was more nuanced than that. Karskens says, “It is time to shake off the idea that Sydney was a ‘white’ city, that Aboriginal people simply faded out of the picture and off the ‘stage of history’: it is simply untrue. The time has come, too, to recognise that Aboriginal people became urban people very quickly.”²³ The concept of *terra nullius*, which may well be more of a twentieth century notion rather than the legal reasons behind the British appropriation of an occupied land,²⁴ nevertheless, informed the practical interactions of the colonisers with the locals. The colonisers had no concept that they were coming onto Eora land. They just began settlement and began to build. Governors and later settlers also brought with them the expectation that their chaplains would confine themselves to preaching on moral subjects for the benefit and improvement of the convicts and soldiers. In contrast Johnson, the first chaplain to New South Wales who arrived with the First Fleet in 1788, together with Marsden, who arrived in 1794, and their backers had the clear expectation that this foothold of the British Empire in the far reaches of the globe would be the God-ordained means of reaching the peoples of the South Seas with the Christian gospel. How the interactions of these differing understandings of the real purpose for the Colony played out is the subject of Chapter Five of this dissertation.

²³ Karskens. *The Colony*. p. 12.

²⁴ Michael Connor. *The invention of terra nullius*. Sydney. Macleay Press, 2005. Connor makes a cogent case for the proposition that the concept of *terra nullius* was a later invention or explanation and the first British settlers had no such concept. He wrote in *The Bulletin* of 20 August, 2003, ‘By the time of Mabo in 1992, terra nullius was the only explanation for the British settlement of Australia. Historians, more interested in politics than archives, misled the legal profession into believing that a phrase no one had heard of a few years before was the very basis of our statehood, and Reynolds’ version of our history, especially The Law of the Land, underpinned the Mabo judges’ decision-making.’

Interactions with the Eora people and differing expectations of his role as chaplain are just some of the complexities Marsden worked with. Each challenged his way of doing ministry and the ideas of Christian piety he brought with him from England which were informed by his evangelical background. Some of these challenges he rose to and he is ultimately credited with having been a leading light and a pioneer, setting standards and an example which others who followed would emulate.²⁵ Some of the challenges he encountered, he failed miserably to address in a meaningful and positive way. In particular Marsden failed to meet the standards of behaviour expected of a clergyman by his critics, being described as the harshest magistrate in the colony and also by becoming a very wealthy man. To complicate matters, Marsden brought with him a form of Christianity that was changing the way the Church of England operated. The Evangelical Awakening had given rise to groups within the Church of England which were organised and politically savvy. Marsden was part of this. We should have no surprise therefore when we later see him organising mission strategy and being heavily involved in the politics of the colony. Marsden was provided grammar school education by the Evangelical Elland Clerical Society and sent to Magdalene College Cambridge which at the time was an evangelical hotbed. In Cambridge he came under the influence and patronage of the Rev. Charles Simeon who recommended him for New South Wales and, prior to that, to the chaplaincy in Bengal.²⁶ These recommendations

²⁵ See for example: An address given to Marsden on the eve of his departure for England in 1807 with sixty five signatories, held in the Family Papers. S. M. Johnstone has a copy of it in *Samuel Marsden A Pioneer of Civilization in the South Seas*. Sydney. Angus & Robertson. 1932. pp. 66-67.

²⁶ See a letter from Charles Grant to Charles Simeon dated 17 March, 1791 in the Simeon Archives in Ridley Hall, Cambridge. Grant informs Simeon that the matter of Marsden had been raised with the Archbishop of Canterbury who expressed his opinion that Marsden had been too short a time at Cambridge (just a few months!) and that he 'was too young, to be sent to Botany Bay; and that the same reasons applied more strongly against his now going to Bengal.'

came at a time when Marsden was only newly arrived in Cambridge. They speak of how highly Simeon must have regarded Marsden.

Marsden was far from being a monochrome individual whom we can like or dislike. His Christian background was complex, the society and the political scene in New South Wales were complex, and, by his ultimate vision of bringing the gospel to the peoples of the South Seas, Marsden added another layer of complexity to what he did and said. The study of Marsden's sermons shows his ultimate vision was not for an improved society in Enlightenment terms but for an eschatological one informed by evangelical theology. He wanted to see men and women making sure of a place in heaven. He faced the great difficulty of preaching to men and women about another place that was not of this world, at a time when their focus (and they contended, his too!) was on making a fortune in terms of material wealth in a new colony. He preached of another world to men and women who were striving to make their fortune and/or their freedom in this temporal world. It was Marsden's belief that this eschatological focus was an efficient means to effecting social renewal and the only means of attaining eternal life.

That a man could, in general terms, be so despised by many in New South Wales and yet loved by most in New Zealand, gives rise to questions, interest and speculation that Marsden was no ordinary man. The opinions which have coloured his reputation now for two hundred years are not to be taken at face value as self-evident truths. The extremes of these opinions alert us to the fact that here is a man of deep complexity who cannot be so easily categorized, whether he be demonized by his enemies or sanctified by his friends.

Primary Documentation

Known primary documentation, including letters, journals, sermons, reports, *apologia* and other papers, direct us to the activities that occupied Marsden's time and alert us to the fact that some, if not many, of those activities led him into controversy and conflict. Much is

documented in private correspondence and official dispatches about the activities of the parson who described himself in a letter to his friend Mrs. Stokes, as ‘a Gardener a Farmer a Magistrate & Minister’²⁷. As to the sermons themselves, 98 of Marsden’s original hand-written sermons are held in the Marsden Collection at Moore Theological College, Sydney. The family collection of papers, held by the Rev. Samuel Marsden, now retired in Cornwall, U.K., contains 25 sermons.²⁸ There are five sermons in the Mitchell Library in Sydney. There are also notes of 22 sermons in the Mitchell Library written by others on *pro forma* outlines.²⁹ Three sermons are held in the Dunedin Public Libraries.³⁰ As noted in the copies of the Family Papers in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, one sermon from the Family Papers has been

²⁷ Quoted by G. Mackaness, (Editor). *Some private correspondence of the Rev. Samuel Marsden and family, 1794-1824*. Sydney. Ford. 1942. pp. 16-17. The letter is dated 3 December 1796

²⁸ Mitchell Library, Sydney, holds copies of these papers at: *Marsden Family Papers. ML. MAU/FM4/751*. The notes accompanying these items say that there are 26 sermons in the Family Papers. A hand written note indicates that "Another sermon (on 2 Timothy 1 v.12) has been sent by Rev. R.E.M. to Marsden School, Wellington." This gift left the Family Papers with 26 sermons as noted by the Mitchell Library. The Rev. Samuel Marsden of Cornwall has informed me that the sermon numbered 23 in the Family Papers on the text of Ephesians 6:10 has been given by him to St. John’s Anglican Church, Parramatta. This means that the Family Papers, now held by the Rev Samuel Marsden in Cornwall, contain 25 sermons.

²⁹ These sermons were preached by Marsden in St John’s Parramatta between 7 October 1827 and 12 April 1829. Mitchell Library (ML). Call Number: MAV / FM4 / 10844. The title of this item in the Mitchell Library misleadingly refers to these sermon notes as ‘sermons of Samuel Marsden and others’. Rather than being Marsden’s actual sermons, they are notes written by others as they have listened to the sermons delivered by Marsden.

³⁰ Dunedin Public Libraries. DP McNab Archives, ARCHIVES 15. These three sermons consist of two complete sermons on the texts Isaiah 57:20-21 and 2 Samuel 12:1-7 and another sermon on 1 John 1:8-9 which has some pages missing. This third sermon is split into two entries in the Library catalogue.

donated by the Rev. R. E. Marsden to Marsden School, Wellington in 1978,³¹ and there are two in the archives of St. John's Parramatta.³²

Despite the large number of Marsden's own sermons available to us³³ what has been missing to date is any comprehensive study of them. J. B. Marsden laments, 'It is much to be regretted that more full and accurate reports of his sermons and conversations should not have been kept. The truth and originality of his remarks would have made them invaluable.'³⁴ This biographer recognised the complexity of Marsden and his times, and expressed regret that he could not delve deeper perhaps into Marsden's mind and thinking with a view to unravelling some of that complexity. There are also extensive manuscripts of his letters and personal papers which many writers have used to give us some insight into Marsden, the man. The Mitchell Library in Sydney has two volumes of Marsden papers, 1793-1902.³⁵ The Library also has six volumes of manuscripts, manuscript copies and typescript of Marsden's papers for the years 1810-1833³⁶ and there are more Marsden papers for the years 1793-1828.³⁷ These papers include the sermon Marsden preached following the death of the Judge Advocate, Ellis Bent, for which he received severe censure from Governor Lachlan Macquarie in the presence of the Rev William Cowper and Major Antill. Because this sermon and the effects it had are an important pivotal point in the interactions between Marsden and

³¹ This sermon on the text, 1 Timothy 2:12, was a donation to the School for its centenary year. It has since been passed on to the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, for safe keeping and preservation.

³² These two sermons include the one given to St. John's Parramatta by the Rev Samuel Marsden of Cornwall, noted above.

³³ In the various collections around the world this is a total of 135 sermons, some of which are fragments.

³⁴ J. B. Marsden., *Life and work*. p. 263

³⁵ ML. Call Numbers: DLMSQ 351, DLMS 125. Note that the year of 1902 (and below, the year of 1928) is because the collection includes family papers and related material beyond the life of Marsden.

³⁶ ML. Call Numbers: A 404, A 1647, A 1682, B 67 and B 328 / vols. 1-2

³⁷ ML. Call Number: C 244 (Safe 1 / 321)

Macquarie it is dealt with at length in Chapter Six of this dissertation. There are a further nine volumes of Samuel Marsden papers in the Mitchell Library covering the years 1794-1837.³⁸ These volumes contain letters to Marsden and his wife Elizabeth, letters and reports by Marsden, letters to Marsden about the New Zealand Mission, letters from the London Missionary Society between 1802 and 1836, letters from South Sea Missionaries, journals, essays and sermons, deeds of sale, including the deed of sale of the ship *Active* which Marsden bought for his missionary enterprise to New Zealand. These nine volumes of Marsden Papers also include Church Missionary Society minutes, and Marsden's notes on the Māori language. There are other items in the Mitchell Library relating to Marsden in other collections. For example in the papers relating to Barron Field there is a letter from Field to Marsden dated 16 December, 1824 and a letter dated 28 December, 1824 from William Wilberforce to Field relating to Marsden's character.³⁹ The State Records Office of New South Wales contains valuable historical records of official government interactions relating to Marsden's dealings with the Governors, the Bigge Enquiry, a range of business and legal transactions and returns of marriages.⁴⁰ The Hocken Library at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand holds several volumes of Marsden's correspondence between 1813 and 1838. These letters are mostly between Marsden and the Church Missionary Society.⁴¹ Yarwood notes that this collection is 'the largest single collection of original Marsden letters.'⁴² The Library also holds Marsden's journals of his third, fourth and sixth journeys to New Zealand.⁴³ There is no journal relating to his fifth journey. The Alexander Turnbull Library, part of the National Library of New Zealand, has a large repository of Marsden

³⁸ ML. Call Numbers: A 1992-A 1999 and D 167. There are also photocopies of these volumes at CYA 1992 – 1999 and CYA 167

³⁹ ML. Call Number: Af 23

⁴⁰ State Records of NSW. Marsden appears in these records from 1794 to 1825. References: Fiche 3037 to Fiche 3312 and Reel 6002 to Reel 6064

⁴¹ Hocken Library (HL). Reference Numbers: MS-0175/001 and ARC-0001

⁴² Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p. 323.

⁴³ HL. Call Numbers: MS-0176/005 and PC-0141

papers. Most of these are copies of original documents held in other collections. Two notable exceptions are the sermon on the passage 1 Timothy 2:12, gifted by the Rev R. E. Marsden to the Marsden School, Wellington and Marsden's journal of his second journey to New Zealand in 1819.⁴⁴ As noted above the Dunedin Public Libraries holds three of Marsden's sermons in its Heritage Collection.⁴⁵ The Bible Society Archives in the University of Cambridge Library holds some correspondence between Marsden and his agent in the U. K., Mr Campbell.⁴⁶ The Cadbury Research Library in the University of Birmingham has the correspondence of the Church Missionary Society from its inauguration in 1799 to 1959. The letters of Marsden to Josiah Pratt, Secretary to the Society, are held in this collection.⁴⁷

Marsden was a prolific letter writer and had a certain awareness of his place in history as he enlisted the help of his daughters to copy correspondence he wrote to others. The fact that we have a large quantity of his correspondence in various repositories around the world indicates that Marsden saw the importance of his work in ministry, agricultural pursuits and missionary endeavours as taking an important place in the development of British colonial interests in New South Wales and the South Seas. In other words, as a pioneer in these endeavours in the far flung reaches of the British Empire, Marsden saw the importance of keeping a faithful historical record. Some critics may judge this to mean that he was too full of his own self-importance. But he was not exceptional among contemporary missionaries in his belief that he was making history and that he should keep a copious record of it,⁴⁸ and

⁴⁴ Alexander Turnbull Library (ATL). Reference Number: qMS-1330

⁴⁵ Dunedin Public Libraries (DPL). Heritage Room City Library. McNab Archives. Archives 15.

⁴⁶ Cambridge University Library (UL) – Bible Society Archives Annex (BSAX). Call Numbers: BSA/D1/2 and BSA/D1/1/2

⁴⁷ Cadbury Research Library (CRL). Finding Number: CMS

⁴⁸ Stuart Piggin, *Making Evangelical Missionaries: The Social Background, Motivation, and Training of British Protestant Missionaries*. Appleford, Oxford: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1984; Treloar, Geoffrey R., and Linder, Robert Dean, *Making History for God: Essays on Evangelicalism, Revival and Mission in Honour of Stuart*

as we shall see later when we look at the content of his preaching, Marsden was a strategic thinker. He was not wont to be stuck in the moment but was, more often than not, looking at the larger picture, seeking to build new nations by the well-known evangelical triumvirate of Christianity, commerce and civilisation. He did this by helping to develop the colony's agricultural economy, by cultivating good relationships with the Māori of New Zealand and by engaging in trade to support the mission to the wider South Seas, even though these particular trading efforts in the South Seas did not prove to be a great source of income. Marsden's ship, the *Active*, was an expensive vessel to run and the income he hoped to produce from it to support the mission did not eventuate.

Marsden's involvement in agriculture and South Seas trade, the former of which brought him considerable wealth, has been the source of much criticism and dislike of the man. For good or ill, Marsden's activities in agriculture and trade show very clear and strategic thinking on his part, not just for his own benefit, but for the benefit of the development of the colony and of the mission to the South Seas. This strategizing comes in the context of the pioneer work Marsden was involved in, for colony and mission, the importance of which he was keen to preserve for posterity by keeping copies of his correspondence which now provide a rich source of primary documentation for scholars and historians. Marsden's thinking, planning and strategizing for mission in particular is the subject of Chapter Five of this work. While Marsden's correspondence and other papers can be accessed in the libraries and repositories mentioned above, it is noted that some of this correspondence and journal entries have been reproduced in publications such as works by Mackaness⁴⁹ and Elder.⁵⁰

Piggin, Master of Robert Menzies College, 1990-2004. Sydney: Robert Menzies College, 2004, p. ix.

⁴⁹ G. Mackaness. *Some private correspondence of the Rev. Samuel Marsden and family: 1794-1824.* Dubbo, N.S.W., Review Publications. 1976.

Strategic Thinking

A good illustration of Marsden's strategic thinking and planning comes to us in his correspondence from Rio de Janeiro on his return journey to the colony in 1809. On board the *Ann*, Marsden encountered the young Māori chief Ruatara. In the first days after leaving England, Ruatara became very sick on board ship. Marsden wrote that 'this gave me much concern, as his death would entirely defeat the object I had in view.'⁵¹ Ruatara recovered and in the same letter Marsden tells his correspondent how he wished to learn from Ruatara the language, religion and government of New Zealand. Marsden also recorded in his journal of the voyage that he had learned elements of the Māori language so that he felt comfortable in carrying on a basic conversation daily and that he could make himself clearly understood. As Yarwood says, at first reading, Marsden's comment about a sick, young man, exploited by English seamen, and lost in a strange culture thousands of miles from home, seems callous. Marsden seems to say that Ruatara's impending death gave him concern, not for the tragic loss of a young life but for the lost opportunity Marsden had in mind. But in a context where Marsden goes on to show concern for the young man's welfare and disgust at the way he had been treated by an English ship's captain, the comment is not compassionless but highlights Marsden's constant thinking and planning for the progress of the gospel. This statement also highlights how those who have commented on the life and career of Marsden have been polarised. It is easy for those who dislike him to focus upon his seeming lack of concern for Ruatara's welfare, apparent in such a statement. At the same time, those who want to paint a positive portrait of Marsden's life, as his early biographers do, are left to explain his real concerns for Ruatara's welfare expressed in his correspondence. The reality is that Marsden

⁵⁰ J. R. Elder. *The letters and journals of Samuel Marsden, 1765-1838: senior chaplain in the colony of New South Wales and superintendent of the mission of the Church missionary society in New Zealand*. Dunedin. London. 1932.

John Rawson Elder, Samuel Marsden, Thomas Kendall, William Hall, and John King. *Marsden's Lieutenants*. Dunedin: Coulls Somerville Wilkie, 1934.

⁵¹ Marsden to J. M. Good, Rio, 15 November 1809. Reproduced under the heading of 'Religious Intelligence' in *The Missionary Magazine for 1810*. pp. 538-540.

has expressed concern both for the young man's personal welfare and for the setback to his own plans for a mission to the Māori of New Zealand if Ruatara had died on the voyage. At our distance of some 200 years we may impute any motive our own prejudices may lead us to, but when we leave prejudices aside, the simple facts tell us that Marsden was both a man of compassion and of vision.

As a further indication that Marsden thought and planned beyond the moment, we shall see later that in his preaching he was able to encourage his congregation to think not just of the temporal, but also to consider what eternal consequences attached to temporal events. We shall see that in his preaching he was not hoping primarily to be a keeper of morals for the good ordering of society. In his preaching Marsden generally does not call for social change. His intention was more that he wanted people to have an eternal perspective. He wanted people to reflect on their behaviour in this world and to consider the eternal consequences of their drunkenness, Sabbath breaking and other vices. He also wanted them to consider the implications that external factors such as drought, famine and death (of others), might have for them in the eternal realm. This is the thrust of the sermon Marsden preached after the death of Ellis Bent which will be considered in full in Chapter Six. This sermon is in the genre of 'Fast Day Sermons' where the preacher considers 'National Sins' and the consequent calamities being visited upon the people and then calls for self-examination and repentance. Such a day was called by Governor Gipps, 'on account of the late calamitous drought', for 2 November 1838. Amongst others who preached on this day, the Rev J D Lang preached on the text of Jeremiah 14-17. Lang suggested that the 'calamitous drought' may well have been God's warning against the people for the national sins of: 1. Treatment of Aborigines. 2. Treatment of convicts. 3. Sabbath breaking.⁵²

⁵² This sermon is held by ML: 285.2944/11

It is probably because of the voluminous primary documentation to do with Marsden that we have lacked to date ‘full and accurate reports of his sermons’. It may be that scholars and historians have neglected Marsden’s sermons because there is so much other material available. It is not often considered that sermons can not only tell us a lot about the person who preached them but can also shed light on a complicated and obscure social and political context. Considering the large corpus of Marsden’s sermons available to us in different collections around the world, this is disappointing. The two major collections of Marsden’s sermons mentioned above, held at Moore College and in the Family Papers, are well known. Or at least their existence is well known. A.T. Yarwood, for example, mentions the Moore College collection and the sermons in the Family Papers, in the bibliography of his biography on Marsden but then makes no reference to them at all in the body of his work.⁵³ This is surprising because Marsden described himself as first and foremost a preacher. In Sermon 23 of the Moore College collection, for example, on Page One he states that the primary role of the office of a minister is ‘to preach the gospel of Christ’. If Marsden thought preaching was his primary task, any study of the man that has little reference to the things he said in his sermons must fail to come to terms with his personality and motivations and any conclusions must inevitably be tentative. Rather than the regret expressed by J. B. Marsden who believed we lacked ‘full and accurate reports of his sermons’, the regret is that such a

⁵³ I am also aware that in researching his biography, Yarwood spent considerable time with the Rev. R. E. Marsden who held the family papers at the time which included 26 sermons, one since having been given to St John’s Parramatta. It raises the question that if Yarwood had access to these sermons, why did he make no reference to them at all? In *The Great Survivor* Yarwood does quote from one sermon held by the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and in footnote 64 on p. 263 refers the reader to the collection in Moore College but has no discussion of the sermons. Yarwood has other sermon references gleaned from Marsden’s journals and sometimes speculates what the preacher might have said but there is no interaction with Marsden’s preaching. It becomes clear that Yarwood would have benefitted from studying Marsden’s sermons because he has mistaken the influences on Marsden’s preaching, discussed later in Chapter Two, and the inspiration for his sermon following the death of the Judge Advocate, Ellis Bent, discussed later in Chapter Six.

large body of Marsden's sermons has been sitting mostly unused and not consulted for so long. Others have extended this regret to the entire historiography of Australia. With a view to the gaps in our historical understanding created by the neglect of the study of sermons in general, the Evangelical History Association has noted on its web site, 'The preaching and hearing of sermons [is] a subject with vast potential in terms of the social, cultural and religious history of this country.'⁵⁴ Describing the sermon as 'the genre most productive of Australian speech'⁵⁵ Professor Ken Inglis also makes the point that the predominant form of public speechmaking in Australian history is the sermon and expresses disappointment at the fact that sermons have not had such a prominent place in historical studies.⁵⁶ Study of Marsden's sermons fills the gap in our knowledge of him and leads to greater discovery of some of the 'truth and originality' of his own words. The sermons also shed some light on the social and cultural history of the time which is a subject dealt with extensively in Chapter Four of this work. Ultimately Marsden's sermons give invaluable insight into how one man can be regarded at the same time so negatively as the Flogging Parson and so positively as the Apostle to New Zealand. It is the intention of this dissertation to hear what Marsden has said in his preaching and by hearing it is hoped that this will lead to a better understanding of how he understood himself. We will take from Marsden's sermons an understanding that within the one human being there are complexities of character, without becoming polarised ourselves in the exercise, and then use them to approach some understanding of the complexity of the man.

⁵⁴ <http://www.evangelicalhistory.org/> accessed Friday 22 February, 2013.

⁵⁵ Ken Inglis. Public lecture, 15 May, 2007. Podcast available at: <http://www.anu.edu.au/discoveranu/content/podcasts/speechmaking/>

⁵⁶ Ken Inglis, *Speechmaking in Australian history*. Canberra. History Program, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University. 2007. pp. 17, 24.

Marsden kept journals at strategic times and others kept journals about him and his activities at other times.⁵⁷ Having arrived in New Zealand, with a view to establishing a missionary colony, and been warmly received by the chieftains and local people who made elaborate preparations for him to preach the first Christian sermon in that country on Christmas Day 1814, Marsden commented in his journal, ‘as there was no timber at Rangheehoo fit for erecting the necessary buildings for the settlers, I determined to take the *Active* to the timber district ... as this would save considerable expense and supply what was wanted at once.’⁵⁸ With a view to saving both money and time, Marsden used his ship to establish this missionary presence in New Zealand. This seems to have been his primary purpose in purchasing this ship, but others have judged it differently.

The Wealthy Clergyman and Neglect of his Duties

Marsden attracted great criticism for accumulating considerable wealth. Comments have been made about the time he spent in commercial pursuits which, it was said, led to the neglect of his clerical duties. Marsden was accused by Governor Brisbane of engaging in ‘trade cloaked under a surplice’.⁵⁹ Brisbane’s belief was ‘that clergy, like government officials, should not indulge in private trade’.⁶⁰ One may want to criticise Marsden for engaging in trade contrary to his ordination vows,⁶¹ but it begs the question as to whether his trading and agricultural

⁵⁷ John Nicholas who accompanied Marsden on his first missionary journey to New Zealand kept a journal of events which has subsequently been published in John Liddiard Nicholas. *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand: Performed in the Years 1814 and 1815, in Company with the Rev. Samuel Marsden*. London: J. Black, 1817.

⁵⁸ John Rawson Elder (Editor). *The letters and journals of Samuel Marsden, 1765-1838 by Marsden, Samuel, 1764-1838*. Dunedin: Coulls Somerville Wilkie and A.H. Reed for the Otago University Council, 1932. p.94

⁵⁹ Quoted in: Bill Wannan. *Very strange tales: the turbulent times of Samuel Marsden*. Melbourne, Lansdowne Press. 1962. p. 176

⁶⁰ J.D. Heydon. 'Brisbane, Sir Thomas Makdougall (1773 - 1860)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 1*. Melbourne University Press, 1966. pp 151-155.

⁶¹ In the *Book of Common Prayer* in the “Ordering of Priests” the bishop exhorts the candidates to ‘forsake and set aside (as much as you may) all worldly cares and studies.’ Then the bishop questions the candidates, asking them if they will be diligent

activities meant the neglect of duties in his primary appointment; viz. Senior Chaplain to the colony of New South Wales. Bill Wannan, who cited Brisbane's criticism of Marsden, was an authority on Australian folklore, writing over 50 books in the fields of folklore, humour, Australian colonial figures and the Scots and Irish in Australia. He also quotes Governor Brisbane's report of Marsden's 'daily neglect of the Spiritual concerns of his Parish for the sake of attending to his multitudinous temporal affairs.' Wannan further refers to the Bigge report:

Mr. Commissioner Bigge, in his report on the state of the colonies, referred to Marsden's private interests and asserted that the Chaplain was 'less sensible than he ought to have been to the impropriety of combining operations of a mercantile nature with those of his profession.' D'Arcy Wentworth and his son William made similar charges against him, characterising Marsden as a man of rancorous and vindictive spirit, who had set his face against every philanthropic object; whose private mills at Parramatta kept no Sabbath.

Wannan concludes, 'In the final analysis, Marsden was not a deeply religious man.' And yet still on this same page he quotes a letter from Marsden to Josiah Pratt in 1825 where Marsden attributes all his wealth and continuing prosperity to the benevolence of God:

The greatest part of my property is in the hands of common felons, more than 100 miles from my house in the woods, and much of it I never saw, yet it has been taken care of and will be. A kind Providence has watched over all that I have had, and I can truly say that I have no more concern about my sheep and cattle than if they were under my own eye.

We are left to ponder Wannan's definition of a 'religious man' but we can surmise he believes that a religious man does not engage in temporal pursuits, or at least not in too much of them, even if he attributes temporal blessing to a benevolent providence. This highlights another issue in regard to those who see Marsden in a negative light. Their perceptions of what

in prayer and reading of the Scriptures, 'laying aside the study of the world and the flesh'. At his own ordination Marsden would have answered, 'I will endeavour myself so to do, the Lord being my helper.'

motivates a clergyman or a Christian person do not always connect with how Marsden and his friends saw himself and his ministry. Marsden's letter to Pratt adds a piece of information that is not immediately apparent in thinking about the truth of statements about the neglect of his duties as a minister. In the letter Marsden tells Pratt that the 'greatest part' of his property is managed by others and most of it he has never seen. We can therefore not make the judgement that Marsden spent too much time administering his property. It is clear that others did that for him. We do not know how Marsden divided his time between his agricultural pursuits and his clerical duties, and Brisbane's criticism may have been made from simple observation, but we are stopped short from concluding that because he had so much property Marsden could not have had enough time to do anything but attend to it. Did Marsden have enough time to perform his duties? He answers this question himself in Sermon 24:14, 'Many fall by means of their excessive care about worldly business. God allows us plenty of time to attend to the concerns of this world, as well as (to) that which is to come.'

Having noted above Wannan's mention of the criticisms by the Wentworths of Marsden, particularly that he 'had set his face against every philanthropic object'⁶² we must examine the context in which they made these criticisms. According to his biographer, W. C. Wentworth 'seized every opportunity to attack the exclusives'.⁶³ It is not surprising therefore that Wannan should have had a very negative opinion of Marsden. The bias against Marsden's philanthropic efforts, however, is seen to be less justified when seen through an examination of Marsden's own words in a sermon commending support of the Benevolent Institution. This is done in Chapter Four of this dissertation under the heading 'The Exclusives'.

⁶² Wannan. *Very strange tales*. p. 178.

⁶³ Michael Persse, 'Wentworth, William Charles (1790–1872)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/wentworth-william-charles-2782/text3961> , published in hardcopy 1967, accessed online 6 October 2014.

Alongside Brisbane's criticism of neglect of his ministerial duties by pursuing other activities, there is but one credible criticism recorded for posterity directly relating to Marsden's ministerial duties themselves.⁶⁴ The Wesleyan minister the Rev. Walter Lawry is recorded as saying of Marsden that, 'On Sunday he reads the liturgy like a man half asleep, and then uniformly serves up one of Simeon's skeletons with very little lean flesh about it.'⁶⁵ Lawry refers to the Rev. Charles Simeon, one of Marsden's original sponsors and a man whom Marsden obviously held in high regard, having named two of his sons after the great preacher from Cambridge. Simeon published 'skeletons' of his sermons which Lawry complains Marsden just dished up to his congregation with little of his own work in them. Lawry's comment is a pivotal one in the study of Marsden's preaching and it will be considered in some detail in Chapter Two.

All other comments in primary documentation about Marsden's devotion to his ministry speak with high praise of his energy, his joyful demeanour and his faithfulness. For

⁶⁴ W. P. Crook, in the colony between 1803 and 1816 and again between 1830 and 1841, is another who was very critical of Marsden. Yet Crook was a man who seems to have been critical of everyone and everything. He is described by Yarwood as a man who wrote 'splenetic criticisms of Marsden and other unwitting victims.' *Great Survivor* p. 147.

⁶⁵ Wannan. *Very strange tales*. p. 176. Wannan gives no reference for this quotation. A second criticism of Marsden's preaching may be implied from Archdeacon Scott's comment on ministry in general throughout the colony that he 'found the Services administered much more after the manner of a Methodist Chapel than of the Church ... Their sermons are delivered extempore, or at least unwritten with a Bible in their hand *full of bookstrings*, placed in the texts they intend to use by way of illustration ... and they usually continue an hour & sometimes more delivering the most unconnected sentences'. Scott to Archdeacon A Hamilton, 3 March 1827, SPG Archives, Australia letters no.5, cited in Yarwood, *The Great Survivor*, p. 262. Despite Yarwood's comment on p. 263 that 'Much of this description applied to Marsden' and our knowledge that Marsden did, on occasion, preach extempore, in the main he wrote out his sermons (as Yarwood acknowledges) in full. That Marsden may have preached for 'an hour or more' is disproved by the fact of the length of his written sermons which, at about 3,000 words being their normal length, would have taken about 20 minutes to preach. Of course the possibility remains that Marsden may have added to his written sermons as he delivered them.

example, a testimony of high praise to his industry is given by two hundred and sixty five signatories in an address given to Marsden on the eve of his departure for England in 1807. They praise his 'Pious, Humane, exemplary Conduct ... as Minister of the Gospel, Superintending Magistrate, Inspector of all Public, Orphan and all Charity Schools, and other necessary offices.' They go on to say, 'Your Sanctity, Philanthropy and disinterested Character will ever remain an example to future Ministers.'⁶⁶ Even Governor Macquarie, with whom Marsden eventually had a major falling out, is recorded as speaking very highly of Marsden with what appears to be admiration. In a letter to Viscount Sidmouth Macquarie wrote that in his busyness Marsden's 'deportment is at all times that of a person the most gay and happy; ... he was by far the most cheerful person I met in the Colony.' All this despite the fact that he had 'his hands full of work.'⁶⁷ In the light of such high praise of Marsden, it is hard to understand why Brisbane thought he neglected his ministry. It may be granted that a period of some fifteen years between the document with the 265 signatories in praise of Marsden and the criticism of Brisbane could have seen Marsden change substantially, but Macquarie's letter to Sidmouth was written in 1821. Brisbane, however, was not his only critic who followed this line. There is also the infamous case of '*Philo Free*'.

On 4 January 1817 a letter appeared in the *Sydney Gazette* under the signature of '*Philo Free*'.⁶⁸ The letter accused those involved in the South Seas mission of introducing alcohol and guns to their own financial advantage while neglecting the native population of New South Wales. Marsden, believing himself to be the object of the criticism in the letter,

⁶⁶ This document is held in the Marsden family papers and quoted by Johnstone in *Pioneer*, pp. 66-67. This type of document was part of the normal practice of the time for those leaving the colony. It is not a special thing done for Marsden but the number of signatories is high and this fact does not distract from the high praise of Marsden in the document.

⁶⁷ Lachlan Macquarie. *A Letter to the Right Honourable Viscount Sidmouth*. London, Rees. 1821 p. 18.

⁶⁸ *Sydney Gazette* 4 January 1817. p. 3. Electronic reproduction available at <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page493206>

instituted criminal and civil action against John Thomas Campbell, secretary to the Governor and the person responsible for the publication of the *Gazette*, the official organ of the Governor. Campbell was found at trial to have been the author of the letter and damages were awarded to Marsden for libel.

Again, this issue has polarised historians and other writers. Those who have judged Marsden in a negative light have leapt upon Brisbane's comments and the *Philo Free* letter, to make a case that Marsden was more interested in gaining wealth for himself than gaining souls for the Kingdom. In doing this, they ignore the evidence that gives testimony to his industry and example in Christian ministry. His friends, on the other hand, point to his industry in mission work and praise him, ignoring the time he spent in developing agriculture and in commerce which clearly took his time away from the pastoral duties of Christian ministry in the colony. The question remains as to how much more Marsden could have achieved in Christian ministry in the colony if he had not been spending time farming and trading.

It must be allowed that Marsden saw his farming and trading activities as integral to his overall Christian work. As a leading citizen of the fledgling settlement, Marsden saw his involvement in farming as essential for the sustenance of the colony. His further involvement through such things as the development of fine wool for export and the establishment of the Agricultural Society show his ongoing concern that the colony develop a viable agricultural industry.⁶⁹ Equally, following the initial difficulties with the mission of the London Missionary Society to Tahiti, in part caused by a lack of support for the missionaries

⁶⁹ It is interesting to note that Marsden's involvement with agriculture was in the initial stages when he was active in the Agricultural Society and encouraging others in agricultural pursuits. Unlike Macarthur who became prominent in the wool industry, Marsden, who exported the first crop of fine wool from the colony, set the pace at the beginning and then became less involved as others, like Macarthur, reached their stride.

sent there, Marsden was keen to make sure further missionary efforts to the South Seas and New Zealand were well supported. We will gain some insight into Marsden's actual motives in regard to these activities when we examine his sermons that deal with the Christian's use of money in Chapter Three under the sub-heading *Wealth*, in Chapter Four under *Christian Charity* and also in Chapter Five under *Criticisms of Wealth*.

The objection raised in the *Philo Free* letter, that ministry to the native people of the colony was neglected, is never addressed and we can only ponder what might have been achieved among the Aboriginal people had Marsden exercised his considerable energies and vision towards their evangelisation and civilisation without the distraction of the missions to the South Seas and New Zealand or, indeed more specifically for his critics, without the distraction of his agricultural and trading pursuits. This is such an important issue we will return to it in Chapter Five when we consider Sermon 34 where Marsden speaks of the Christian work of missionary societies among the native peoples around the world.

Secondary Sources

There have been many volumes written about Marsden and his work, and his contributions to the early days of the colony are noted in works about other prominent figures of the time. It also seems that almost any modern scholar writing about colonial times cannot help but have a swipe at Marsden even where his deeds do not have a prominent place in their work. One such recent work is *Girt: The Unauthorised History of Australia* by David Hunt.⁷⁰ Hunt takes all the stereotypes of Marsden and replays them, even tipping his hat to Robert Hughes' description when he paints Marsden as a man, 'With a ruddy face, piggy snout, melon-shaped head and the strength of an ox on steroids'. Hunt also mistakenly believes that in his role as a magistrate Marsden was, 'rapidly earning himself the nickname of the Flogging Parson'.⁷¹

⁷⁰ David Hunt. *Girt: The Unauthorised History of Australia*. Melbourne. Black Inc. 2013.

⁷¹ Hunt. *Girt*. Kindle edition: Location 2218.

This unthinking acceptance of stereotypes is a particular detail which alone alerts us to the fact that Marsden was a complicated man and his contribution to the development of Australia was something that cannot be ignored. The works again fall into two distinct categories: those who praise Marsden and those who speak negatively of him.

One recent work that manages to avoid the stereotypes and present Marsden with a refreshingly balanced depiction while acknowledging his very different reputations on both sides of the Tasman is Rachel Standfield's *Race and Identity in the Tasman World, 1769-1840*.⁷² With regard to the evangelical imperative of evangelising native peoples, Standfield asks the question, 'why Marsden did not feel he could satisfy what evangelicals considered an imperative, rather than an impulse, amongst the indigenous population of New South Wales.'⁷³ Standfield refers to Bishop Thomas Wilson's essay prepared for the evangelisation of North American natives, copies of which were brought to New South Wales on the First Fleet, in the hope of making sense of Marsden's lack of imperative amongst the Eora people. Based on the ideas in Wilson's essay Standfield concludes, 'Marsden saw one people who he thought tractable and ready for civilization and Christianity, and another population who he felt would be incorporated into the lowest roles in British society, and where religion might help resign them to their fate.'⁷⁴ To find an answer to her question Standfield did not have to go quite so far from the New South Wales context. While the ideas of Americans in dealing with their own indigenous and slavery interactions might help some understanding of the New South Wales colonial situation in a very broad way, it is from Marsden's sermons that we gain a more specific understanding of his own thinking on the issue of evangelisation of the local Aboriginal people and why he turned more evangelistic effort towards New Zealand. The specific issue of Marsden's attitude to the Aboriginal people of New South Wales is dealt

⁷² Standfield. *Race and Identity*.

⁷³ Standfield. *Race and Identity*. Kindle edition: Location 2233.

⁷⁴ Standfield. *Race and Identity*. Kindle edition: Location 2287.

with more fully in Chapters Three and Four and the issue of the mission to New Zealand is discussed extensively in Chapter Five.

The evangelicals in England promoted the idea with government of sending a chaplain to Botany Bay with the First Fleet and followed that up with the appointment of an assistant chaplain six years later. Marsden was in fact the third man chosen by the evangelicals to be the second chaplain to the colony. The Rev David Crowther was appointed as second chaplain in 1789. Crowther left for NSW on board HMS *Guardian* in September 1789. The ship came safely to Cape Town and then into the Southern Ocean where it collided with an iceberg, ripping a large gash in the hull. Crowther struggled into the only boat which made it safely to land. He took this as providential evidence that the Lord did not want him to be a chaplain in NSW. Wilberforce thought he had found another candidate in the person of the Rev Harry Porter and wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies asking that Porter be appointed. But Porter had found another position before the Secretary had a chance to act.⁷⁵

Their idea was that these men would be ‘apostles to the South Seas’ and when Marsden enquired of them about the appropriateness of his farming efforts and of accepting a position as a magistrate, they were supportive. The overarching perceptions of Marsden’s sponsors were, however, that his ministry was a spiritual exercise that would extend beyond Botany Bay to seek to win the heathen of the South Seas for Christ. They saw no conflict, at least initially, with this ministry and the pursuit of temporal activities to aid in the development of the colony. However, Wannan discounts the support Marsden received from his friends. He says (p.16):

At most, I have attempted the outlines of a portrait of him and a description of some of his activities; and, in doing so, I hope I have

⁷⁵ See J. Bonwick, Australia's first preacher, the Rev. Richard Johnson, first chaplain of New South Wales. London: Sampson Low, Marston. 1898. pp. 108-110.

succeeded in divesting him of the cumbersome halo which Wilberforce and other pious friends inflicted on him.

One gets the distinct impression that if Marsden had stuck to calling on the people of the colony to be good, moral, upright citizens, had made some greater effort to show kindness to the Aboriginal people of New South Wales and not turned his mission effort to New Zealand, then he would have had no critics either in the colony nor from later historians. But then possibly his friends who sent him as an apostle to the South Seas would have become his critics for being too lazy or too afraid to take the gospel to the ‘savages’ of those islands.

Herein lies the issue. Marsden’s critics, almost without exception, fall into the camp of those who do not understand, or who oppose, the evangelical agenda of Christian mission. These opponents include Wannan who, as noted above, has an at least questionable definition of a ‘religious man’.⁷⁶ Quinn in *Altar Ego* clearly and vehemently opposes an evangelical agenda and, it would seem, anyone who opposes Irish Catholics.⁷⁷ James Belich is a well-respected historian and academic whose work has focused on reinterpreting nineteenth-century New Zealand history, particularly the New Zealand Wars for which his publication has won the international Trevor Reed Memorial Prize for historical scholarship.⁷⁸ His reinterpretation of history extends as far back as 1814 when in his book *Making Peoples*⁷⁹ he tries to make a case that Marsden was duped by his friend, the Māori chief, Ruatara. Belich claims that Ruatara did not translate Marsden’s sermon on Christmas Day in 1814 at all. Belich makes the assertion that Ruatara simply encouraged his people to make like they were

⁷⁶ Wannan’s original book published in 1962 had the title: *Very strange tales: the turbulent times of Samuel Marsden* Melbourne. Lansdowne Press. 1962. This was republished in 1972 as: *Early colonial scandals: the turbulent times of Samuel Marsden*. Melbourne: Lansdowne Press. 1972.

⁷⁷ For example, in speaking of Marsden Quinn says, ‘His relentless pursuit of Irish conspiracies was atavistic: blind, unreasoning hatred.’ *Altar Ego*. p.25

⁷⁸ <http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/writers/belichjames.html> Accessed 25 June, 2014.

⁷⁹ James Belich. *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century*. Auckland: Penguin, 1996.

paying attention as Marsden spoke because they would profit greatly by association with Marsden and the British. This suggestion, for which Prof Belich gives no evidence, is dealt with more fully in Chapter Five.

M. H. Ellis has written the definitive biography of Governor Macquarie.⁸⁰ Ellis was a journalist and historian. It is not surprising that Macquarie's biographer should be negative about Marsden and perhaps even less so when we discover that Ellis' father was born in Ireland, Marsden having treated the Irish Catholics in the colony harshly. Ellis has also written a biography on John Macarthur⁸¹ with whom Marsden had a very uneasy relationship for many years which again may make Ellis predisposed to dislike Marsden. Ellis, like Macquarie in 1815, shows that he did not understand Marsden's preaching. Ellis goes beyond his role as historian when he presumes that he knows what mood Marsden was in when he delivered the sermon that Macquarie took exception to. The details of this sermon and Ellis' comments on it are discussed later in Chapter Six.

Alison Jones and Kuni Jenkins have written an exceptional book on how the Māori interacted with the written word.⁸² When it comes to Marsden and his Christmas Day sermon they have unfortunately taken up Belich's ideas. They argue at length that Marsden did not preach a sermon on that day because the assembled Māori did not understand a word he said. Chapter Eight of their book is entitled, 'Not a sermon: an educational event on Christmas Day, 1814'. They call it a 'modern fantasy that the first sermon on New Zealand

⁸⁰ M. H. Ellis. *Lachlan Macquarie: His Life, Adventures and Times*. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1973.

⁸¹ M. H. Ellis. *John Macarthur*. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1955.

⁸² Alison Jones & Kuni Jenkins. *Words Between Us - He Korero First Maori - Pakeha Conversations on Paper*. Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2011.

shores was preached that day'.⁸³ So mistaken are they in this idea it is dealt with in detail in Chapter Five.

Grace Karskens has written a superb book on the colony of New South Wales.⁸⁴ She is an Associate Professor in the School of Humanities and Languages at the University of New South Wales. Her research areas include Australian colonial history, urban and environmental history and cross-cultural history. Her interests are promoting historical understandings and awareness to wide audiences through writing, film, art, museums and online.⁸⁵ In a unique and helpful way *The Colony* shows how the Aboriginal and settler histories became intertwined. The book suffers from some inaccuracies mainly to do with geography. Notably, Karskens moves the Three Sisters in the Blue Mountains from their current location, rising out of the Jamison Valley, a kilometre or two to the west and into the Megalong Valley.⁸⁶ She again gets east and west mixed up when she writes of the 'fabled cattle' lost in the area that has become known as 'Cowpastures'. She says that, 'the small farmers along the east Nepean – mostly emancipists – increasingly crossed the river and raided the herds for calves to add to their own herds.'⁸⁷ Cowpastures is in fact also on the eastern side of the Nepean River so there would have been no need for the small farmers to cross the river to raid the herds. Marsden is not a focus in *The Colony* but Karskens' comments about him are negative and mistaken. These are raised in Chapter Three of this

⁸³ Jones & Jenkins. *Words Between Us*. p. 83.

⁸⁴ Grace Karskens. *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2009.

⁸⁵ <https://hal.arts.unsw.edu.au/about-us/people/grace-karskens/> Accessed 16 June, 2014.

⁸⁶ Karskens. *The Colony*. p. 38. Karskens notes that 'Eora women had the top two joints of their little finger removed as infants'. She then relates this image of the mutilated hand to the Three Sisters which she describes as, 'three intact fingers, and one truncated stump, reaching up from the hand-valley of Megalong'. It would be a nice story if it were true but the Three Sisters actually rise out of the Jamison Valley. The Megalong Valley is a little further west.

⁸⁷ Karskens. *The Colony*. p. 287.

dissertation under the sub-heading *Colonial Context*. On other occasions Karskens, when speaking about women and farmers, while not referencing Marsden, is in remarkable agreement with a number of things he has said. These issues are raised in Chapter Four under the sub-headings *The Gallows*, *Innocent Men and Women of Shame* and *Soil Notes*.

Annette Salt has written *These Outcast Women* about the Parramatta female factory.⁸⁸ Dr Salt is a historian who has also written a history of the Aboriginal people of the Hornsby Shire in Sydney's north. While Marsden does not come out of most discussions about the female factory looking good, Salt's work shows that the description Marsden used of women was not uncommon. Babette Smith in *Australia's Birthstain* says little on Marsden but what she does write is persistently negative.⁸⁹ Smith has also written *A Cargo of Women*⁹⁰ and describes herself as an independent historian. Salt's and Smith's descriptions of Marsden are discussed further in Chapter Four under the sub-heading *Marriage and Adultery*.

Works of fiction gleefully jump on the bandwagon of Marsden bashing. Roger McDonald⁹¹ in *The Ballard of Desmond Kale* makes no apology that his main character, Matthew Stanton, is a barely veiled caricature of Marsden. Marsden's *alter ego* even finds himself transported back to the colony as a convicted criminal after returning to England having served as the chaplain in New South Wales. Not being one to be polarised however, McDonald has said in an ABC Television question and answer:

⁸⁸ Annette Salt. *These Outcast Women: The Parramatta Female Factory 1821-1848*. Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1984.

⁸⁹ Babette Smith. *Australia's Birthstain: The Startling Legacy of the Convict Era*. Sydney. Allen & Unwin, 2008.

⁹⁰ Babette Smith. *A Cargo of Women: Susannah Watson & the Convicts of the Princess Royal*. 2nd edition. Sydney. Allen & Unwin. 2009. Also: Babette Smith. *A Cargo of Women: the novel*. First published by Pan Macmillan, Australia 1991. 2nd edition 2010

⁹¹ Roger McDonald. *The Ballard of Desmond Kale*. Sydney: Random House, 2005.

Opposites at war in the same person make for character in fiction as in life. Stanton emerged as a main character for this reason, I think. Like Marsden he is an evangelical fundamentalist Anglican, deeply flawed, a grasping worldly man, and yet through it all, a true believer.⁹²

It is tempting for readers of Peter Carey's Booker Prize-winning novel *Oscar and Lucinda*⁹³ to conceive the main character, a prominent Anglican cleric in Sydney, to be what they imagine Marsden to have been. Oscar's gambling, drinking and axe wielding proclivities present a tragic figure of a man whose heart does not appear to have been devoted to his primary calling. With negative images of harsh magistrates and dedication to personal wealth Marsden remains in the popular psyche a man whose heart was not in his primary calling as a chaplain to the colony.

Of published works, there are also those which are supportive of Marsden. The earlier examples tend to be hagiographies which can be embarrassing. Cyril Davey, a man of evangelical persuasion has written many short books on prominent Christian figures. These include Martin Luther, John Wesley, Gladys Aylward (a missionary to China), Florence Nightingale, Mother Teresa and another English missionary to China, Hudson Taylor, who founded the China Inland Mission. Another book by Davey is about the Japanese Christian social reformer, author, and leader of labour and democratic movements, Toyohiko Kagawa. Davey has written of Marsden in *Chief of Chiefs*.⁹⁴ It is short at only 32 pages and as the title indicates is a book that speaks highly of Marsden. It falls into the category of hagiography along with J. B. Marsden's work mentioned earlier, as well as several books by A. H. Reed,⁹⁵

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<http://www2b.abc.net.au/tmb/Client/Message.aspx?b=51&m=12&ps=50&dm=1&pd=3> Accessed 26 June, 2014.

93 Peter Carey. *Oscar and Lucinda*. New York. Random House. 1988.

94 Cyril James Davey. *Chief of Chiefs. Samuel Marsden of Australasia*. London: Edinburgh House Press, 1961.

95 A. H. Reed. *First New Zealand Christmases: Tasman 1642, Cook 1769, Marsden 1814*. Dunedin: A. H. Reed, 1933. See also: A. H. Reed. *Samuel Marsden, Pioneer*

T. R. Seddon's book on several *Saints and Heroes of our own Day*⁹⁶ and Alexander Williamson's *Samuel Marsden, the Apostle of New Zealand*.⁹⁷ Pakenham Walsh in *Modern Heroes of the Mission Field* is typical of these hagiographers with statements like, 'We can well imagine with what earnestness the vigorous and devoted man of God pleaded the cause of his *protégés* with the committee of the Church Missionary Society' and 'Such was the first entrance of the Gospel into New Zealand, and such the heroic man who gained that entrance for it, no less by his kindness than by his courage.'⁹⁸ These words of high praise have more to do with promoting a certain style of Christian piety than any real historical research, but they do tell the story. Malcolm Falloon, an Anglican minister in New Zealand currently undertaking doctoral studies on the encounter between Māori and the CMS missionaries in pre-colonial New Zealand, has written a small book on Marsden's attitude to mission strategies.⁹⁹ He deals with the issue of Marsden's priorities in mission strategy, namely whether or not Marsden thought that civilisation must necessarily precede proclaiming the

and Peacemaker. Dunedin: A.H. & A.W. Reed, 1936. and A. H. Reed. *Samuel Marsden: Greatheart of Maoriland*. London: Pickering & Inglis, 1947.

⁹⁶ T. R. Seddon. *Saints and Heroes of Our Own Days*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1899.

⁹⁷ Alexander Williamson. *Samuel Marsden, the Apostle of New Zealand*. Edinburgh.1884. pp. 125, 134.

⁹⁸ W. Pakenham Walsh. *Modern Heroes of the Mission Field*. New York: Fleming H. Revell. 1884. pp. 124 & 134.

⁹⁹ Malcolm Falloon. *To Plough or to Preach: Mission Strategies in New Zealand During the 1820s*. London: The Latimer Trust, 2010. Falloon also has a chapter in Allan Davidson, Stuart Lange, Peter Lineham, Adrienne Puckey, ed. *Te Rongopai 1814 'Takoto Te Pai!' Bicentenary Reflections on Christian Beginnings and Developments in Aotearoa New Zealand* Auckland: General Synod Office, "Tuia", of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia,2014. on 'Christian Rangi: 'A Brand Plucked from the Burning'?' pp. 128 – 137. and also a chapter in Peter G. Bolt & David B. Pettett (Eds). *Launching Marsden's Mission; The Beginnings of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, viewed from New South Wales*. London. Latimer Press. 2014 on "'Openings of Providence': The shaping of Marsden's missionary vision for New Zealand.' pp. 129 – 138.

gospel. Falloon paints Marsden in a positive light but unlike the hagiographers his argument is balanced and rounded.

A continuing interest in Marsden is evidenced in an increasing number of journal articles and theses. Most of these try to promote a more positive, but balanced image. It seems that those who are interested in Marsden today are mostly from an evangelical background. Meredith Lake is one such. She is a modern scholar whose research interests include the history of student evangelicalism and faith-based charity in the twentieth century. An article she has written is quite balanced in her treatment of Marsden. She does however make the mistake of writing that he gained personal satisfaction more from his agricultural activities than those of a more spiritual nature.¹⁰⁰ She also has a chapter in a book on colonial missionaries which deals lightly with Marsden and another chapter in a book dealing with Marsden's mission to New Zealand in which she speaks of Marsden's benevolence to the 'poor heathen'.¹⁰¹ Lake's Ph.D. dissertation on colonisation deals with Marsden in two chapters.¹⁰² She understands the Protestant piety of not driving a great wedge between the

¹⁰⁰ Meredith Lake. "Samuel Marsden, Work and the Limits of Evangelical Humanitarianism." *History Australia* Vol 7, no. 3 (2010): 57.1 - 57.23. I have more to say on Marsden's attitude to his farming activities in Chapter Four under sub-heading *Marriage and Adultery*.

¹⁰¹ The first of these chapters is: Meredith Lake. 'Salvation and Conciliation: First Missionary Encounters at Sydney Cove' in *Evangelists of Empire?: Missionaries in Colonial History*, ed. Amanda Barry, Joanna Cruickshank, Andrew Brown-May and Patricia Grimshaw [online] Melbourne: University of Melbourne eScholarship Research Centre, 2008. Available at: <http://msp.esrc.unimelb.edu.au/shs/missions> . The second of these chapters is: Meredith Lake. 'Promoting the welfare of these poor heathens': Contextualising Marsden's Attitudes to Indigenous Peoples' in Peter G. Bolt & David B. Pettett. *Launching Marsden's Mission. The Beginnings of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, viewed from New South Wales*. London. Latimer Trust. 2014. pp. 101 – 128.

¹⁰² Meredith Lake. "Such Spiritual Acres: Protestantism, the Land and the Colonisation of Australia, 1788-1850." Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Sydney, 2008. See Chapter Four: "An Agricultural Imagination, Samuel Marsden's cultivation of

sacred and the secular but applies this concept too completely to Marsden when she says ‘he found affirmation of his calling [to ministry] ... in the material rewards of his worldly toil.’¹⁰³ Certainly Marsden believed that his material prosperity was God’s blessing, but to say that he regarded this as affirmation of his ministry is a step beyond which Marsden himself would go. Michael Gladwin is another Evangelical Anglican who has written papers on Marsden. Gladwin is Lecturer in History for the School of Theology, Charles Sturt University at St Mark’s National Theological Centre, Canberra. His Ph.D. thesis is a prosopographical study of Anglican Clergymen in Australia and the British Empire, 1788–1850 in which he places Marsden alongside other colonial clergymen in a generally positive light. Papers by Gladwin include ‘The Journalist in the Rectory: Anglican Clergymen and Australian Intellectual Life, 1788 – 1850’¹⁰⁴ in which he examines the contribution of clergy to the ‘intellectual enquiry, and public discussion of the scientific discovery and exploration of Australia’ and discovers that Marsden had a ‘persistent pessimism regarding the potential of Aborigines’.¹⁰⁵ Gladwin also delivered a paper in 2008 at the Yale-Edinburgh Group Meeting titled, ‘The two faces of Samuel Marsden, missionary to Australia and New Zealand, 1794-1838.’ In this paper Gladwin examines the influence of Marsden’s four most significant mentors, Charles Simeon, William Wilberforce, William Hey and Miles Atkinson particularly in the area of social order and how they may have influenced Marsden to take up the magistracy.¹⁰⁶ Marsden’s mentors are the subject of Chapter Two of this dissertation.

soils and souls.” pp. 121 – 156. And Chapter Five: “Inducing Industrious Habits, Samuel Marsden’s attitudes to convicts and Aborigines.” pp. 157 – 190.

¹⁰³ Lake. *Such Spiritual Acres*. p. 155.

¹⁰⁴ Published in *History Australia*. Volume 7, Number 3, 2010. Monash University Press. pp. 56.1 – 56.28.

¹⁰⁵ Gladwin. ‘Journalist in the Rectory’. p. 56.12. Marsden’s attitudes to civilising and evangelising Aboriginal people are discussed in Chapter Three of this dissertation under the sub-heading *Aboriginals* and in Chapter Four, under *Natives of this Colony*.

¹⁰⁶ Michael Gladwin. ‘The two faces of Samuel Marsden, missionary to Australia and New Zealand, 1794-1838’. 2008 Yale-Edinburgh Group Meeting, 3-5 July 2008.

Two other significant theses are worthy of note. Jan White argues for a more nuanced understanding of the colonial clergy. She argues that they were not simply men out of touch with their flocks. They were not men who simply administered a rule of law and of church but were unable to meaningfully engage the attention of their people.¹⁰⁷ In an M.A. thesis from 1939 William Menzies Robb has argued that Marsden was just the right man for the chaplaincy to which he was appointed.¹⁰⁸ Whether or not Marsden was the right man for the colony of New South Wales, I argue in Chapter Five that he fulfilled the purposes of his evangelical backers in having a vision for taking the gospel to the people of the South Seas. Yarwood has also published an article in which he speaks of Marsden in mostly positive terms.¹⁰⁹ He does, however, state in this article that he thinks Marsden made a ‘disastrous’ decision in becoming a magistrate. Certainly had Marsden not taken on this role he would not be known today as the ‘*Flogging Parson*’, but whether or not we can agree with Yarwood’s assessment is discussed more fully in Chapter Three under the sub-heading *Colonial Context*.

Conclusions

Reviewing all that has been written about Marsden, it is clear that none of the authors has had any significant interaction with the one activity Marsden himself declared to be his primary focus, namely his preaching. This is true not only for those who have blindly accepted a negative legend developed by Marsden’s opponents as well as of his hagiographers, but it is also true for those who have made some attempt at a more balanced historical understanding.

Gladwin has expanded these ideas in ‘Marsden’s generals: The metropolitan roots of Marsden’s mission.’ in Bolt & Pettett. *Launching Marsden’s Mission*. pp. 13 – 30.

¹⁰⁷ Jan White. ‘A Master and his Men. A Different Perspective on the Reverend Samuel Marsden in NSW from 1794 to 1851.’ unpublished M.Litt. dissertation, University of New England. 1993.

¹⁰⁸ William Menzies Robb. ‘The Reverend Samuel Marsden, pioneer, a man fitted for his day and generation: an estimate of his work for Australia during the years 1794–1838’. Unpublished M.A. dissertation. University of Sydney, 1939.

¹⁰⁹ A. T. Yarwood. "The Missionary Marsden: An Australian View." *New Zealand Journal of History* 4, no. 1 (1970).

The scope of this dissertation therefore is a close, full and comprehensive study of Marsden's sermons. This analysis will show that mistakes could have been avoided by previous writers if they had consulted the sermons. It is my intention to add to, and where necessary correct, what has previously been said by a fuller interaction with this primary documentation which has received so little attention. The lack of study of and interaction with Marsden's sermons is a gaping hole in the literature. While this dissertation will not fill that hole completely it is one step towards giving a fuller picture of who the man Samuel Marsden was and what his motivations were.

My contention in this current work is that the polarisations that have led either to avid support or decided enmity have been far too simplistic. To some extent these writers, scholars and historians could have redressed this fault if they had interacted with Marsden's preaching. Where some scholars have made attempts at a more balanced study they have fallen at critical points and failed to understand Marsden because they also have not interacted with his preaching. This work will show that the things Marsden has said in his sermons give a deeper understanding of his personality and motivations. Without bringing our own prejudices to polarise us at one extreme or the other, by studying Marsden's sermons we will discover the complexity of his character. This complexity in reality gave to the colony of New South Wales and to the nation of New Zealand a man of extraordinary energy and vision notwithstanding the mistakes he made. His contributions over wide areas of endeavour, while involving some bad decisions, flaws of character, and unfortunate statements that have even his most ardent supporters cringing with embarrassment, nevertheless show that Marsden has left us with a significant legacy. It becomes evident that the colony would not have made progress in significant areas if the Rev. Samuel Marsden had not been among us. My aim is to show that his sermons, a valuable primary resource almost completely ignored until now, throw light on these controversial issues and give a greater insight into Marsden's character, motivations and thinking.

In his hopes for a well ordered and prosperous society and in his enthusiasm for taking the gospel to the South Seas, Marsden may rightly be described as a visionary. This vision, however, was hampered as he failed to see how some of the activities he engaged in gave the enduring perception that his motives were less than honourable. Marsden was blinded to the reputation he gained as a magistrate as he dealt out punishments and even sentences of illegal torture. He was indifferent to the fact that his ever increasing wealth would lead to perceptions that he was more interested in business than his duties as a clergyman. He did not see that his evangelistic efforts towards the more responsive Māori would lead to accusations of neglect of the more immediate mission field to the Aboriginal people of New South Wales. In this sense Marsden may well be described as the ‘Blinkered Visionary’.

And yet, both his enemies and his friends alike have also been blinkered. Polarising at one end, Marsden’s opponents have failed to see the good he achieved. Polarising at the other, his supporters have ignored things for which Marsden should rightly be censured. A more balanced understanding of the man is available to us in his own writings, especially his largely unstudied sermons. It is the aim of this thesis to bring more of this balance into Marsden studies while nevertheless recognising that he remained a ‘Blinkered Visionary’.

Chapter One

The Rev. Samuel Marsden's Sermons

The physical nature of his sermons held in the Library of Moore Theological College Sydney

Introduction

Of the collections around the world of the sermons of the Rev Samuel Marsden, by far the largest is that held by the Moore Theological College Library in Sydney, with a total of 98 items. The first item is not a sermon, but Marsden's notes on soil around the Hawkesbury region to the west of Sydney. These notes, however, do not just describe soil and how it might best be farmed. The notes begin in the middle of a sentence with the description of the soil:

black mould from one to two foot deep. No ground can be more congenial to the production of almost every kind of grain than this, and especially wheat.¹¹⁰

Marsden then moves from describing the soil to describing and criticising the people who farm it:

Experience has already clearly evinced what little advantage the Colony is likely to derive from permitting such persons as have been prisoners to become settlers. These men in general have not been brought up in the habits of industry, but of extreme idleness. They have the greatest aversion to labour, to subordination and good government. Their idle, licentious & ungovernable habits are fixed in many of them for life. They set no value whatever on property. Present gratification is their only object. Their farm, their crops, their stock and all they posses (*sic*) they will sell for the ~~near~~ sake of indulging themselves in a few bottles of liquor.¹¹¹

In this regard the Soil Notes do tend to 'sermonising' and their inclusion in this collection of sermons is therefore understandable. I understand that the collection was originally given to the Moore College Library in the mid-1950s by the Rev. J. R. L. Johnstone, the son the Rev. S. M. Johnstone who wrote a biography of Marsden in 1932. S. M. Johnstone was the Rector

¹¹⁰ Soil Notes:1

¹¹¹ Soil Notes:8-9

St John's Parramatta during the time he wrote the biography where he may have come into possession of the Collection.¹¹²

In the Moore College Collection, items 52 and 89 consist of two sermons each. Further comments on these are made in the notes below. In 1984 this collection was catalogued by Janet Middleton¹¹³ and microfilms were made of the originals by the Mitchell Library, Sydney. Middleton was a student at the University of New South Wales where her work on these sermons of Marsden was submitted as an assignment in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the *Diploma in Information Management – Archives Administration*. Moore College retains the original hand written sermons. Both Moore and Mitchell Libraries hold copies of the microfilmed sermons.¹¹⁴ The microfilm contains a small number of errors. For example on several occasions a page has been filmed twice. On one occasion where original pages from the beginning of a sermon have been folded back, they appear as the last pages of the sermon on the microfilm. These difficulties of the microfilm are noted below. There are also some sermons that appear to have been combined by Marsden into one sermon. This is observable where one item consists of two types of paper and in other instances where the writing changes from one page to the next, probably indicating that there is a gap of time between when these two parts were written. These points are noted below in the notes on each sermon where they occur.

I have made a detailed transcription of this collection which can now be viewed in the Moore College Library and on line.¹¹⁵ In this transcription, which is used in this current

¹¹² I am indebted to the Rev. J. H. L. Johnstone, the grandson of S. M. Johnstone for this information.

¹¹³ J. Middleton. *Guide to Sermon Notes and Papers of Samuel Marsden in Moore Theological College*, Sydney. (1984.)

¹¹⁴ ML. A. 1999 and CYA 1999

¹¹⁵ The transcription is available on line at:
<http://www.moore.edu.au/Media/Default/Library/PDFs/Marsden%20Sermons%20Transcription.pdf>

work when Marsden's sermons are quoted, I have expanded his abbreviations to the full word. On many occasions Marsden has crossed out words, for example, where he has made spelling mistakes and then has written the correctly spelled word. I have retained these crossed out words in the transcription. Sometimes there has not been room to add corrected words on the same line and so Marsden has written corrected words above the line. Sometimes Marsden has also added words to his text for clarification. These words are also written above the line. In these cases, where words have been inserted above the line, in the transcription I have included these words in parentheses, (), so that where words in the transcription are in parentheses this is an indication that the words were originally written by Marsden above the line. References to the sermons are by number as they appear in Middleton's catalogue. References to pages in the sermons are by the number of the sermon followed by a colon and the page number, so that Sermon Three and Page Eight, for example, is rendered as 3:8. Throughout this work where a sermon is referred to only by number, 'Sermon #', it is a sermon in the Moore College Collection. Where reference is made to sermons in other collections the collection is named.

In this Chapter I seek to update and clarify Middleton's notes and to correct some errors. The most significant difference I note here is the pagination of the sermons. The microfilm copy of the sermons has generally copied two pages in one frame. In her own pagination, Middleton has counted these two pages as one. I have followed the more conventional approach of numbering the left hand and right hand pages (as they appear in the microfilm) as two separate pages. Hence my numbering of the pages of the sermons is usually double the number of pages that Middleton has recorded.

Dating

In her catalogue of the collection of Marsden's sermons in the Moore College Library, Middleton noted that out of a total of 98 sermons only five are dated. She has also been diligent in noting dated paper watermarks where these are visible. These dated sermons are:

Sermon 24: June 1815.	Watermark, 1808.
Sermon 43: 5 Sept 1813.	Watermark, 1809.
Sermon 44: 30 May 1813.	Watermark, 1809.
Sermon 72: 13 Dec 1812.	Watermark, 1797.
Sermon 94: 13 June 1813.	Watermark, 1809.

A sixth sermon, Sermon 74, has the date of 29 February 1824 written sideways down the page on page 27 which is the second last page of the sermon. It is in Marsden's hand. There are some difficulties with this date as Marsden has written it but this is the most likely date. It appears he has written 28th and then over written the 8 with a 9. Unfortunately the year is not completed. Marsden has simply written '182'. If the sermon is to be dated on 29 February, rather than 28 February, then the year we are dealing with is a leap year. Of the three leap years in the 1820's, 29 February fell on a Sunday (the most likely day for Marsden to preach) in 1824.

According to watermarks on the paper on which the sermons are written, dating from 1796 to 1833, and according to the dated sermons, from 13 December 1812 to June 1815, (as Middleton thought) Middleton has suggested that the series covered a possible period of 1812 to 1833.¹¹⁶ Sermon 76, however, can be dated in late August or early September 1834, and is most likely to have been preached on Sunday 31 August. The sermon has reference to the wreck of the ship *Edward Lombe* which foundered on Middle Head as she was trying to enter Sydney Harbour. The wreck happened on Monday 25 August 1834 and it is likely that Marsden made reference to it in his Sunday sermon following the tragedy. In the light of this, Middleton's dating can be extended by one year to 1834. Another sermon, held by the Mitchell Library, can be dated fairly accurately. This is the sermon Marsden preached following the untimely death of the Judge Advocate, Mr Ellis Bent in 1815. This sermon, and Macquarie's reaction to it, is discussed in detail in Chapter Six of this work. Mitchell Library

¹¹⁶ Middleton. *Guide*.

also has two other sermons with the dates of 4 April 1813 and 7 July 1818.¹¹⁷ In the Family Papers, now held by the Rev. Samuel Marsden who has retired in Cornwall, there is only one sermon that is dated. It is listed as Sermon Three in that collection. It is a sermon on Psalm 63:8-11 and is dated 23 July 1815. This date puts it in the same period as the sermons in the Moore College collection. It is interesting to note however that none of these extant sermons was preached by Marsden in St John's Parramatta between 7 October 1827 and 12 April 1829. The Margaret Marshall Papers held in the Mitchell Library¹¹⁸ has a full list of the sermons preached in this place each Sunday during this period. The sermon references given in this list do not correspond to any sermon reference in the extant sermons. So while the possibility is that these sermons were preached between late 1812 and 1834 we can now add a gap to this dating of almost 18 months from early October 1827 to 12 April 1829, that is, of course, unless these sermons were preached in another place other than St. John's. It is impossible to be certain of the actual location.

The handwriting style of most of the known sermons is very similar. Normally we would expect this fact to indicate they were written around the same period but there are some indications which suggest we cannot be certain of this. There are some sermons where the handwriting is larger and a little more 'shaky', which would possibly indicate that these are sermons written by Marsden in his later life.¹¹⁹ However, one such sermon with large writing, having only five or six words to a line, is dated 4 April 1813 when Marsden was in his late

¹¹⁷ Mitchel Library. *Marsden Papers*. ML. A1999. Vol. 8. CY Reel 230 Essays and sermons. Mk. 4:12? "Behold the day cometh that shall turn etc." Dated April 4 1813. p.559. Isaiah 3:11. "Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him." Dated July 7 1818. p.580.

¹¹⁸ Margaret Marshall – Marianne Hassall's school book and diary, 1843, 1849 – 1851, and sermons of Samuel Marsden and others preached at St. John's Church, Parramatta, 1827 – 1829. ML. MAV / FM4 / 10844. While a part of these papers is described as 'sermons of Samuel Marsden' they are in fact notes taken by someone else of Marsden's sermons.

¹¹⁹ See for example Sermons 5 & 19.

40s.¹²⁰ Likewise the oldest dateable sermon in the Moore College Collection, Sermon 76, written in August, 1834, seems to the untrained eye to be a very similar hand to the earliest dated sermon, Sermon 72, written in December, 1812. This leads to the conclusion that the style of Marsden's writing therefore does not help in dating his sermons. It is disappointing that more accurate dating cannot be attributed to each sermon in the collections. Knowledge of when Marsden preached a particular sermon may well lead to a better understanding of events and Marsden's responses to them. It is clear however that the bulk of the sermons in the Moore College Library, the Mitchell Library and the Family Collection, were preached during what was the most difficult and controversial time for Marsden, followed in the later years by one of the most settled times. The difficult and controversial time was the period of Macquarie's governorship. From the late 1820s until his death in 1838, Marsden was faced with very little controversy.

The Moore College Collection

This current work deals mostly, though not exclusively, with the Moore College collection of Marsden's sermons. Working with my transcription of all 98 sermons in this collection it has been a simple matter to search for themes and topics within this collection. These searches have been invaluable in gaining an understanding of Marsden's attitudes to the Aboriginal people of New South Wales, to wealth and to mission, to mention just a few subjects which are dealt with in more detail later in this work. Having also read the sermons in the Family Collection when visiting the Rev Samuel Marsden in Cornwall, it is clear that, by largely concentrating on individual items in the largest collection of Marsden's sermons, there is nothing to detract from the conclusions reached in this work.

The sermons in the Moore College Collection are held in a box in the College Library. Each sermon is in its own plastic sleeve. Stickers on the plastic sleeves have the

¹²⁰ This sermon on Malachi 4:1-2 is held by the Mitchell Library. Marsden Papers. Vol. 8. ML. A1999. p. 559.

numbers of the sermons written on them. While the sermons are kept in the same order as Middleton discovered them in 1984, some of the numbers have fallen off the plastic sleeves. As already noted above, the first item in the collection is not a sermon at all, but is a set of notes Marsden has made on soils of the Hawkesbury district. While explaining how to best cultivate crops in this soil Marsden leads into discussion of the men who might work this soil and writes in critical terms about those who have been idle and who have not properly prepared the ground for crops. He also criticises the authorities who have not sent anyone to the colony who might better teach men how to farm and he again condemns the laziness of those who would plunder any crop that has been grown by the more industrious farmer. This item gives some insight into Marsden's view of moral behaviour and is therefore discussed later in Chapter Four.

In her catalogue Middleton attempted to give a summary of each sermon's content. In my notes below I make comment on the content or subject matter of the sermon and particularly note where I disagree with Middleton's summary or want to enhance her notes. The topics Marsden has covered in these sermons are wide ranging. Middleton has made the mistake of determining the sermon topic generally from just the first lines of the sermon. Sermon 83, for example, Middleton has listed as being on the subject of miracles. Marsden has said in the first sentence of this sermon, 'The miracles wrought by our Lord were too manifest to be denied even by his most inveterate enemies.' The biblical text he preached on is Luke 11:21-22. Following this reference and before the first sentence of the sermon Marsden has quoted a snippet of the verses, 'when ~~the~~ a strong man etc.' The body of the sermon deals with the issue of people being under the influence of Satan until Christ casts him out. The issue of miracles is only used by Marsden as an introduction to declare that those who opposed Jesus were motivated by Satan. Middleton has missed the main subject of the sermon by apparently assuming that the first few lines indicate the subject. Middleton has also listed two sermons on the subject of Magistrates, but the first of these, Sermon 23, has far

more interesting comments relevant to studies on Marsden than just ‘Magistrates’. The sermon is a four page fragment and in two places mentions magistrates; on pages two and four. These two references give some insight into how Marsden viewed the role of magistrates and the topic is discussed more fully in this work in Chapters Two and Three. Sermon 23, however, is of even more interest because of what Marsden has said there about the ordering of society. On page three he says, ‘Even in heaven he has established different rank and orders amongst the angels, and on earth also he has seen fit, that a similar order should be maintained.’ Because this comment gives some understanding of Marsden’s exclusivist views, which brought him into conflict with what Macquarie was trying to achieve, it is discussed more fully in Chapter Four under the sub-heading *The Exclusives*. Overall it is hard to list Marsden’s sermons as being on only one topic and it is probably therefore better to ignore Middleton’s subject index.

My research has confirmed the comment by the Rev. Walter Lawry¹²¹ that Marsden used the Rev. Charles Simeon’s Expository Outlines as the basis of many of his sermons. The notes below make reference to which sermons have used those outlines and which have not. In all of the 98 sermons in the Moore College Collection, 74 have used a Simeon outline to a lesser or greater degree. Where there are problems with the microfilm (such as copying a page twice) I comment on these in the notes.

As the essential foundation to this dissertation is to develop a greater understanding of Marsden and his motives through a study of his preaching, the notes below give a full list of the sermons held in the Moore College Collection.

¹²¹ Lawry is reported to have said, ‘On Sunday he (Marsden) reads the liturgy like a man half asleep, and then uniformly serves up one of Simeon’s skeletons with very little lean flesh about it.’ Bill Wannan. *Early colonial scandals: the turbulent times of Samuel Marsden*. Melbourne. Lansdowne, 1972. p. 176.

The Sermons

Soil Notes. 12 pages.

While this document is labelled Number 1 in the Moore College Collection, it is some notes on soil and a comment on the nature of the men who might work it. The original is covered with paper with a note written in biro pen which says, 'This is a fragment of Marsden's discussion of soil types & agricultural methods. I'd be very grateful for a copy of this soon, as I have two students working in the field for M.A's.' The note is not signed nor dated. Page two of the microfilm is a copy of page one. In my transcriptions I have placed this document at the end.

Sermon 02. 16 pages.

This is one of two sermons in the collection on Luke 2:10-11. This Bible reference is the passage that Marsden preached on in the Bay of Islands in New Zealand on Christmas Day 1814. This occasion is dealt with extensively in Chapter Five. The other sermon on this passage is Sermon 33. The sermons are quite different. Sermon 33 has used Simeon's Expository Outlines whereas Sermon Two has not. See also Sermon 47 which begins with the scriptural reference of Matthew 13:16-27 and then on page five turns to discuss Luke 2:10-11.

The content of Sermon Two shows that this is not the actual sermon Marsden preached in New Zealand on Christmas Day, 1814. It is on the same passage that he preached on that day, but it is not the sermon itself. On the last page, page 16, Marsden has written, 'You have seen and felt your want of so great a Saviour and were you to be silent in his praises the very timbers in the building would sing out against you.' As the sermon in the Bay of Islands was preached in the open air Marsden could not have spoken on that occasion about the 'timbers in the building'.

Sermon 03. Psalm 118:27-28. 20 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines extensively in that Marsden has copied out many slabs of Simeon's outline. In my transcription I have underlined Marsden's own words to illustrate how he has woven his words into Simeon's Outline. A copy of this transcription is included in Appendix One. The sermon is 3,326 words in total length. Of these, 2,129 words are Marsden's own. That is, approximately two thirds of the sermon is Marsden's own words. The extent to which Marsden uses Simeon's outlines in this collection varies greatly.

Sermon 04. Psalm 9:17. 12 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

The sum $176+181+181=538$ is written upside down at the foot of the last page of this sermon.

Sermon 05. Two pages.

This is only a two page fragment. Page one has the number 2 written at the top. The writing is large and there are few words on each line possibly indicating Marsden's sight was weakening. Middleton has identified a watermark as 1829 so the sermon was preached when Marsden was in his sixties at a time when his sight was likely to be failing. The sermon uses Simeon's outline on 2 Cor. 2:11. The microfilm has these two pages in reverse order. It is clear from Simeon's outline that the order followed in my transcription is the correct order.

Sermon 06. 1 John 3:2. 16 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines. In my transcription Marsden's own words are highlighted in red. Pages 7 – 10 are torn so that more than half the text is missing.

Sermon 07. Luke 23:42-43. 28 pages.

The body of this sermon considers the penitent thief and encourages the congregation not to wait for a deathbed conversion but to repent of sin now. The first two pages as they appear on the microfilm are pages belonging to the end of the sermon and have been folded to the front and photographed first and therefore out of order. The sermon actually begins on page three of the microfilm where the scripture reference heads the page. This is confirmed from an examination of the originals held in the Moore College Library. The first two pages of the microfilm are on a different sized paper and have been added to the end of the sermon but, perhaps because of their larger size, had been folded to the front to encompass the smaller sheets. The pagination of my transcription is according to the original and not the microfilm. This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 08. 20 pages.

This sermon does not have a Scripture reference. It begins with the words, 'However so much you may glory in your shame.' These may be a reference to Phil. 3:19.

Sermon 09. Micah 7:18-20. 24 pages.

Simeon has two outlines on this passage. Marsden's sermon does not follow either outline.

Sermon 10. Matthew 25:33-36. 21 pages.

Simeon does not have an outline of this passage.

Sermon 11. Mark 13:37. 19 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outline. Page six is continued on page 15 which consists of only six lines of Marsden's handwriting. Page 14 is continued on page 16.

Sermon 12. 14 pages.

The reference of this sermon is unknown. However, on the first page Marsden quotes from Psalm 4, 'with our tongue will we prevail. Our lips are our own, who is lord over us?' and

from John 8:44, 'ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning & abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him.' The sermon begins in the middle of a sentence with the words, 'of unrighteousness.'

Sermon 13. Matthew 26:63-66. 21 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

Sermon 14. Matthew 23:37. 24 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

Sermon 15. John 14:13. 27 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

Sermon 16. Job 34:29. 16 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

Sermon 17. John 6:34. 24 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines. In this sermon Marsden discusses salvation by faith alone and the role of works in salvation on page four.

Sermon 18. 1 Thess. 5:8. 24 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

Sermon 19. Luke 19:12-13. 12 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines. The handwriting is large and there are few words per line.

Sermon 20. Romans 8:26. Five pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

Sermon 21. Six pages.

This sermon is a fragment of only six pages. It is not clear what passage it is based on.

Sermon 22. 1 Thess. 5:23-24. 20 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

Sermon 23. Romans 13:1. Four pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines. Comparing Simeon's outline on this passage, there is clearly at least one page of Marsden's sermon missing before page three.

Sermon 24. Revelation 3:2. 25 pages.

Marsden does not use Simeon's outline on this passage, but this sermon is instructive as to how much Marsden was influenced by Simeon in that while he does not use a Simeon outline he has, nevertheless, used the same style and structure as Simeon's outlines. Though the sermon itself takes up 25 pages, pages 26 to 29 are blank with the date of 'June 1815' written on page 30.

Sermon 25. Revelation 5:11-13. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline but there are many thoughts Marsden has developed independently. On Page Two of this sermon Marsden has said:

They altogether Jews and Christians bond & free who have been brought to the knowledge of the only true God, comprise one body in & under Christ.

Does he mean 'Jews and Gentiles' rather than 'Christians'? This thought does not exist in Simeon's outline. It would be an unusual thought that 'Jews' 'have been brought to the knowledge of the only true God' unless they have become Christians. The Bible text refers to the multitude in heaven and Marsden comments how unexpected this is:

Their number exceeds all computation. They are expressed in our text by ten thousand times ten thousand & thousands of thousands. That their number should be infinite may appear strange & mysterious to us if we examine the sacred writings and see how much is required of a real Christian.

Marsden appears not to want to give his congregation the impression that because of the large numbers in heaven it would be easy to get there. He goes on in this sermon to assure them that living a truly Christian life is an onerous task. This message of works is not in Simeon's outline, but must be balanced by what Marsden says in other sermons where he emphasises the fact that no person can live the Christian life unless drawn and enabled by the Holy Spirit.¹²² Later in the sermon he does tip his hat to a more evangelical statement of the gospel message on Page 12 where he says that salvation is by the blood of Jesus and by faith in that blood:

What an inestimable privilege to become the sons of God thro the blood of the Lamb. Let all seek this blessing by faith in the ~~blood~~ in Jesus.¹²³

Sermon 26. Two pages.

This sermon is only a fragment of two pages. Note that in her summary, Middleton has described the content of this sermon as being about, 'those who have a life of well-doing will be received into heaven'. With this summary Middleton misunderstands what Marsden has said in the sermon. In the body of the sermon Marsden says that those who will be received into the 'everlasting kingdom' are those whose 'feeble endeavours' God has blessed. In the last sentence of the sermon Marsden continues, 'Never grow weary in well doing, and continually bear in mind that he who endureth unto the end the same shall be saved.' This is a

¹²² See for example Sermon 32:2 'The spiritual mind on the contrary imports that principle which leads the soul to spiritual objects & is implanted by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the regenerate.' Sermon 33:6 'his grace and Holy Spirit would be sufficient to make them conquerors over all their spiritual enemies, and to bring his people finally to glory.' Sermon 37:16 'God does at his day as well formerly give his Holy Spirit to all them that ask him, and this Spirit bears witness with the believing soul that he is a child of God and an heir of everlasting life.'

¹²³ Marsden seems to have changed his thought here from, "faith in the blood of Jesus", to, "faith in Jesus".

reference to the refrain in Revelation 1 – 3, a call to the churches to persevere. Marsden's words are more about grace than Middleton's summary implies.

Sermon 27. Romans 13:11. 16 pages.

Simeon has an outline on this verse, but Marsden does not follow it in this sermon.

Sermon 28. Jeremiah 8:20-21. 28 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines though note that Simeon's outline is on Jeremiah 8:20-22. While the sermon is 28 pages long, Page 26 is blank. Marsden sometimes ends his sermons on a very harsh note with warnings of coming wrath and Hell fire unless people repent. This is one sermon that ends on a more gracious note:

[When you] put off this earthly tabernacle then you will take possession of that kingdom which God hath prepared for all them that love him. ~~Then~~ Therefore my brethren comfort one another with these things and exhort one another ~~day~~ duty (*sic*), and so much the more as you see the day approaching.

Sermon 29. Jeremiah 6:16. 24 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

The writing changes in this sermon between Page 23 and Page 24. The writing on Page 24, which is the last page of the sermon, is smaller and neater than the previous pages. Page 24 also has the number '2' written at the top of it. The sermon could have finished at the end of Page 23. The words of Page 24 do not seem to add anything to the sermon. It may be that Marsden has simply used the back of one page from a previous sermon to finish his writing of this sermon.

Sermon 30. Luke 2:32-35. 32 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines.

At 32 pages in length it is the longest sermon in the collection.

Sermon 31. 1 Peter 4:7. 19 pages.

Simeon has an outline on this passage but Marsden does not follow it in this sermon.

Sermon 32. Romans 8:6. 16 pages.

Simeon has an outline on this passage. Marsden does not follow the outline closely in this sermon, but certainly takes up the ideas Simeon expresses on the comparison of a spiritual and carnal mind. In his outline Simeon says:

A spiritual man ... will act from spiritual motives: he will act with spiritual views even in his temporal concerns.

Marsden has it as:

A spiritual minded man ... will act of spiritual motives. He will have a single eye to the glory of God. He will act with spiritual views even in his temporal concerns.

In his sermon Marsden then fills this out further with words not used by Simeon:

He is sincere before God, he seeks to honour and glorify him and longs and prays that he may be unblameable before him in love. It is his desire and study to do the will of his heavenly Father. In short the carnal man will seek his own pleasure, interest and honor independent of God, while the spiritual man seeks his happiness in God and studies to promote his glory.¹²⁴

It is very tempting to imagine that Marsden saw himself as this 'spiritual minded man' as he justified his activities in farming, trade and mission to New Zealand in the light of much criticism from others over his involvement in these undertakings. The issue of self-justification is taken up later in this dissertation in Chapter Three under the sub-heading 'Wealth'.

Sermon 33. Luke 2:10-11. 20 pages.

This is one of two sermons in the Moore College collection on Luke 2:10-11. The other is Sermon 02. As noted above these two sermons are quite different. This sermon has used

¹²⁴ Sermon 32:5

Simeon's Expository Outlines. See also Sermon 47. In some of the sermons the paper has deteriorated to the extent that the text is unreadable. In some cases the paper has been torn and there are words or lines missing. This is one such sermon where the words at the bottom of the first two pages and at the top of the last page are missing due to the damaged manuscript.

Sermon 34. Luke 13:28-29. 24 pages.

This sermon is not based on a Simeon outline.

Marsden sometimes included notes to himself which indicate that, despite writing full notes, he planned to extemporise parts of his sermon. This is one such sermon where on Page 8 he has written up the left hand margin of the page, 'Notice the prospect of the accomplishment of the promise.'

Sermon 35. Jeremiah 28:16. 18 pages

Simeon does not have an outline on this passage. Page 14 of this sermon is blank. The sermon ends abruptly:

The more you meditate upon heaven, the more ardently will you long to be there. There is nothing here deserves your joys. There is nothing like your God

It may be that there is a page or more missing.

Sermon 36. Nahum 1:7. 20 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines. There are a number of unusual features to note about this sermon. On Page One Marsden has written:

He commanded the Israelites to walk into the midst of the sea which they did (+) & the sea became a wall on their right and on their left.

One Page 20, the last page, the only words are:

+ And the angel of God went before the camp of Israel until they entered the sea. He then removed and went behind them, between the Egyptians and the Israelites.

Clearly the plus sign '+', written above the line on Page One indicates an addition which Marsden has written on the last page. These words which have been added fit into the sentence on Page One. These types of additions are not common, but do occur as noted above in Sermon 34 with the words written up the side of the page. On Page 12 of Sermon 36 the writing changes half way through. It seems to be still the same hand but tighter with more words per line.

Page Eight of this sermon does not follow naturally from Page Seven and has a line down the middle of the page, possibly indicating that Marsden has crossed it out. Page Nine more naturally continues the thought from Page Seven. Page Eight is also the same as Page Thirteen with minor differences. At the bottom of Page 16 Marsden has written:

x whilst God will always (be) a stronghold in the day of trouble to them that that love and trust in him, he will be a God of vengeance and terror to you who despise his longsuffering.

The text is slightly separated from that above it. This, with the 'x' at the beginning of this sentence, indicates it is an addition to something he has written above but there is no 'x' anywhere else on the page and the sentence doesn't fit naturally into any other place on the page.

These additions and oddities in some of Marsden's sermons, and the fact that two sermons in this Collection are almost identical,¹²⁵ probably indicate that on occasions Marsden has used older sermons and mixed and matched them and on other occasions, after preparing his sermons, he has reviewed them and made small additions before delivery. My estimation is that this sermon is one that has been mixed and matched, made up from at least two sermons that Marsden has preached previously. John Watsford, the first Australian-born Methodist minister,¹²⁶ reports that in his old age Marsden often preached the same sermon on

¹²⁵ See notes on Sermons 64 and 79 below.

¹²⁶ Watsford was born in Parramatta on 5 December, 1820 and ordained in 1839.

different occasions, apparently unaware, but to the extent that the boys of The King's School could almost repeat the sermon word for word.¹²⁷

Sermon 37. Job 19:25-27. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. It is on the subject of assurance. This is an interesting sermon. On first reading, it could be surmised that Marsden is seeking to justify himself against 'certain calumnies' where on Page 17 he says:

Would not this hope be an ~~effectu~~ effectual antidote to the poisonous breath of calumny which will ever strive to blast the fairest characters. Will not the testimony of a good conscience fill us with joy even when we are loaded with the bitterest accusations?

These words however are a direct quotation from Simeon's outline on this text. While Marsden may have thought that these words fitted exactly his situation, they are not his words, but Simeon's.

The biblical text on which this sermon is based is the same text noted in the *Sydney Gazette* on Wednesday 9 August 1826 'in which he took notice of the death of the late Mrs. Lawry'. However, no reference is made in this sermon, Sermon 37, to Mrs. Lawry. If this is the sermon Marsden used on that occasion, he has made reference to Mrs. Lawry without notes. It is more likely, however, that the notes of that sermon are lost to us and that Sermon 37 is one that Marsden preached on another occasion.

Sermon 38. Isaiah 11:6-9. 20 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline for this text. Note that in this sermon Marsden talks about countries and kingdoms being at war and people being put to the sword and being burned in their cities, Page 8. Simeon does not have this in his outline. It would be interesting to be able

¹²⁷ John Watsford. *Glorious Gospel Triumphs*. Edinburgh. Morrison & Gibb. 1899. 'While at "King's" I attended the Episcopalian church every Sunday afternoon. The well-known Rev. Samuel Marsden, then very old, was officiating. We boys got to know some of his sermons almost by heart, for he often repeated them.' p. 13.

to identify these specific events but there is too little detail in Marsden's words and we are not able to date the sermon accurately. At the end of the last page Marsden has written the following words upside down:

Such an early fruition of happiness. This prophecy of Enoch relative to the final destruction of the ungodly is not recorded in the Old Testament.

How these words might fit into this sermon is not clear. Enoch is not mentioned anywhere else in the sermon. This may be indicative that Marsden has used one side of the paper for one sermon and then reused the other side for another sermon. Enoch is mentioned in Sermons 8, 29, 56, 67 and 81.

Sermon 39. Psalm 51:7. Two pages.

Marsden has used Simeon's outline on this text.

Sermon 40. 1 Peter 4:12-16. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

In this sermon Marsden addresses the behaviour of his congregation quite directly, though does not mention specific instances. On Pages 16 & 17 he says:

Some professors [of Christianity] are what the apostle calls busy-bodies in other men's matters under the idea of rendering service to God and man. This is a great evil in the Christian world and at the same time too common. It is productive of much mischief and tends to destroy the best feelings of religion. Many of you suffer for such conduct as this.

Also on Page 16 he has written:

But when persons reap the just reward of their own misconduct so far are they from honouring God that they generally dishonour him and expose religion to hatred and contempt. +

And then at the bottom of Page 17:

+ Let your own conduct as Christians be correct, let it be as becometh the gospel of Christ. Remember if you only call him Lord, Lord and do not his commandments he will not own you at the last day but on the

contrary he will declare that he never knew you and will say to depart
from me ye workers of iniquity.

This style of exhortation is typical of Marsden. He calls upon his hearers to godly living, but usually leaves them with the warning of severe punishment for non-compliance rather than words of encouragement, grace and forgiveness for those who follow Christ.

Sermon 41. Zechariah 12:10. 12 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines. It is interesting to note, however, that there are great differences between Simeon's outline and Marsden's sermon in a section dealing with the loss of a first born son. It is likely this sermon was written after the death of Marsden's first born son in August 1801, and maybe even after the death of his second son in 1803. Middleton notes a watermark on the paper of 1798.

Significant additions to Simeon's outline by Marsden are noted in red in the transcription. The sermon has a total of 2,535 words of which 1,266 are Marsden's own. The sermon also speaks about 'evangelical repentance'. See pages 1, 3, 4, 9. By this term Marsden seems to mean 'true repentance'. Following Simeon, he has stated on page one, '... there is a repentance which is not unto salvation. Such was Cain's, Judas's ... The text therefore deserves our deepest attention, since it opens up to us the nature of evangelical repentance ...' Again, following Simeon, 'evangelical repentance' is defined on Page Three where he says, 'Repentance can only be called evangelical when it hath immediate respect to Christ.' This 'respect to Christ' is further defined as:

not that the miseries which Christ endured on the cross a[re] proper
grounds for the real penitent sorrow, but rather it is his grief that he has
dishonoured Christ by his sins and that he has again & again crucified
him afresh by his sins.

Marsden sometimes quotes from hymns in his sermons. There is an example in this sermon on Page Four where he has quoted the first two lines of a John Newton hymn, 'I saw one hanging on a tree in agony and blood etc.' The addition of 'etc' at the end of this short quotation

indicates Marsden has continued past these two lines from memory. Could it be also that he might have actually sung these lines in the middle of his sermon? There is no evidence that he did. He does, however, again quote the hymn on Page Nine.

Sermon 42. Luke 2:13-14. Eight pages.

The sermon reference is Luke 2:13-14. Middleton has it as Luke 13:14 which is what Marsden has written. The sermon follows Simeon's outline.

There appears to be some pages missing from this sermon. The eight pages are stitched together which is typical of the physical form of each of Marsden's sermons. The centre pages of this sermon are Pages Four and Five. The end of Page Four reads, 'and would be lost in wonder and admiration at his great glory'. The beginning of Page Five reads, 'born to the shepherds saying fear not'. The thought is disjointed which seems to indicate there are pages missing from the middle of this item.

This is another sermon where Marsden quotes from a hymn. This time it is the first line of the fourth verse of Isaac Watt's hymn, 'When I can read my title clear'. The words Marsden quotes are, 'There shall I bathe my weary soul'.

Sermon 43. Romans 8:13. 18 pages.

The sermon has used Simeon's outline. On Page 18, which has only a few lines of text, the sermon does not seem to be complete where it ends with, 'You will then begin to feel an inward satisfaction which'. On Page 19 the sermon is dated 5 Sept. 1813. On Page 13 Marsden has written a note to himself, 'Enlarge upon this.'

Sermon 44. Luke 18:6-8. 24 pages.

The sermon uses Simeon's outline. It is dated 30 May 1813 but the writing of the date does not appear to be Marsden's.

Sometimes Marsden makes comments in his sermons that, on more careful reflection about the theological implications, he probably would not have made. On Page 21 of this sermon he says, ‘The heart must be sincerely engaged in the work and all the affections of the soul called forth into exercise if we hope to derive any saving benefit from our prayers.’ An evangelical theology would not normally see any ‘saving benefit’ from prayer and that salvation does not depend upon how ‘sincerely engaged’ a person might be. Marsden does make clear evangelical statements of belief in other places, attributing salvation to the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart which brings a person to faith in the shed blood of Jesus alone. For example, in Sermon 45:5 Marsden makes a clear statement of evangelical theology where he says, ‘There is free and full pardon for all sins that ever we have committed.’

The last few words on the second last and the last pages of this sermon are missing because the page is torn.

Sermon 45. Luke 14:16-18. 20 pages.

Middleton has wrongly given the reference as Luke 12:16-18 and has quoted the first lines from that passage in her notes. The passage is actually Luke 14:16-18.

In this sermon there are some illuminating remarks on Marsden’s attitudes to justice and corporal punishment and on the balance between religion and work. These remarks are discussed further in Chapter Three under the sub-headings ‘Colonial Context’ and ‘Wealth’.

On the last page of this sermon Marsden quotes the third verse of Charles Wesley’s hymn ‘Sinners, obey the Gospel word!’

Sermon 46. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon’s outline.

Sermon 47. Matthew 13:16-27 and Luke 2:10-11. 25 pages.

This sermon does not follow a Simeon outline. Middleton lists this sermon as being on the text Luke 2:10-11. The text in the first paragraph is Matthew 13:16-17, but at the end of Page Five Marsden says, ‘the words of our text, Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings etc etc.’ which is Luke 2:10-11. Note also that Page One starts in the middle of a sentence indicating some missing pages.

Sermon 48. Luke 2:25. 20 pages.

This sermon has used Simeon’s outline. On Page 17 two ink blots have obscured some small parts of the text.

Sermon 49. Hebrews 1:6. 23 pages.

Simeon does not have an outline on this passage.

Sermon 50. Romans 6:23. 18 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon’s outline. The manuscript is in poor condition and some of the pages are torn. Page One and Page 15 are almost identical. It is possible that page 15 is the beginning of another sermon which continues to Page 18, but the condition of the manuscript is so poor that it is impossible to be certain of this.

As much as Marsden inveighed against the immorality in the colony this sermon shows how clearly he believed that salvation was all by grace through faith, even though, as noted above, on rare occasions he may have not been precise in the choice of his words. Usually Marsden chose his words very carefully in order to be clear about detail. One such example of his careful language is a sermon held in the Mitchell Library, Sydney that is considered at length in Chapter Six. On Pages Six and Seven of Sermon 50 Marsden speaks of nothing but grace with statements like:

He offers heaven and glory freely as a gift to all who will accept of it them. ... The gift of God is eternal life. ... The gift of heaven is

bestowed says the apostle only thro the Lord Jesus Christ. ... Christ is our redemption. He is our mediator and he has procured every blessing for us by his own death and sufferings, and all who come to God thro him shall obtain everlasting life, for he is able to save to the utter most all that come to God thro him.

From Page 11 onwards pages are torn and several lines of text on each page are missing.

These pages are also detached from the first ten which may indicate that they are in fact a separate sermon. Because of the poor condition of the manuscript it is impossible to tell.

Sermon 51. Job 27:6. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 52A: Psalm 25:3. Sermon 52B: 2 Corinthians 4:17-18. 32 pages.

This item consists of two sermons. The first is on Psalm 25:3. The second on 2 Cor. 4:17-18.

A page from the second sermon had been folded to the front which makes it appear as though it belonged to the first sermon. In the Collection this page has now been folded to the end of the second sermon and appears as pages 15 and 16 of the second sermon. Four pages that were at the end of the second sermon and identified by Middleton as belonging to the first sermon, now sit at the end of the first sermon as pages 13 – 16 and my transcription follows this order. Simeon does not have an outline for Psalm 25:3, but Marsden has followed Simeon's outline for 2 Corinthians 4:17-18. Page 12 has a line down the middle indicating Marsden has crossed it out.

On Page 22, in speaking about losses people experience Marsden has written:

How often do we see parents (mourn) ~~make~~, and be in great bitterness for the loss of a beloved child. They do not see the hand of God in their affliction, and have no firm foundation to rest upon for comfort in the day of trouble.

These words are not in Simeon's outline and may give some insight into how Marsden dealt with the deaths of his sons.

Sermon 53. Mark 2:8-12. 12 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 54. Luke 6:19. 22 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 55. Isaiah 25:6-8. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 56. 1 Samuel 2:25. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

The flow of thought between Pages Nine and Ten seems disjointed. The sentence reads, 'How ought we to labour to suppress and mortify our evil inclinations – what a dangerous [*page break*] any evil thoughts in our breasts?' The writing is very clear and the pages are sown together. This makes it very difficult to understand why the thought seems disjointed.

Sermon 57. 1 John 3:20-21. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

The sermon has some small but nevertheless, intriguing differences with Simeon.

On Page 18 Marsden has:

The accusations of conscience are the voice of God within us calling us earnestly to repentance, & the most guilty conscience that ever distressed a man may be cleansed and purged by the blood of Jesus.

Whereas Simeon renders this:

The accusations of conscience are the voice of God within us calling us earnestly to repentance, & the most guilty conscience that ever distressed a man may in an instant be purged by the blood of Jesus.

Marsden does not seem to like this idea of 'instant' action on the sinner by Jesus. Is this because he insists on a moral life as evidence of the cleansing by the blood of Jesus? A more

in depth study of the implications of the differences between Marsden and Simeon than is possible in this dissertation could reveal more about Marsden's theological position and therefore his attitudes to a range of issues.

A further difference between Marsden and Simeon is evidenced again in this sermon on Page 19 where Marsden speaks of 'true repentance' whereas Simeon simply has 'penitence'. It would be interesting to understand what Marsden means by 'true repentance' as distinct from 'repentance' or even 'penitence'.

Sermon 58. Luke 11:27-28. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

On Page 13 of this sermon, in speaking of the ministry of Jesus, Marsden has said, 'during the 4 years of his public ministry'. Most believe that Jesus' public ministry lasted only three years.

At the bottom of Page 16 Marsden has written, 'and the first and last time I have seen them in the Church has been when brought into it (by men [*unclear*]) in their coffin.' These words have been added from Page 18 where the first two lines of the page read, 'of God. Many I know whom I have never seen at a place of public worship upon any occasion. +'.

Sermon 59. Revelation 20:11-15. 12 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

The last three pages of this sermon are separate from the first nine pages. There is clearly some text missing between Pages Nine and Ten. The last three pages could be part of another sermon. Page Ten begins, 'The prophet Malachi informs us ...'

Sermon 60. Lamentations 3:27-29. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 61. Luke 3:19-20. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

On Page 15 Marsden has written, 'Herod was so enraged at Peter's escape that he commanded', up the left hand margin of the page but it is not clear where these words fit into the text on this page. It may be that he completed this sentence extemporaneously.

Sermon 62. Luke 13:8-10. 22 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 63. Genesis 18:19. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline, but not as slavishly as some earlier in the collection.

The text on Page 23 has been crossed out and Page 22 continues on Page 24 where the sermon finishes with the words, 'I shall only mention one ~~instance~~ instance more which is the prodigal son, no uncommon character, in every age. Our Lord tells us there was a certain man who had two sons & the youngest said to the father etc.' It seems that Marsden told the rest of the story of the Prodigal Son extemporaneously.

Sermon 64. Ecclesiastes 7:16. Seven pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. Sermon 79 also uses this text and is mostly a copy of this sermon, though much longer. This sermon is seven pages long and Sermon 79 is 22 pages long.

Sermon 65. Isaiah 11:10. 23 pages.

This sermon appears to use Simeon's outline on this passage, but Marsden has not copied out slabs of it as he has done with most others. Middleton has this sermon, Sermon 65, with a reference of 'Mathew (*sic*) 25:35-40' and the theme as 'Charity'. In her list of sermon texts she has no listing for Matthew 25:35-40. She lists Sermons 66 and 76 as being on the subject of Charity but in the contents she has left out a reference and description of Sermon 66. It

seems she has numbered the description of Sermon 66 as number 65 and left out a description of Sermon 65.

Sermon 66. Matthew 25:35-40. 27 pages.

Marsden has used Simeon's outline for this sermon. The occasion appears to be an appeal for funds to the Benevolent Asylum. Middleton has noted that the paper has a watermark date of 1833. The Asylum opened in 1821. Middleton has numbered this sermon as number 65 and does not have number 66. See note above on Sermon 65.

Sermon 67. Hebrews 1:6. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. Due to a torn page the bottom lines of Pages 23 and 24 are missing.

Sermon 68. 2 Timothy 3:12. 20 pages.

This sermon does not follow Simeon's outline on this passage.

Sermon 69. Luke 8:50. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. Note that Marsden had first written the reference John 10:9, but has crossed this out and written Luke 8:50.

Sermon 70. Isaiah 55:6. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline and is the same as Sermon 86 but with variations.

Sermon 71. Job 34:29. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 72. Philippians 3:10. 15 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. It has the date of 13 December 1812 written on Page 16 which is otherwise blank, that is, the date is written on the back of Page 15. The date does not appear to be Marsden's writing. On Page 13 Marsden says, 'Those who are unprepared to partake of the Holy Communion here below, are surely unprepared to partake of it in heaven.'

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He expresses this idea in a number of sermons. That is, 'If you exclude yourself from Holy Communion you can't expect God to include you in the Heavenly Banquet.' It is an idea that is not in Simeon's outlines nor expressed by any other of Marsden's mentors.

Sermon 73. Hosea 5:5. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. On the last page of this sermon, written upside down, are the following words:

Dear Sir

I have sent you the papers. Found them at Lannas. had you

Lannas Lu

Dear Sir, I have sent you the
papers. I found them at L.

Dear Sir, Will you pls

Sermon 74. Hebrews 10:19-22. 28 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. Marsden has written the date of 29 February 1824 on page 27, sideways down the page. The difficulties of this date have been discussed above in the introduction to this chapter. On Page 22 about half way down the page the writing style changes. It is still Marsden's writing, but it is smaller and slightly neater than the writing above it. The three lines above the change have also been crossed out. This seems to indicate that Marsden has added to the original sermon at a later date.

Sermon 75. Exodus 20:15. 24 pages.

Simeon does not have an outline on this text. Towards the bottom of Page 20 just over one line of text has been written upside down and has also been crossed out. There are two more lines below these upside down words, but the flow of thought does not continue onto the following page. The text reads:

your sins will be found upon your own heads (~~yet we find that neither the command of God.~~)¹²⁸ and you will here (*sic:ere*) long hear the judge of quick & dead say depart from me into everlasting

[Page 20]

to plead for an excuse but here every person may find employment and need [not] to suffer for want of labour.

The upside down words were probably written at another time and Marsden has simply used this piece of paper and crossed the words out as he has written this new sermon. The disjunction in the flow of thought from Page 20 to Page 21 is harder to explain. The pages are sown together and are part of the one sermon.

Sermon 76. Galatians 4:4. Eight pages.

Like Sermon Seven the microfilm appears to have started in the middle of the sermon. In the transcription I have ordered the text in the most logical way. The scriptural reference appears to be Galatians 4:4. The sermon refers to the tragic loss of life and the plight of the survivors when the barque *Edward Lombe* was wrecked on Middle Head in Sydney Harbour while trying to take refuge from a raging storm at sea on 25 August 1834. This shipwreck was Sydney's first major shipping disaster. In total 12 people lost their lives, five passengers and seven crew, including the captain, Captain Stroyan.¹²⁹ This sermon does not appear to be based on a Simeon outline.

Sermon 77. Luke 1:67-75. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 78. Matthew 21:28-31. 23 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

¹²⁸ These words in parentheses have been written upside down.

¹²⁹ http://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/16492/Shpwrks-Sth-Hd_region_sht5-layout.pdf Accessed 14 September, 2007.

Sermon 79. Ecclesiastes 7:16. 22 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 80. John 1:18. 21 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 81. Hebrews 11:19. 21 pages.

Simeon has an outline on Hebrews 11:17-19 but this sermon does not use any of it. In this sermon Marsden uses some very direct address to his congregation about their lives and the impact their 'vices' have on their own children.

Sermon 82. 1 Peter 1:3-5. 28 pages.

Marsden has used Simeon's outline on this passage but nowhere near as slavishly as in many other cases. The writing is large, generally four or five words to a line.

Sermon 83. Luke 11:21-22. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 84. Mark 10:49-50. 23 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 85. Psalm 42:5. 16 pages.

Simeon does not have an outline on this passage.

Sermon 86. Isaiah 55:6. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline and is the same (with variations) as Sermon 70.

Sermon 87. Hebrews 4:9. 20 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 88. 1 Corinthians 6:11. 24 pages.

Simeon does not have an outline on this verse alone. He has an outline on 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Marsden's sermon seems to be independent of Simeon. It addresses local issues directly.

Sermon 89. Matthew 18:32-35. Five pages. Luke 16:8. 19 pages. (Total 24 pages.)

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. Note that the sermon on Matt. 18:32-35 is a fragment sown together with another sermon on Luke 16:8.

Sermon 90. Romans 1:20-21. 22 pages. (Page 16 is blank.)

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 91. 1 Kings 21:20. 23 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

In various sermons there are intriguing statements by Marsden that could be taken as autobiographical and an attempt to justify some of his controversial behaviour. Some of those statements occur in this sermon. On further examination, however, it is clear that many of these statements are direct quotations from Simeon and are not Marsden's original words. Of course, Marsden may still be using them as self-vindication, but they are words first written by Simeon and could have been used by any preacher reliant on Simeon's outlines. Some of these expressions occur in this sermon.

The sermon is about Christian ministers and it would be expected that Marsden would see himself as a faithful minister. The sermon begins:

The office of a Christian minister is doubtless the most honourable that can be sustained by man because ministers are ambassadors for Christ the King of Kings. But their office is at the same time the most arduous & difficult.

Not only is Christian ministry 'most arduous & difficult', on Page Ten Marsden believes that 'wicked men' will be those who oppose a 'faithful minister of the Lord'. As an indication of

how Marsden has added his own thinking to Simeon's words when speaking about 'faithful ministers', in the follow quotation from Page 11 Marsden's words are underlined:

Will their admonitions be received with thankfulness? Will not their interposition be deemed rather an impertinent intrusion? And will not the minister become an object of hatred as Elijah was? Yes, such is the light in which ~~is the light in which~~ his conduct will be viewed, however gross and unjustifiable the sin is that has been committed and reprov'd men cannot bear to have their favourite sins touched. They immediately shew their enmity and indignation.

These words sound very personal and it is easy to hear Marsden saying that he believed himself to be 'an object of hatred' and of 'enmity and indignation', particularly when he admonished certain behaviours in the colony. Marsden is on record in a letter to the Governor about an 'impertinent intrusion' by MacArthur into his dealings with a drunkard by the name of Simon Burn. This subject is considered later in the *Introduction* of Chapter Four.

On Page 13 in speaking about the interactions of King Ahab and the prophet Elijah, Marsden declares that, 'The king was the aggressor and yet he wanted to charge the prophet with the very offence which he was guilty of himself.' These are Marsden's words and not Simeon's. It is very tempting to see in this statement an autobiographical sketch of Marsden's dealings with Governor Macquarie who declared Marsden to be, 'a secret enemy of mine and the head of a low cabal', before cutting off further contact with the chaplain.¹³⁰

Sermon 92. 1 John 3:5. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. Note that the microfilm has copied pages 16 & 17 again at pages 18 & 19.

It is quite clear that Marsden was comfortable with his own conduct in business and as a Christian minister despite accusations against him that he was more interested in

¹³⁰ The relationship between Marsden and Macquarie is dealt with extensively in Chapter Six.

gaining wealth for himself than in his duties as a Clergyman.¹³¹ In Sermon 92 Marsden speaks of those who profess to be Christian and yet are dishonest in business. He declares on Page 18, 'that the world at large would rather deal with men who make no profession of religion than with such as you' and then warns, 'Such conduct brings the greatest disgrace upon religion and will be attended with the heaviest judgments.' If Marsden was dishonest in business himself he either was able to totally deceive himself about his true character, or he had a clear conscience about his business dealings.

Sermon 93. Leviticus 25:9-10. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 94. Isaiah 45:23-25. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline. Note that the bottom half of page 22 has the date June 13 1813 written on it not by Marsden.

Sermon 95. Ephesians 2:18. 16 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Sermon 96. Luke 18:6-8. Eight pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

This is another sermon where Marsden has a note to himself to extemporise. On Page Four he writes, 'Oh Father, said the blessed Jesus, if it be possible let this cup pass from me etc. Enlarge upon this.'

Sermon 97. 1 Peter 4:4-5. 19 pages.

Simeon does not have an outline on this passage.

¹³¹ These issues are dealt with in Chapter Four.

Sermon 98. Matthew 15:28. 24 pages.

This sermon uses Simeon's outline.

Conclusions

These notes have attempted to update and clarify the earlier notes by Middleton on the collection of Samuel Marsden's sermons held in Moore Theological College Library. Some issues of interest that may help in better understanding Marsden have been raised and fuller discussion of these is made later in this dissertation. There are other issues and themes in Marsden's preaching which are beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it is hoped that with the availability of the full transcript of this collection other scholars may find many other topics to be mined there. One such topic is Marsden's theology as expressed in his preaching. While this is covered in some small part in this current work there is still much to be learned about his theological position and how faithful or otherwise he has been to the evangelical tradition from which he came.

Chapter Two

Marsden's Debt to Simeon

Introduction

The Rev Samuel Marsden was born at Farsley on 26 June, 1765.¹³² He was the eldest of seven children by his father, Thomas, a butcher, and in his teens was apprenticed to his uncle to learn the art of blacksmithing. In October, 1786 Marsden began his formal education in the home of the Rev Samuel Stones, a member of the Elland Clerical Society, who, as tradition has it, first met Marsden when he brought his horse to be shod at his uncle's foundry. In 1788 Marsden moved to Hull to further his education under the Rev Joseph Milner. From Hull he entered Magdalene College Cambridge on 7 December, 1790. After just two years and before he had completed his degree, the Rev Charles Simeon recommended Marsden for the chaplaincy at Botany Bay. Before leaving for this assignment Marsden married Elizabeth Fristan. Only a month before their departure in July 1793, William Carey, who had founded the Baptist Missionary Society a year earlier, sailed with his family to Bengal, to begin a mission in the very place Marsden had earlier been considered for the East India Company chaplaincy. It is interesting to speculate how this coincidence of circumstances may have enlivened Marsden's enthusiasm for the mission which lay before him. As he was setting out to preach the everlasting gospel in Botany Bay another evangelical was taking the good news to Bengal after he had been prevented from going there himself two years previously.

The Marsdens' first child, Ann, was born on the ship just a few days before arriving in Port Jackson on 10 March, 1794. Marsden joined the Rev Richard Johnson who had been the only chaplain in the colony since its foundation. Marsden quickly came into conflict with Lieutenant Governor Grose over the issue of convicts attending church on Sundays. A year later when Hunter became governor life for Marsden became a little easier.

¹³² Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p. 284.

Hunter had trained for ministry in the Presbyterian Church. He appointed Johnson and Marsden as civil magistrates in which position Marsden served until he returned to England in 1807. Johnson had returned in 1800 leaving Marsden on his own. In 1798 Marsden welcomed missionaries of the London Missionary Society fleeing Tahiti and was officially appointed as resident agent and supervisor of the Society's operations in the South Seas in 1804.¹³³ Despite warnings from home that he should not associate with the dissenters, Marsden saw in his fellow evangelicals the opportunities for gospel ministry. Marsden's reputation, power and influence increased during the governorship of King (1800-1806). According to George Caley Marsden effectively became second-in-command in the affairs of the colony during this time.¹³⁴

In 1807 Marsden left the colony to recruit teachers, chaplains and missionaries, returning with some success in February, 1810. For this trip Marsden secured from the Church Missionary Society missionaries to accompany him back to New South Wales to begin the mission to New Zealand. Delays to this mission saw Marsden writing to the CMS asking that the missionaries be put to work in the colony until such time as they might be able to continue their journey on to New Zealand. It would be another four years before Marsden and the CMS missionaries could begin that mission. During his absence from the colony Marsden avoided the difficulties during the governorship of Bligh and the subsequent rebellion. On his return he found Lachlan Macquarie appointed as Governor. The difficulties these two men faced in conflict with each other is the special attention of Chapter Six.

On Christmas Day, 1814, Marsden preached the first Christian sermon in New Zealand, beginning a successful mission that saw him make a total of seven voyages to that

¹³³ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p.73

¹³⁴ George Caley to Joseph Banks, 20 January, 1807 in J. E. B. Currey (Ed.). *Reflections on the Colony of New South Wales, by George Caley*. Melbourne. Lansdowne. 1966. p. 127.

country. Having produced eight children, five girls and three boys, two of whom died in infancy in tragic circumstances, Marsden's beloved 'Betsy', after suffering a debilitating stroke in 1811, died in October, 1835. Marsden himself died in the Rectory at Windsor on 12 May, 1838.

Through his long ministry in the colony the society to which Marsden came and preached went through significant changes. The sermons show that on occasion Marsden was addressing convicts. 'Many of you have formed unlawful communions with the most abandoned of the human race. For these you toil and sweat. For these you rob and plunder ...' (Sermon 7:23). On other occasions a more genteel audience is evident. The colonial context is evident in Marsden's sermons and is addressed in the relevant sections following.

Marsden was an evangelical churchman at heart, a product of the evangelical milieu. Evangelicalism not only shaped his character and the decisions he made in ministry. Marsden took a deep and personal interest in the evangelical movement around the world. In particular his interest in, support of, and involvement with the Baptist Missionary Society, the London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society is evidenced not only by his personal involvement with the latter two but also in his own preaching.¹³⁵ His sermons show he was focused on the progress of the gospel manifesting a zeal which contradicts the impressions others were developing about his ministry and the motives they were imputing to him.

Amongst his many friends and mentors the influence of the Rev Charles Simeon, fellow of King's College and Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Cambridge, upon Marsden is second to none and cannot be overestimated. This influence shaped Marsden's character as an evangelical and formed him to be entirely dependent on Simeon's preaching style. This

¹³⁵ As already noted in the Introduction and to be dealt with in detail later in Chapter Five, Sermon 34 shows Marsden's zeal for the work of these evangelical missionary societies in all parts of the world.

dependence led to a major criticism of Marsden, adding weight to the controversy that he was more interested in temporal affairs than his ministry as chaplain.¹³⁶ Marsden and Simeon became intimate friends and established and maintained a correspondence throughout their lives.¹³⁷ Simeon accompanied Marsden on both his departures from England, the first in 1793 when he travelled with him through the Isle of Wight and the second in 1809 when they parted company in Marsden's cabin at the last minute as the pilot was leaving the ship.¹³⁸ Described by Simeon's biographer as an 'intimate friend',¹³⁹ Marsden's preaching was entirely shaped by Simeon. Where Yarwood believes that the inspiration for Marsden's sermon following the death of Ellis Bent (discussed at length in Chapter Six) came from the Rev Peter Peckard, master of Magdalene at the time of Marsden's residence, it is clear that Marsden has used Simeon's outline for this sermon.¹⁴⁰ While Simeon was by far the most influential mentor in Marsden's life and ministry, there are others who had a significant influence. Before the extent of Simeon's influence is discussed in detail, we will examine the

¹³⁶ Walter Lawry's criticism of Marsden's total dependence on Simeon's outlines has been noted in the Introduction and will be discussed more fully later in this chapter. The criticism adds weight to the comment from Governor Brisbane that Marsden neglected his pastoral duties as a clergyman to spend more time in his money making endeavours.

¹³⁷ The Simeon Archives in Ridley Hall, Cambridge hold three letters, two from Marsden to Simeon, 9 July 1792 and 26 April 1794, and one from Simeon to Marsden, 10 November 1835. In this last letter Simeon mentions previous correspondence between the pair that is not in the archives. Marsden entered Magdalene College in Cambridge in Michaelmas Term, 1790 and left before completing his degree in 1793 to take up the appointment as second chaplain to the colony of New South Wales.

¹³⁸ Simeon Archives. Letter from Simeon to Marsden 10 November 1835.

¹³⁹ W. Carus (Ed.) *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. Charles Simeon*. London 1847. p. 81.

¹⁴⁰ Yarwood *Great Survivor*. p.16. Yarwood has also mistakenly said that it was Peckard who 'rapidly transformed [Magdalene] into Cambridge's Evangelical centre.' Peckard was not an evangelical and came to Magdalene with a reputation for heresy having expressed his disbelief in the doctrines of the Trinity and Original Sin. In his article on Marsden in the Blackwell *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography* Vol. II. pp. 742-743, Yarwood does seem to rightly attribute the evangelical milieu of Magdalene to Hey, Farish and Jowett. See below for the details of these three men who set Magdalene on its evangelical trajectory.

influence of others on Marsden particularly as that influence impacted on his preaching style and the content of his sermons.

Influence of the Rev Samuel Stones

In 1787 Marsden became an Elland Clerical Society probationer and began training for ministry in the Church of England. The aim of the Society was to increase the ‘numbers of pious clergy’, as Simeon described it,¹⁴¹ meaning those of an evangelical persuasion. A further aim of the Society was to provide for those of promise who otherwise could not afford an education. It was in October of 1787, at the age of twenty one, that Marsden began his formal studies under the tutelage of the Rev. Samuel Stones, the Curate of Rawdon Chapel and a member of the Elland Society. The Methodist preacher, John Wesley, described Stones in his journal as ‘a truly pious and active man’.¹⁴² Marsden may well have garnered these qualities from Stones, being noted later in his life as a man of great activity and energy even if accounted by some as not so pious.¹⁴³ It is likely also that Marsden met John Wesley at this time when he preached at Rawdon in May 1788 adding to the influence in his life of many men of significance in evangelical circles and helping to develop a vision of how a society could change through the faithful preaching of the gospel. As an Elland student Marsden was not only given a formal education to prepare him for evangelical ministry but was also brought into the influential circles of a number of prominent Church of England Evangelicals. Marsden became a lifelong correspondent with a number of these men. Amongst them were William Wilberforce and the Rev Miles Atkinson. Simeon at this stage does not seem to have had association with the Elland Society, appearing for the first time in its books as a contributor sometime after 1793. It is difficult to determine what influence Stones may have

¹⁴¹ Letter from Simeon to the Rev. T. Thomason, 7 July, 1820. Simeon, *Memoirs*. p. 314.

¹⁴² *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 4, pp. 416-417.

¹⁴³ Bill Wannan, *Early Colonial Scandals : The Turbulent Times of Samuel Marsden*. Melbourne: Lansdowne, 1972. p.178. As noted earlier, Wannan regarded Marsden as not being a religious man.

had over Marsden's preaching. There are no sermons of Stones to compare and no biographer or other commentator makes reference to his preaching content or style. There are also no references in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* nor in the *Blackwell Dictionary of Evangelical Biography* for Stones.

Influence of the Rev Joseph Milner

After some time with Stones, Marsden moved to Hull in 1788 where at the Grammar School he came under the influence of the well-respected Rev. Joseph Milner. At a time when evangelicals were debating whether or not a person needed an understanding of the doctrine of justification by faith alone in order to be saved, Milner, 'held the doctrine absolutely necessary to salvation.'¹⁴⁴ This doctrine permeates Marsden's preaching demonstrating that he was clearly a product of the evangelical milieu. According to Milner, 'It is not reasonable ... to suppose a man to have the Spirit of God ... if he have not evidence of it.'¹⁴⁵ This is what Marsden was trying to do in his preaching. He encouraged his hearers to put their faith in God and show evidence of it by not engaging in immorality, Sabbath breaking and blasphemy, all constant themes in his sermons. Two examples will suffice to show that Marsden faithfully followed this evangelical inheritance. In Sermon 6:4 Marsden is very clear that it is by the Holy Spirit that a person experiences a 'divine change'. In Sermon 15:7 he declares, 'the Father of mercies remembers we are but dust and bestows upon us his Holy Spirit to help our infirmities.'

Another comparison of Marsden's preaching style, this time with Milner, is helpful here. It is clear that their styles differ significantly. A sermon on Genesis 18:9 will serve as an illustration. A sermon by Milner on this passage is published in his own *Practical*

¹⁴⁴ David Bebbington. *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain. A history from the 1730s to the 1980s*. London. Unwin Hyman, 1989. p. 22.

¹⁴⁵ Joseph Milner. *The Essentials of Christianity Theoretically and Practically Considered*. London. 1855. p. 189.

*Sermons*¹⁴⁶ and there is one by Marsden in the Moore College collection on the same passage.¹⁴⁷ In his sermon, Milner speaks of the faithfulness of Abraham and concentrates on the role of those who are ‘Masters of families’.¹⁴⁸ Marsden, following Simeon’s outline also brings this focus telling his hearers that Abraham ‘eminently excelled in the observance of what may be called family religion.’¹⁴⁹ But where Milner continues on this theme throughout his sermon Marsden brings in the roles of magistrates as ministers of God¹⁵⁰ and uses Abraham as an example of authority, ‘whether it be official, or personal, civil or religious.’ Marsden also speaks at length on the ‘violation of the Sabbath’ which he describes as, ‘a common sin amongst us’ which ‘many imagine ... [to be] a sin of little consequence’ but declares ‘there is no sin with all its attendant evil [that will] ruin men’s souls so much as this.’¹⁵¹ Sabbath breaking, and its attendant consequences, is a constant theme in Marsden’s preaching. Of the 98 sermons in the Moore College collection thirteen have warnings about the issue of Sabbath breaking. Whereas Milner has remained consistent with his theme on the role of Masters of Families, Marsden has allowed his thoughts to drift onto one of his favourite themes, irrespective of the scriptural passage he has been preaching on. While this may be indicative of the pastoral situation Marsden found himself in, as a preacher who has a high regard for the Bible, Milner shows himself to be the one who more faithfully follows an evangelical tradition by constantly applying the biblical text rather than drifting off into a favourite subject.

The Magdalene Influence

As noted above, contrary to Yarwood, the evangelical tone of Magdalene College in Cambridge was set by its President, Samuel Hey, and two of its staff, William Farish and

¹⁴⁶ Joseph Milner *Practical Sermons*. London. Cadell & Davies, 1821. pp. 209-224.

¹⁴⁷ Sermon 63.

¹⁴⁸ Milner, *Practical Sermons*. p.210.

¹⁴⁹ Sermon 63:2

¹⁵⁰ Sermon 63:4

¹⁵¹ Sermon 63:5

Henry Jowett. These three men were Elland Subscribers and continued to have influence over Marsden once he had arrived at Magdalene. In the 1770s the College was in difficult financial circumstances and with an absent Master. The Master in this period, Barton Wallop, died suddenly on 1 September 1781 whereupon, within two weeks, John Griffin, 1st Baron Braybrooke and Hereditary Visitor, informed Hey that he had offered the position of Master to his ‘very old and amiable friend’, the Rev Dr Peter Peckard. Peckard was far from being an evangelical. He was a liberal churchman who was at one time part of ‘a movement to abolish the requirement for the clergy to subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles.’ He also did not believe ‘both the doctrine of the trinity and that of original sin.’¹⁵² It can be imagined that the three Elland Subscribers at Magdalene worked hard at keeping Marsden away from any influence Peckard may have had on him rather than Peckard transforming the College into an evangelical centre and having any sway over Marsden as Yarwood thought. Like Marsden, Hey was a Yorkshireman and had been at Magdalene since he entered there as a student in 1766. He became its President in 1788. Hey ‘was that extraordinary rarity in the Cambridge of King George III, a devout Evangelical’.¹⁵³ He gathered around him men who helped change the character of Magdalene during Wallop’s time. The College developed a reputation of ‘extreme godliness’ and increased scholarship before Marsden arrived in 1790.¹⁵⁴

Comparing Peckard’s sermon on Slavery with Marsden’s sermons confirms that any influence Peckard may have had on Marsden’s preaching was minimal at best. Peckard’s sermon is based on the text of Micah 6:8. Marsden does not have a sermon on this passage in either of the two major collections. Simeon has an outline on the passage of Micah 6:6-8.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Peter Cunich. David Hoyle. Eamon Duffy. Ronald Hyam. *A History of Magdalene College Cambridge 1428 - 1988*. 1994. Cambridge. Magdalene College. pp.182-186.

¹⁵³ Cunich et. al. *A History of Magdalene College*. p. 185.

¹⁵⁴ Cunich et. al. *A History of Magdalene College*. p. 186.

¹⁵⁵ Simeon. *Horae Homileticae*. Vol. 10. pp. 322 – 327. Discourse 1213.

He has entitled this outline ‘The Sum of Practical Religion’ and has subdivided it into the headings of:

1. The inquiries of an awakened soul
2. The answer of God to them

Peckard’s sermon is entitled: ‘Justice and Mercy recommended, particularly with reference to the **SLAVE TRADE**.’ He has also divided his sermon into two parts, ‘First, That God hath shewn us what is Good by the frame and constitution of our nature’ and ‘Secondly, That he hath at sundry times, and in diverse manners, strengthened and assisted these original tendencies of our Nature by various communications of his revealed Will.’ Peckard says on page seventeen of this published sermon, ‘I firmly believe that so far our kind Creator hath, by the very frame and constitution of our nature, shewn to man what is Good.’ With this view, that God has by nature placed in humanity a sense of the Good, Peckard demonstrates ideas that would be regarded by his evangelical colleagues as clear evidence of his heretical views. His argument is that because God has placed within the human mind a sense of what is good, this should then lead us to oppose the slave trade. Opposition to the slave trade would be an example of how to ‘walk humbly with your God.’ This sermon shows transparently that Peckard did not believe in the doctrine of original sin. Simeon on the other hand says,

Now our duty to God is, to ‘*walk with*’ him, as Enoch and Noah did; and to walk ‘*humbly*’ with him in a believing dependence on his grace to help us, and his mercy to pardon our defects. Without this, our attention to relative duties will be of no avail. This chiefly distinguishes the true Christian from a proud self-righteous Pharisee.

In summary, Simeon’s belief is that without a believing dependence on God’s grace and mercy for pardon, any attention to duty is the act of a ‘proud self-righteous Pharisee’. This belief speaks clearly against Peckard’s understanding of why the slave trade should be opposed and places him well outside Simeon’s evangelical understanding of grace and a Christian response to that grace. Far from being, ‘equipped with an impeccable training at ...

Magdalene under ... Peter Peckard', as Yarwood described Richard Johnson,¹⁵⁶ we must conclude that Johnson and Marsden maintained their evangelical allegiance despite Peckard and that Marsden, in particular, owed his evangelical heritage not only to his family background and patronage by the Elland Clerical Society, but more especially to the friendship and influence of the Rev Charles Simeon.

Influence of the Rev Miles Atkinson¹⁵⁷

According to Yarwood, Marsden may well have developed a style which he learnt from another correspondent and Elland associate, the Rev. Miles Atkinson. However, on closer examination Yarwood's assessment can be challenged. Yarwood suggests that none of the Elland subscribers had greater influence on Marsden than Atkinson. In speaking of Marsden's preaching, Yarwood says, 'the content and style of Marsden's religious message bears the clear stamp of the great Leeds preacher.'¹⁵⁸ If this is true it would be expected to become evident when Marsden departs from Simeon's outlines but this is not the case. Of the twenty nine sermons in volume two of Atkinson's *Practical Sermons*¹⁵⁹ there is none on any of the same passages Marsden preached on in either the Moore College collection or the Family papers. These sermons of Atkinson do however exhibit a vague similarity to the structure which Simeon has used in his *Outlines*. In a very similar method to Simeon, Atkinson in *Practical Sermons* generally makes two points which he prepares his hearers for and then

¹⁵⁶ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p. 18.

¹⁵⁷ Atkinson was the Vicar of Kippax, minister of St. Paul's and Lecturer of the Parish Church in Leeds. Marsden sometimes stayed with him during his time as an Elland Probationer and also, with his family, during his return to England between 1807 and 1809. Marsden regularly wrote to Atkinson often seeking advice. After receiving his first grant of land in October 1794, Marsden wrote to Atkinson asking if this was an appropriate course. After putting the question to a meeting of the Elland Society Atkinson wrote back with the meeting's unanimous approval. Atkinson was the Treasurer of the Elland Society.

¹⁵⁸ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p. 10.

¹⁵⁹ Miles Atkinson. *Practical Sermons by the late Rev. Miles Atkinson, A. B., Vicar of Kippax*. Vol. II. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme et.al. London. 1812

proceeds to expand. Whether or not he has learned this from Simeon is impossible to say. It does however alert us to the fact that these evangelical preachers of the time had a specific, similar style in their preaching. While Atkinson repetitively has two points in each of his sermons, Simeon has two or three, each with sub-points. Their sermons are ordered and each point explained and argued and they end with a call for action.

Of further interest in Atkinson's preaching is Sermon Four in *Practical Sermons Vol. II*. It is on the passage, 2 Chronicles 12:7.¹⁶⁰ In it Atkinson considers national calamities and the human response to them in the purposes of God. He says,

public enemies and calamities are the scourges of God, which he makes use of to chastise the nations for their sins: and ... that the only way to escape, when dangers threaten, or to have calamities removed ... is for the people to humble themselves before God, and implore his mercy and deliverance.¹⁶¹

This is of great interest because it was after a sermon Marsden preached on the subject of public calamities, following an outline by Simeon, that Marsden found himself receiving a public rebuke from Governor Macquarie. This will be discussed at length in Chapter Six.

What is noted here is that Atkinson is in agreement with the sentiments Simeon expressed in his outline on the subject. Simeon's outline is on a different Bible passage (2 Chronicles 29:10-11), but the subject of national calamities is the same. Atkinson declares that, 'public calamities are either brought upon nations by the immediate hand of God, as punishments for their sins; or suffered to befall (*sic*) them in the course of his providence.'¹⁶² Simeon in a similar expression says, 'it is by temporal judgments chiefly that he punishes nations.'¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ In this volume the Contents page lists two sermons as 'Sermon III'. The sermon on the Bible passage of 2 Chronicles 12:7 is the second of these.

¹⁶¹ Atkinson. *Practical Sermons*. Vol. 2. p. 43.

¹⁶² Atkinson. *Practical Sermons*. Vol. 2. p. 46.

¹⁶³ Simeon. *Horae Homileticae* Vol. 4. pp. 181 – 185. It is outline number 421 entitled 'The Use of covenanting with God.'

Marsden expresses the idea as, ‘... calamity which is God’s usual method of punishing nations for their iniquities’.¹⁶⁴

It is difficult to agree with Yarwood’s comment that Marsden had a similar style in his preaching to that of Atkinson if he means by that that it was to the exclusion of other mentors. What we can agree on with Yarwood is that Marsden had a similar content to Atkinson when it came to his theological understanding of the world. However, we can likewise say that Marsden’s theological content was also similar to that of Simeon. What we can say with greater accuracy about Marsden’s preaching is that his content and style were very much in the milieu of evangelical preaching of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Marsden at times ended his sermons on a harsh note of judgement. This sets him apart from Atkinson whose sermons often end with promises of blessing such as: ‘and he will give this blessedness to those who have loved his Son the most, and are most like into him.’¹⁶⁵ Marsden, on the other hand, regularly finished his sermons with warnings of the wrath of God: ‘I may venture to answer you in that you will not turn and fear God therefore his wrath will abide upon you forever.’¹⁶⁶ It is therefore hard to agree with Yarwood’s assessment that Marsden’s preaching bore the ‘clear stamp’ of Atkinson. If Marsden’s style follows anyone, it is Simeon. Marsden has used Simeon’s structure and has often copied out parts of Simeon’s outlines word for word. His content, on the other hand, when he applies his teaching to his congregation, while being faithful to an evangelical heritage, seems to be uniquely his own. In addressing local issues, Marsden has often left his congregation a message of judgement and

¹⁶⁴ Marsden Papers. Mitchell Library, Roll Number CY762.

¹⁶⁵ Atkinson. *Practical Sermons* Vol. 2. p. 123.

¹⁶⁶ Marsden. *Sermons*. Sermon 37.

punishment rather than one of grace and hope that Atkinson does.¹⁶⁷ This method illustrates the ‘blinkered visionary’ style of Marsden’s approach. While he had a vision of preaching ‘the everlasting gospel’ to see men and women come to a saving knowledge of Christ, he failed to see the potentially negative impact on his congregation by finishing his sermons with harsh words of judgement.

Influence of the Rev Charles Simeon

Simeon had been appointed by the Bishop of Ely to the Parish of Holy Trinity Cambridge under very difficult circumstances. Before being appointed, the parishioners informed the bishop that they had spoken to Simeon and he had declined the appointment. They informed the bishop that they would be pleased if he appointed the curate to the living. Not liking to be told what to do by the parishioners, the bishop immediately appointed Simeon. This appointment was the beginning of many years of tensions between Simeon and his parishioners. Through it all Simeon’s memoirs show that he constantly worked with the situation, seeking God’s guidance and blessing. When he observed that, because of locked pews in the church only half the number of people as might be expected were able to attend Divine Service, Simeon prayed that God would give them a double blessing. It was his hope that by this double blessing the effects of his ministry would not be diminished because of the fewer number present. It is easy to imagine this attitude to ministry was something that Marsden took on board and shaped his attitude in the face of the hardships and opposition he encountered in his own ministry in the colony. Marsden followed throughout his life the habit that Simeon established of rising at 4 a.m. each day to pray.¹⁶⁸

As noted in the Introduction, in the colony Marsden was criticised by a contemporary, Wesleyan minister the Rev. Walter Lawry. Lawry complained of Marsden,

¹⁶⁷ The details of how Marsden addressed local issues in his preaching are dealt with in Chapter Four.

¹⁶⁸ J. B. Marsden. *Memoirs* p. 73. ‘Mr Marsden rose early, generally at four o’clock during the summer; and the morning hours were spent in his study.’

‘On Sunday he reads the liturgy like a man half asleep, and then uniformly serves up one of Simeon’s skeletons with very little lean flesh about it.’¹⁶⁹ Lawry was referring to Simeon’s skeletons or outlines of sermons which he first published in 1796 as ‘100 Sample Sermons’. Expanding this work and his reputation, Simeon published ‘500 Helps to Composition’ in 1801 and then in 1810 ‘600 Helps to Composition’ and finally in 1819 the 21 volume *Horae Homileticae*. This criticism from Lawry did not diminish his friendship with Marsden. Despite differences over a Sunday School, they remained friends and staunch evangelical allies. The *Sydney Gazette* of 9 August 1826 reported that Marsden preached a sermon taking note of Mrs Lawry’s death where he was so moved by her passing, having known her since infancy, that it was difficult for him to proceed. His sermon text was Job 19:25-27. Simeon has an outline on this passage and Sermon 37 in the Moore College Collection is based on this Simeon outline but, as noted previously, it is clear that Sermon 37 was not the one Marsden preached in remembrance of Mrs Lawry.¹⁷⁰ Perhaps, aware of the Rev Lawry’s criticism, Marsden was sufficiently cognisant of the solemnity of the occasion that he was averse to simply serving up another skeleton. My research has shown that Lawry’s criticism is justified to a certain degree. Marsden has used Simeon’s outlines extensively and somewhat slavishly. In his Introduction to *Horae Homileticae* Simeon speaks of the advice that had been given to young preachers of his day ‘to transcribe printed sermons for a season, till they have attained an ability to compose their own’. He lamented ‘that this advice has been too strictly followed:

¹⁶⁹ Quoted by Wannan. p. 176.

¹⁷⁰ The Lawrys had left Sydney on 18 June 1822 bound for missionary service in Tonga. Due to troubles with the General Wesleyan Missionary Society they returned to England arriving on New Year’s Day 1825. Lawry then stayed in England until his retirement, returning to Parramatta in 1854. He was buried in the Wesleyan Cemetery on 30 March 1859. S. G. Cloughton, ‘Lawry, Walter (1793–1859)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lawry-walter-2337/text3045>, published in hardcopy 1967, accessed online 25 February 2014.

for, when they have once formed this habit, they find it very difficult to relinquish it'.¹⁷¹ No doubt Simeon would have been disappointed that Marsden was not able to break this habit throughout his life. In the Moore College collection of 98 sermons almost three quarters (73 of 98) have used a Simeon outline. In most of these sermons, Marsden has simply copied out the outline word for word for the first few paragraphs. As he goes on, however, he moves more away from the outline and develops his own thinking. Sermon Three in the Moore College collection is typical of how Marsden uses Simeon. The sermon has a total of 3,326 words of which 2,129 are Marsden's own. That is, almost two thirds of the sermon is in Marsden's own words. In some cases the differences with Simeon's outline are very minor. For example in the first paragraph of the sermon Marsden has used the word 'able', Simeon has used 'enabled'. These types of differences may be attributed to preferred language style, but other minor differences in wording indicate a theological difference or at least a preference. For example, where Simeon has spoken about eternal redemption, he uses the word 'us' whereas Marsden has replaced 'us' with the phrase 'all that believe in his name' making it clear he believed eternal redemption was not just for 'us' who happen to be listening to this sermon, but only for those who 'believe'. Marsden did not want his hearers to think that salvation was universally available, so he has made it clear that there is an action required to avail oneself of 'eternal redemption' and that is to 'believe in his name.' These differences are highlighted in the following quotation from Marsden's Sermon 3:6 where he has slavishly followed Simeon's outline but has added his own words which are underlined:

But when we see that he did rise from the dead, and did ascend up into heaven in the presence of his disciples, and did send down the Holy Ghost according to his word of promise to bear testimony concerning him, there is no room left for doubt, but that he actually did give his life a ransom for sinners, and we are perfectly assured that his offering was accepted of the Father, and that by his obedience unto death he

¹⁷¹ Simeon. *Horae Homileticae*. Vol. 1. p. iv.

hath wrought out eternal redemption for [us] all that believe in his name. Hence St. Paul boldly asks who shall condemn us? etc

Another theological difference is Marsden's attitude to attendance at the Lord's Supper.

Simeon had a very high view of the Lord's Supper for it was the compulsory attendance at this Service, when he began as a student at Cambridge, which led to his conversion. In Sermon 74:26 Marsden speaks of attendance at the Lord's Supper:

Many are afraid of coming to the holy sacrament lest they should kindle God's wrath against (*sic*) them (from a consciousness of their own guilt) but they are not afraid of the sin of neglecting this holy ordinance or of committing any other sin, but they are ready to imagine that if they were to receive the sacrament they could not sin with that ease of conscience which they can do whilst they neglect it.

The emphasis Marsden has in the sermon where he says, 'they are not afraid of the sin of neglecting this holy ordinance', is not in Simeon's outline on this passage. Simeon's outline in fact has no mention of the Lord's Supper. Simeon's outline is about access to God 'Through the Atonement' and 'the Intercession of Christ'. He then speaks of the manner in which God should be approached namely through 'a sincere heart', an 'assured faith', and 'a good conscience'. Marsden has faithfully reproduced these points and then expanded on them in his own sermon, but in application has spoken of the neglect of the Lord's Supper and the consequences of such neglect. Marsden has gone beyond what his mentor has said in his outline and has declared that it is a sin to neglect attendance at the Lord's Supper. This is typical of Marsden's sermons which follow a Simeon outline. The second part of Marsden's sermons leave Simeon's outlines behind and make points of application from his own context. Other small differences between Simeon's outlines and Marsden's sermons indicate a different, perhaps higher, piety on Marsden's part. For example, where Simeon has written 'risen saviour' Marsden has amended this to 'risen and exalted saviour' on two occasions in Sermon 3:11 and 3:18. Marsden may be expressing a higher view in theological terms with his use of 'exalted' or it may just have been his own preferred language style. Where Simeon has 'the fullness which ye have in him' Marsden has amended this to 'the blessings ye have in

him' (3:18). Some may think the word 'blessings' is a more 'religious' word than 'fullness' and its use therefore may indicate a higher piety on Marsden's part, or again it may simply be a preferred language style. Certainly, when comparing the two styles, Marsden's appears to be more 'religious' in its sentiment. From page five onwards of Sermon Three most of the work is Marsden's. From the middle of page six to the end, a total of twenty pages, Marsden has completely ignored Simeon's outline. That is, he does not even follow the gist of the outline, but has departed entirely from it and created his own work with his own points of application. This pattern is typical in all the sermons in the Moore College collection where Marsden uses a Simeon outline.

It is also to be noted that Marsden uses the same structure in his sermons that Simeon uses in his outlines. In fact even in sermons where Marsden has not used a Simeon skeleton, he will often use the same familiar structure to the sermon that is typical of Simeon. This shows how indebted Marsden was to his mentor in his preaching and also, as noted above in regard to Atkinson's preaching, how faithfully Marsden followed a style of preaching that was typical of evangelicals of his day. Yet Marsden moves away from Simeon at another significant point of language use. Not only does his language seem to have a more 'religious' tone than Simeon's but also, in a small way, Marsden's sermons show clear evidence of Enlightenment language, where Simeon's outlines do not. It is clear, however, that for Marsden this is only a style of language usage. It does not denote a departure from his evangelical heritage. For example in Sermon 2:11 Marsden says,

He came to give us rational and worthy notions of that Being we are obliged to adore, & is most properly adopted to raise our natures to the greatest improvement they are capable of.

This sermon has not used Simeon's outline on the passage which is Luke 2:10. Sermon 33 is on the same passage from Luke 2:10 and has used Simeon's outline. The words 'rational ... notions' and 'raise our natures to the greatest improvement' are not in Sermon 33 and are

terms Simeon has not used in his outline. This highlights that when he is not sitting under the direct influence of his mentor, copying paragraphs from Simeon, Marsden's language has taken on an Enlightenment hue. It is not a theological change but a change of language which probably indicates the influences which were on Marsden in the colony. The thrust of Sermon Two makes it very clear that despite his Enlightenment language Marsden's theology hasn't changed. As he nears the end of the sermon on the last page he speaks of a standard evangelical belief that a person can only enter heaven by the blood of Jesus. The exhortation is couched in his normal harsh language towards the end of his sermons as he declares:

nothing that is unholy and unclean can enter the kingdom of God.
There are no drunkards there, no unclean persons, no profane persons,
none but such as have washed their robes and made them white in the
blood of the Lamb.¹⁷²

His point is that heaven is achieved, not by 'rational notions' nor by personal improvement, but by the action of having washed in the blood of Jesus which has by God's grace made them white. This is straight up and down evangelical theology. His use of the word 'improvement' throughout his sermons is instructive. In the 98 sermons in the Moore College collection Marsden has used the word 'improvement' in a moral sense hardly at all. The word occurs a total of 23 times and almost always has the meaning of 'improving a subject', that is, expanding or explaining the subject matter. For example:

By way of improvement let us enquire (2:13)

We shall now conclude this subject by way of improvement. (30:22)

We shall conclude with considering what improvement we should
make of this subject. (36:14)

Where Marsden uses the word in a moral sense it is not used to call his hearers to a mere improvement of living. For example, on the right use of the Sabbath, Marsden says that if the

¹⁷² Sermon 2:16

people had used the Sabbath Day aright they themselves would have had a moral improvement to the glory of God:

Have we not also enjoyed many Sabbaths and ordinances in which God hath promised his blessing. These might have been turned to good account for our improvement and the glory of God. (19:4)

In this passage Marsden does not want people to keep the Sabbath so that the colony will become a better place to live with moral, upright citizens, but this 'improvement' of keeping the Sabbath, will be to the glory of God. Here we see Marsden's eschatological focus. His sermons do not make a call to civilisation, or even to an elevation of rational thought as opposed to revelation. In his preaching there is emphasis on the call of the gospel, the account all people will one day give to the Sovereign God as judge of all for everything they have ever done and said. Marsden did not believe that the state of human kind could be improved without the intervention of God. A renewed society would only be achieved when people had experienced a personal renewal in Christ. His sermons include an emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit to change lives. For example in Sermon 33:20 he says, 'if you are his people he will dwell in your hearts. Your bodies will become his temple thru the Holy Ghost.' Again in Sermon 80:14, emphasising that there is no growth or improvement in the human condition without the inner working of God, Marsden says, 'The word must come to us in power & in the Holy Ghost, or it will come in vain, but when applied to us by the Spirit it shall teach us plainly of the Father.' On the subject of whether or not a person can be assured of entrance into heaven Marsden emphasised that even this work is not achieved by improvement of morals or by rational thinking but:

The righteousness of Christ is imputed to every believing soul in order to justification, and the Holy Ghost is sent down from heaven to sanctify his nature and to render him meet for the blessed inheritance. (88:15-16)

Theologically Marsden, being a product of the evangelical movement, followed his mentor and the general evangelical style, closely. Even where his language has taken on an

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Enlightenment hue, Marsden continued to express an evangelical milieu. In Sermon 55:10, however, Marsden, following Simeon's outline expresses a different theology of revelation than that expressed by Simeon. The sermon is on Isaiah 25:6-8. Simeon says in the outline, "It is true, this clear knowledge of divine truth will not be imparted all at once; but it shall gradually increase, till they 'see as they are seen, and know as they are known'." In contrast, Marsden changes this to, 'It is true this knowledge of divine truth will not be imparted unto us all at once. He will teach us as we are able to bear it, and make from time to time fresh revelations to our minds.' Simeon's words are more of the objective truth which will 'gradually increase'. Marsden's words are more subjective, applying the increase of knowledge to a slow growth in the believer who will receive internal 'fresh revelations to our minds'. A more traditional evangelical theology of revelation sees it as the objective work of God where God teaches rather than the believer having 'fresh revelations' made to their minds. This difference is an important one. Simeon focuses on the objective work of God on behalf of his people. Marsden speaks of the subjective, internal work done in the believer. The former emphasises the work of God. The latter emphasises the responsibility the believer has to make changes in their lives. This subjective emphasis is seen constantly in Marsden's preaching where he continually calls upon his hearers to change their behaviour. While there are examples in Marsden's sermons where he is clear that the changes he expects to see in the lives of his listeners will only come about by the workings of the Holy Spirit in their lives, his emphasis here in Sermon 25 on subjective change, shows some inconsistency in his thinking.¹⁷³

¹⁷³ For examples of where Marsden says that change can only come about by the working of the Holy Spirit in a person's life see Sermon 15:7 'the Father of mercies remembers we are but dust and bestows upon us his Holy Spirit to help our infirmities'. 15:22 'the Father of mercies remembers we are but dust and bestows upon us his Holy Spirit to help our infirmities'. 20:5 'if we cheerfully put our hands to the work the Holy Spirit will at all times afford us very effectual succour so that we shall not faint in the day of

When it comes to points of application Marsden tends to be more direct and harsh than Simeon. To be fair, Simeon has written outlines that he expects others to use in their own preaching and therefore, unlike Marsden, he is not speaking into a specific pastoral context. Sermon 70:3 serves as a good example of Marsden's directness. He says,

many glory in their shame or what ought to be their shame. Some live in drunkenness & ludeness (*sic*), others in falsehood & dishonesty, others in pride & envy, and others in malice and revenge and under the influence of every sinful passion. And do not these sins shew that such persons are far from God and strangers to his presence, and his fear is not before their eyes.

In his outline of this passage Simeon has the same litany of sin but he has prefaced it by saying, 'it is not improbable that some live in open sin' whereas Marsden has said, 'It is well know[n] that many in this assembly live in the habitual commission of open and known sins.' (70:2) At this time Marsden's congregations included convicts, soldiers and emancipists, many of whom lived in *de facto* relationships. To Marsden, this was an habitual, open and known sin. The point is that Marsden is not averse to speaking so bluntly and directly to his congregation.

As an Elland pensioner Marsden was part of a movement within the Established Church that was new and radical. While wanting its evangelicalism to invade the Church, at the same time it encouraged voluntaryism. Simeon was at the forefront of this. 'His Evangelicalism predisposed Simeon in favour of the missionary movement, thus he affirmed

trial'. 33:6 'his grace and Holy Spirit would be sufficient to make them conquerors over all their spiritual enemies'. 37:24 'The Holy Spirit is willing to teach you the way to heaven'. 43:10 'This however cannot be done effectively but by the assistance of the Holy Spirit'. 43:15 'God has not left us without hope and without help but he graciously offers us the assistance of his Holy Spirit'. 88:14 'Their natures were sanctified by powerful operations and influences of the Holy Spirit'. 95:4 'we know not how to pray to God aright, unless the Holy Spirit help our infirmities'.

the validity of missionary voluntaryism within the context of the established Church.¹⁷⁴ As long as Charles Grant was associated with the East India Company, Simeon was recommending to him various clergy to become chaplains with the Company. Marsden was one of these, but at the time was considered too young.¹⁷⁵ In New South Wales, despite discouragement from Atkinson, Marsden involved himself with London Missionary Society missionaries and became that Society's agent. He clearly took his lead here from Simeon rather than Atkinson.

Simeon's Influence and Magistracy

Marsden's decision to take up a position as a magistrate may well have been developed in following Simeon's teachings and practice. Michael Gladwin has pointed out, 'Marsden's clerical and intellectual formation coincided precisely with a dramatic expansion of evangelical activism in the social and political spheres.'¹⁷⁶ Simeon was not only actively preparing young men for evangelical ministry, but also, as a university fellow, was in a position to exercise authority over disorderly behaviour of students and townsmen. In his memoirs Simeon declared that he saw it his duty to be firm over disorderly behaviour.¹⁷⁷ Simeon did not promote the idea of clergy taking a role as a magistrate, but his writings are filled with ideas of the importance of civil order and the role of the magistrate in this. Simeon believed that the magistrate's role was to ensure civil order and for this the magistrate held an appointment from God. Marsden followed this line of reasoning. In Sermon 63:3-4 Marsden declared:

¹⁷⁴ John C Bennett. 'Charles Simeon and the Evangelical Anglican Missionary Movement: A Study of Voluntaryism and Church-Mission Tensions'. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Edinburgh, 12 June 1992.

¹⁷⁵ Letter from Grant to Simeon, 17 March 1791. Ridley Hall Archives, *Simeon Papers*.

¹⁷⁶ Michael Gladwin. 'Marsden's generals: Metropolitan Roots of Marsden's Mission.' in Bolt & Pettett *Launching Marsden's Mission* p. 15

¹⁷⁷ Carus. *Memoirs*. pp. 89-93

The power that is given us, of whatever kind it be is bestowed for this end, and to God alone we are responsible for the use of it. Magistrates are invested with it by him and are therefore called his ministers

Had Marsden had a greater understanding of the effect his activity as a magistrate was having on the people's understanding of his role as a minister of the gospel, he may well have modified his position. As the 'blinkered visionary' Marsden may well have had a vision of the good he could do for the good ordering of society as a magistrate, but he was blinded to the negative impact his reputation as a harsh magistrate was having on himself as a minister of the gospel. The origins of the epithet, 'Flogging Parson', are obscure. Janice White, after noting that 'the Evangelical clergy of early New South Wales have not fared well at the hands of posterity', goes on to say that Australian historians, 'led by Ellis, Ward, and Manning Clark, have tended to accept criticisms of Marsden from his contemporaries at face value, and to ignore the more positive assessments that are also extant'.¹⁷⁸ In particular, White notes that the appellation 'the flogging parson' was first coined by Ward as late as 1962, although it was said of Marsden by his contemporaries that, 'He sentences the prisoner on Saturday, admonishes him from the pulpit on Sunday, and flogs him on Monday.'¹⁷⁹ Following his mentor's understanding of the role of a magistrate Marsden could not have imagined that his harshness as a magistrate would have such a detrimental effect on the reception of the gospel.

Simeon and Marsden agree that magistrates are invested with power from God. In the Moore College collection there are seven sermons in which Marsden speaks of the role of magistrates. In each of these he speaks of the duty of members of a civilised society, under God, to obey magistrates. Christians are to be kept in mind that they are to 'be subject to

¹⁷⁸ Janice K. White, 'A Master and his Men: A Different Perspective on the Reverend Samuel Marsden in New South Wales from 1794 to 1851.' Unpublished Master's thesis, University of New England, 1994. pp. vi and 13

¹⁷⁹ This saying is attributed to the early 1800s and probably follows the flogging of Paddy Galvin, an Irish convict sentenced by Marsden and Richard Atkins to daily flogging until he gave up the hiding place of weapons he was alleged to have hidden.

principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates’. In words that give some insight into how Marsden may have justified his own harshness as a magistrate he says, ‘The office of magistrates is to do all in their power for the suppression of iniquity.’¹⁸⁰ As much as these words may be a self-justification, Marsden believed that the work of a magistrate was God’s work for the good ordering of society. In Sermon 27:1 he speaks of the Apostle Paul’s address to Christians at Rome where:

He points out to them several both social and relative duties, enjoins upon them a peaceable and quiet subjection to earthly governors as God’s ministers appointed to protect the lives and properties of subjects and to punish those who dare invade the rights of civil society. Therefore says the apostle the civil magistrate is a minister to the[m] for good, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

In speaking of the formation of Israel under Moses Marsden points out how God also commanded the appointment of judges and makes the statement, ‘The institution of magistrates and judges is a necessary part of every well-ordered government.’¹⁸¹ Simeon’s concern in his outline on this passage of scripture is to do with the fallout from the French Revolution. He declares,

We have witnessed the destruction of all constituted authorities, and the utter annihilation of all established laws. We have beheld licentiousness stalking with the cap of liberty, and ferocious despotism, under the name of equality, spreading desolation with an indiscriminating hand [Note: At the time of the French Revolution.]. But, blessed be God, it is not thus with Britain: I pray God it never may be.¹⁸²

This is a telling description that in Simeon’s view, licentiousness, liberty, despotism and equality have destroyed ‘all constituted authorities’. This is a view notable amongst a number of English evangelicals of the time. It speaks of a belief that God has ordained a clearly

¹⁸⁰ Sermon 23:1, 2 & 4.

¹⁸¹ Sermon 56:4.

¹⁸² Simeon. *Horae Homileticae*. Vol. 3. Outline 283. p. 113. The words in square brackets are in the original.

hierarchical society where there are those in authority and those who obey and where there is no such thing as liberty and equality. While Marsden does not take up any reference to the French Revolution in his sermon, he does emphasise the due ordering of society as an ordinance of God. He declares that, ‘The same Apostle writing to the Romans he exhorts them to be subject to the powers that be in authority, for there is no power but of God, for the powers that be are ordained of God.’¹⁸³ These words may go some way to explaining Marsden’s exclusivist views in the colony.

Conclusions

The great affection with which Marsden held Simeon, over and above other significant mentors and patrons, is evidenced by the fact that Marsden named his first born son Charles Simeon. Following Charles’ tragic death at age three in August 1801, having been thrown from a chase in front of the family home, Marsden named his third son, born after his older sibling’s death, also Charles Simeon. That he did not name any of his other six children after any of his mentors is strong evidence of the major influence Simeon held in Marsden’s life.¹⁸⁴ It is also apparent that Marsden named an aboriginal man who worked for him on the Mamre property at South Creek, Simeon.¹⁸⁵ Marsden came under the influence of many prominent evangelicals, but none more so than the Rev Charles Simeon of Cambridge.

¹⁸³ Sermon 56:4.

¹⁸⁴ Five of Marsden’s eight children were female. This means that in reality there was not much opportunity to name other children after his other significant mentors who were Wilberforce, Atkinson and Hey. Marsden’s second son was named John. He also died in tragic circumstances aged less than two years. With such a common name it is impossible to know if this boy was also named after a person of influence in Marsden’s life, though the Rev John Newton was one such person.

¹⁸⁵ James Backhouse. ‘Account of a Journey from Parramatta Across the Blue Mountains to Wellington, 1835.’ reproduced in George Mackaness. *Fourteen Journeys Over the Blue Mountains of New South Wales 1813-1841*. Sydney. Horwitz and Grahame. 1965. p. 200.

By understanding the extent to which Marsden has used Simeon's outlines in his own sermons we have learned something more of Marsden's character. His determined use of Simeon's outlines shows his commitment to evangelical theology and his vision, typical of evangelicals, that faithful peaching of the scriptures would see men and women won for Christ. Marsden, however, unlike his mentor and other evangelical preachers who had influence in his life, tends to exhibit a harsh note in his preaching, failing to understand how this would not leave his hearers encouraged to follow Christ. It may well be that because of the realities of ministering in a harsh penal colony and being one of those administering harsh judgements, Marsden became blinkered to the positive impact a message of grace would have on the people he so wanted to see converted.

Chapter Three

The Sermons - Background, Morphology, Themes and Comparisons

Introduction

As noted previously, misunderstandings of Marsden's character have been made because of a lack of interaction with what he said in his preaching. This chapter highlights that in his preaching Marsden was very clear on the nature of and differences between his roles as chaplain and magistrate. He did not see the role of magistrate as one to augment a supposed lack of power and influence as a preacher. The two roles have very different purposes and seek to achieve different ends. Marsden was clear on these differences and, while his role as a magistrate caused controversy, the sermons show him to hold the tension with complete integrity of character.

Marsden was criticised for his wealth. The sermons show that his attitude to wealth was to see it simply as God's blessing and nothing more. It is not a vindication, nor a reward for hard work. Marsden preached that those who have been thus blessed by God should use their wealth for the cause of spreading the gospel and for the relief of the poor and for those in need.

In January 1817 Marsden was criticised in the *Sydney Gazette* for being involved in the South Seas mission for the supposed wealth he might gain from trade. It was considered that the evangelisation of the peoples of those islands was a ruse. Along with this criticism the *Gazette* also complained of the neglect of the more ready mission field among the Aboriginal people of the colony.¹⁸⁶ The sermons show Marsden's integrity of character, rising above such controversy, by declaring that the Aboriginal people are more responsive to the gospel than the Europeans of the colony.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ This particular incident is discussed more fully in Chapter Four under the sub-heading 'The Natives of this Colony'.

¹⁸⁷ See Sermon 81:10, also discussed in Chapter Four in 'The Natives of this Colony'.

Evangelical Tradition

While on board ship ready to set out to the colony of New South Wales in 1793 Marsden remarked in his journal that he was about to quit his homeland in order to preach the everlasting gospel. He expressed the desire that, ‘the end of my going may be answered in the Conversion of many poor Souls’.¹⁸⁸ He also carried with him the hopes and expectations of key evangelicals that he would share with the Rev Richard Johnson the title of Apostle to the South Seas.¹⁸⁹ The banker, parliamentarian and Clapham Sect member, Henry Thornton, wrote to Henry Venn about his hope that Johnson’s appointment to the chaplaincy in New South Wales would be the beginning of the gospel being preached to the people of that part of the world. He said,

Through the influence of Mr. Wilberforce with Mr. Pitt, he (Richard Johnson) is appointed Chaplain to Botany Bay... With what pleasure may we consider this plan of peopling that far distant region, and other openings connected with the Heathen, as a foundation for the Gospel of our God and Saviour to be preached unto them¹⁹⁰

These evangelical expectations of the conversion of lost souls and of an apostolic ministry to the South Seas were different expectations to those expressed by government authorities. Governor Phillip expected both Johnson and Marsden to preach on moral subjects.¹⁹¹ In the Moore College collection of sermons Marsden counters the expectation that he would simply preach on moral subjects when he says in Sermon 93:12, ‘It is not to preach a scanty morality that we are called, but to publish the glad tidings of a free and full salvation to a lost world’. It

¹⁸⁸ Samuel Marsden, *Diary – 1793-1794*. Mitchell Library, C245. Entry dated 27 July, 1793.

¹⁸⁹ John Newton, Letter to the Rev Richard Johnson 24 May 1793. NSWHR Vol. 2. p. 27.

¹⁹⁰ H. Venn and J. Venn. *The life and a selection from the letters of Henry Venn*. London: Hatchard. 1834. pp. 439-440.

¹⁹¹ Our knowledge of this expectation by Governor Phillip comes from two letters from the Rev John Newton to Richard Johnson. The only extant copies of these letters are those published by James Bonwick in *Australia’s First Preacher*. 1898. pp. 63-64, 67. The first of Newton’s letters is dated 13 May 1787. The second is 24 June 1789. I am indebted to Craig Schwartz for this information.

appears that Marsden was not alone amongst his fellow clergy. In ‘Anglican Sermons in Colonial Australia’ Joanna Cruickshank observes that the ‘clergy were far more than just agents of the colonial and imperial state.’¹⁹² Drawing on Cruickshank’s work, Michael Gladwin suggests that this shows ‘the need to revise received views of the clergy.’¹⁹³ A reading of Marsden’s sermons indicates that he would be in full agreement with this twenty first century assessment and perhaps even go beyond it by saying that he would not have thought he was an agent of the State in any sense, except in his role as magistrate. Marsden clearly differentiated his roles as clergyman and magistrate and what can be said about him in one sphere cannot be simplistically applied to him in the other.¹⁹⁴ As chaplain, Marsden would have believed himself to be first and foremost an agent of God. As noted earlier, he came to New South Wales with a purpose to ‘preach the everlasting gospel’ and to see the ‘conversion of many poor souls.’ This follows the distinctive style of preaching the evangelicals had developed by the time Marsden arrived in the colony. It was, in essence, evangelistic and textual rather than moralistic or exegetical. Since the Evangelical Revival of the 1740s evangelical preaching was not primarily moralistic, but evangelistic, that is, concerned with the preaching of the gospel.

As noted above the content of Marsden’s sermons could lead the casual observer to conclude that he did confine himself mostly to preaching on moral subjects. His common themes include the moral behaviour of the colonists. He often preached against drunkenness, whoring, the use of foul language and Sabbath breaking. Yet a closer examination of the sermons shows that Marsden’s preaching exhibited a feature common to contemporary

¹⁹² Joanna Cruickshank, ‘Anglican Sermons in Colonial Australia’, paper delivered at the Anglican Historical Society conference, Trinity College, University of Melbourne, 17–18 Sep. 2010. p.50.

¹⁹³ Gladwin. *Thesis* p. 41.

¹⁹⁴ This differentiation of roles is discussed later in this Chapter and in Chapter Four under the sub-heading: *On Magistrates and the rule of law*

sermons which were textual. They were not expository nor topical. Marsden's concerns were that moral lapses were indicative of a deeper spiritual problem. For example in Sermon 33:16 on the text Luke 2:10-11 he warns those who indulge in too much drinking that their eternal salvation is at risk, 'There are many drunkards amongst us both men and women. Every such character is in danger of eternal death every moment.' In railing against immoral behaviour Marsden called upon his congregations to repentance before a holy God. In Sermon 4:3 on the text Psalm 9:17 he says, 'many of us have lived in the open and avowed violation of his laws. In Sabbath breaking, in profanation of God's name, in theft, in adultery, in drunkenness and every vice that would render us obnoxious to an holy God.' His concern was their relationship with God. Marsden believed that if his congregation were to get their relationship with God right then their behaviour would change. Rather than preaching a 'scanty morality' for the improvement of colonial life, Marsden was calling his hearers to know God using as his starting point a text of Scripture. In refusing to preach a scanty morality, but seeking to proclaim a deeper spirituality, Marsden followed his mentor's attitude to what a sermon should be. In his sermon outline number 965 'The Means and Evidence of Conversion' on Isaiah 52:15 Simeon advocates preaching the 'mysteries of the gospel' as opposed to morality because it is this that converts 'the vulgar and the cultivated'. He writes, 'To preach morals because it speaks to what men understand, is to be wiser than God.'¹⁹⁵ While we do not have a copy of any sermon Marsden may have preached on this scripture passage, it is clear that he followed Simeon's ideas about the necessary focus of preaching.

In the evangelical world of late eighteenth century Britain the idea of overseas evangelism had not yet fully formed. It was, never the less, the desire of key evangelical figures to see the gospel taken to the far flung corners of the Empire. And so it was with the forceful involvement of evangelicals like Wilberforce that the First Fleet sailed to Botany Bay

¹⁹⁵ Simeon. *Horae Homileticae*. Outline 965.

with a chaplain. The Rev Charles Simeon, Marsden's mentor, was also active in recommending young evangelical clergy as chaplains to the East India Company. He suggested Marsden's name to the Company late 1790 or early 1791 shortly after Marsden had arrived at Magdalene College in Cambridge. The Archbishop of Canterbury thought Marsden too young for this appointment, and so we see Simeon two years later again recommending Marsden for a missionary appointment. This time it was for the position as second chaplain to New South Wales after unsuccessful appointments of two others before him, as noted previously.

Colonial Context

As noted above, Marsden did not see himself as a preacher of morals, contrary to what the authorities wanted him to be. He saw himself rather as a preacher of the eternal gospel by which he was seeking to establish a people with an eschatological focus, a people who looked more to eternity rather than to any benefits or improvements of life they might gain in the contemporary world. It is clear from his sermons that Marsden saw the primary role of a minister was 'to preach the gospel of Christ'¹⁹⁶. His sermons show Marsden did this with passion, conviction and determination to save souls from hell. Contrary to some opinion, Marsden did not see his role as a magistrate and the use of corporal punishment as an alternate method of saving souls. For example, Yarwood has misconstrued Marsden's understanding of his roles when he says that Marsden's acceptance of the role of Magistrate was a 'disastrously misguided attempt, to supplement his tiny authority as a man of God with the more immediately reliable sanctions of the state'.¹⁹⁷ We may agree with Yarwood that the consequences for Marsden's reputation in accepting the role of magistrate were disastrous, but Yarwood has missed the point when he implies that Marsden's motive was to gain more

¹⁹⁶ Sermon 23:1

¹⁹⁷ A. T. Yarwood, "The Missionary Marsden: An Australian View," *New Zealand Journal of History* 4, no. 1 (1970), p. 31.

authority.¹⁹⁸ We have seen in the previous chapter how Marsden's understanding of the role of a magistrate may well have come directly from his mentor and intimate friend, the Rev Charles Simeon. Contrary to Yarwood's understanding, in Sermon 45:7 Marsden says, 'It is the force of persuasion we are to use [for the conversion of souls], not the force of penal statutes. Such compulsion as that is as abhorrent from reason as it is from religion.' Further to this, Marsden did not think that he had a 'tiny authority as a man of God' as Yarwood has put it. Marsden believed it was his duty only to preach the gospel and that it was God's work to convert people. Marsden saw his 'success' was in being a faithful preacher rather than a more tangible count of the number of people converted. In Sermon 62:7-8 he has said:

However fruitless the labors of God's ministers may appear to be, they are never to give up any for lost, as long as there is a possibility of their being found, but to seek after them constantly and diligently. May we not well say with respect to all here present, what could I have done more for you, than I have done?

The duty of God's ministers is 'never to give up'. Marsden believed that he succeeded in that goal and asks his congregation the question, 'what more could I have done for you?' He also expresses God's role in the conversion of people in Sermon 95:4 for example where he says, 'We have no will to approach unto him unless the Holy Spirit incline our hearts.' Marsden saw his role as preacher quite distinct and separate from his role as magistrate. The two roles were to achieve very different ends. As a preacher Marsden wanted to see his ministry alongside the work of the Holy Spirit to convert people to Christ. As a magistrate he saw his role as bringing law and order to bear in the temporal context of a penal colony. Marsden saw no cross over in these two. He declares that 'Christian forgiveness does not interfere with

¹⁹⁸ Gladwin notes that this misunderstanding of how clergy in general perceived their role is common among historians. 'On the whole, however, the clergy's activities, sermons and writings on public worship suggest priorities that subordinate government and assert godly and clerical authority.' Gladwin. *Thesis*. p. 178.

human laws.’¹⁹⁹ He believed that magistrates were to administer the laws of society being unaffected by ideas of Christian forgiveness. Yarwood and others make the mistake of judging that Marsden was trying to achieve the same ends in these two different roles. We can agree with Yarwood when he says Marsden had an ‘almost pathological detestation of crime and sin’.²⁰⁰ We can see this in his preaching and in his judgements as a magistrate, but we cannot agree that Marsden believed he would achieve the same outcomes as a preacher and as a magistrate.

Equally incorrect is the view expressed by Grace Karskens that, with little apparent success in his preaching, Marsden ‘threw himself instead into farming, stock raising and the study of the nature and soil of the colony.’²⁰¹ Marsden had complained in a letter to Mrs. Stokes that he did ‘not know one person who wants the great physician of the soul’.²⁰² Karskens then concludes that ‘Marsden found farming more interesting than preaching’.²⁰³ With greater familiarity with what Marsden said in his sermons, Yarwood, Karskens and other critics may have better understood his priorities and have seen his passion for the spiritual wellbeing of his hearers.

From the beginning of his ministry in New South Wales Marsden’s constant refrain was against the immorality of the colonists. At first glance this may seem contrary to his stated claim that he had not come to preach a ‘scanty morality’. Instead Marsden’s railing against the immorality he observed in the colony is quite consistent with this stated purpose. The emphasis is on the word ‘scanty’. Marsden believed that the lack of moral behaviour in

¹⁹⁹ Sermon 89:4

²⁰⁰ Yarwood. ‘The Missionary Marsden’ p. 31.

²⁰¹ Karskens. *The Colony*. p.140.

²⁰² Letter to Mrs Stokes. 26 October, 1795. In George Mackaness. ‘Some Private Correspondence of the Marsden Family (1794-1824)’, the *Royal Australian Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 23, part 6, 1937. p.13.

²⁰³ Karskens. *The Colony*. p.140.

the colony was indicative of a deeper spiritual problem. And so in addressing moral issues he endeavoured to encourage his listeners to examine their spiritual state. His first sermon in the colony was on the subject of Sabbath breaking.²⁰⁴ While this sermon is not available to us, comments by Marsden in other sermons on the ‘evils of Sabbath breaking’ show that his concern for his congregation was their spiritual welfare. He wanted them to be in the House of the Lord on Sundays and not rolling drunk in the streets. His sermons are full of denunciations against drunkenness and immorality. In Sermon Four in the Moore College Collection Marsden states on page three:

many of us have lived in the open and avowed violation of his laws. In Sabbath breaking, in profanation of God’s name, in theft, in adultery, in drunkenness and every vice

The phrasing of these words, which is typical, shows that Marsden has a pastoral concern for the people he is speaking to. He does not harangue them, but uses inclusive language. The preacher identifies with his people and speaks in the first person plural.

While Marsden desired to raise the standard of moral behaviour in the colony, his roles as preacher on the one hand and magistrate on the other had two distinct and separate purposes. As a preacher he desired to see people fit for heaven and evidence of this would be seen in a moral life. It is noted above that he believed the use of corporal punishment to persuade people of the truth of the gospel was abhorrent. The role of the sermon was to persuade people to change and be made fit for heaven. This change would be seen when the Holy Spirit applied the words of the preacher to the heart of the hearer. The role of the magistrate was to see good order and government established in the colony. In the Moore College Collection in Sermon 23 Marsden puts these two offices side by side. On page 1 he

²⁰⁴ This is noted by John Buxton Marsden and James Drummond, *Life and Work of Samuel Marsden*. Christchurch, N.Z. ; London: Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1913. p.10: ‘His first Sunday in Australia is thus described ... I spoke, and warned them of the evil of Sabbath-breaking. ... I spoke from the sixth chapter of Revelation ...

says, 'The office of ministers is to preach the gospel of Christ.' And on page 4, 'The office of magistrates is to do all in their power for the suppression of iniquity.' And yet while these are two distinct offices, it is also the role of the preacher, in proclaiming the duties of gospel obedience, not to pass by the duties, 'which pertain to us as members of civil communion'.
(23:3)

If success is to be judged in terms of numbers of people changing their life styles, Marsden had great difficulty in communicating his gospel message.²⁰⁵ His intentions have sometimes been misunderstood by contemporaries and historians alike. Not the least example of such misunderstanding was the fallout from the sermon he preached in 1815 following the death of the Judge Advocate, Ellis Bent. Governor Macquarie took great exception to this sermon and gave Marsden a public dressing down for it. This sermon is dealt with in detail in Chapter Six.

Marsden's Themes

According to J. B. Marsden Marsden's 'love of the country and of rural scenes gave a strong colouring to his preaching ... Through life his choicest topics in the pulpit had been the patriarchs, their lives and characters;'²⁰⁶ It is hard to know exactly what J. B. Marsden means by the first part of this quotation. Marsden does not speak of 'the country' meaning rural settings in any of the extant sermons. There is just one or possibly two exceptions to this. A clear reference to a rural setting is in Sermon 47:5 where Marsden has written 'country shepherds'. He has, however, crossed out these words and replaced them with, 'poor

²⁰⁵ On the subject of numbers responding to Marsden's message, an account by a member of the 'Society of Friends', James Backhouse, as he travelled through NSW with George Washington Walker in 1835 notes that 'The Episcopal congregation, at Parramatta, is attended by from 500 to 600 persons' on Sunday mornings. Backhouse also notes that this number included 'military and prisoners' who had 'no choice in regard to being present'. See Mackaness, *Fourteen Journeys* p. 198. Despite some compulsory attendance it seems that Marsden had some success in terms of numbers late in his ministry.

²⁰⁶ J. B. Marsden *Memoirs*. p. 262.

shepherds'. The other possible reference is to Jesus retiring, 'to the country near Tyre & Sidon'. The meaning though is more of 'region' than any scenes of idyllic rural life. In the Moore College Sermons the word 'country' is used 31 times. More often than not the meaning is that of 'nation'. At other times it is a reference to heaven where Marsden uses the phrase, 'a better country'. For example Sermon 3:20 the expression is a clear reference to heaven where Marsden says:

Convince the world around you that you are seeking after a better country etc. and cultivate that blessed disposition which our Lord exemplified so strongly, both in life and death, viz. love your enemies etc.

Twice the word 'country' is a reference to Hell. For example, Sermon 14:18: 'friends have been cut of (*sic*) by death and gone to that country from whence none return.' In the Collection there are nine references to 'farm' or 'farmer'. These are all in Marsden's 'Soil Notes' where they might be expected. In the light of J. B. Marsden's comment that Marsden's sermons had a colouring of rural scenes the juxtaposition of 'cultivate' and 'country' in Sermon 3:20 above, is interesting but it is a long way from a claim that love of 'rural scenes gave a strong colouring to his preaching'.

J. B. Marsden's claim that Marsden's 'choicest topics' were the patriarchs has a little more weight to it. There are only eight occurrences of the word 'patriarch' itself in the Moore College Collection. These 98 sermons have a total of over 280,000 words. Eight words out of 280,000 is a miniscule amount and as such the use of the word could hardly be described as indicative of a 'favourite' topic. In his preaching Marsden's definition of a 'patriarch' is a little broader than the Old Testament patriarchs and includes some figures from the New Testament as well. For example 'good old Simeon' who 'waited for the consolation of Israel'²⁰⁷ is described by Marsden as 'the old Patriarch'.²⁰⁸ On the eight

²⁰⁷ Sermon 2:4 (Luke 2:25)

occasions Marsden does use the word ‘patriarch’ it is used almost in passing. For example: ‘This too is of great antiquity and must be traced up thro prophets & patriarchs to the days of righteous Abel.’²⁰⁹ There is no detailed examination of the patriarchs in the sermons and based on Marsden’s use of this word alone it could not be reasonably assumed that this was one of his ‘choicest topics’. When it comes to the names of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, however, we can tend to agree with J. B. Marsden’s assessment.

Patriarchs

The word ‘Abraham’ occurs 113 times in 33 of the sermons in the Moore College Collection. ‘Isaac’ occurs 51 times and ‘Jacob’ 74 times. The combination of the three patriarchs, ‘Abraham, Isaac & Jacob’ occurs ten times. On the topic of Abraham being one of Marsden’s choicest topics, Sermon Three provides a very good example. The sermon is on Psalm 118:27-28 and uses Simeon’s outline. As mentioned earlier, one third of this sermon has been copied by Marsden directly from the outline. Where Simeon introduces Abraham as an example, Marsden fills out the example in detail (Marsden’s words are underlined):

The example of Abraham may assist us in this particular the offering of his son was a dark dispensation. His only son Isaac in whom all the promises of the messiah rested. Abraham walked by faith and not by sight when he hastened to obey the divine mandate. It was a great trial to him. God did tempt Abraham but he was strong in faith giving glory to God. Abraham we are told took his son Isaac and bound him and laid him upon the altar to slay him. When God arrested his arm and forbad him to inflict the fatal wound, a light beamed in upon his soul. He beheld a risen saviour presented unto him under the image of his restored son. Abraham saw my day and was glad said our Lord. Abraham turned and instantly saw a ram caught in a thicket, and immediately offered him up for a burnt offering instead of his son.²¹⁰

As Marsden has described Abraham’s character and behaviour in this passage it is easy to imagine that he took this as an example for his own life. He is certainly holding up the

²⁰⁸ Sermon 77:12

²⁰⁹ Sermon 29:5-6.

²¹⁰ Sermon 3:10-11. The wording of the last sentence also differs slightly from Simeon’s words.

example of Abraham to his congregation as a life of faith and obedience to follow. In summary Marsden's message is that Abraham walked by faith; this was a great trial to him but he was strong in faith and gave glory to God. These are words any preacher would hope that those listening would take to heart and live by.

When Marsden describes the lives of the patriarchs not only could we imagine that he took them for an example for himself to live by, but it is also easy to see that he may have been taking personal comfort from their examples. Further on in Sermon Three he says,

Many are the afflictions of the righteous. It was a very dark and trying time for Noah while he was building the ark. ... What anxiety must his righteous soul have endured during that long and dark period, yet in the event the Lord took care of him and his, and rewarded his faith and patience.

In writing these words Marsden may well have had in mind his own 'afflictions', 'anxieties' and 'long and dark period' during his difficulties when Macquarie was Governor. In this section of the sermon Marsden also talks about Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:

Abraham had many seasons of darkness and trial during his pilgrimage. He was often afraid of being killed amongst the Egyptians, the Philistines and others amongst whom he sojourned. Isaac also had many severe family trials, and was often brought into deep distress. Jacobs was a life of toil and labor and sorrow when he was brought before Pharaoh King of Egypt, the king said unto him how old art thou, and Jacob said unto Pharaoh the days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years, few & evil have the days of the years of my life been. He had many dark and trying lessons to pass thru and had long been waiting for God's salvation long before he yielded up the ghost and was gathered up unto his fathers. In short all the Old Testament saints had their day of trouble darkness and sorrow.²¹¹

While Marsden speaks of the patriarchs' 'day of trouble darkness and sorrow' and may have seen there some parallel with his own life of troubles with the Governor, he also speaks of 'God's salvation' and the Lord's 'care of him and his' and the reward of 'faith and patience'.

²¹¹ Sermon 3:15-16

But he is a preacher and as such his focus would have been on giving his congregation a message. He would have wanted his congregations to know that in their day of trouble God would take care of them. Nevertheless, it would be surprising if he did not take this to heart for his own experience as well. He makes this explicit at the end of this sermon when he says, ‘Whatever trials you may be called to endure they will all be sanctified to your souls and will only tend to make your faith more precious than gold.’²¹² It is not surprising that Marsden found in the patriarchs great examples of faith and saw them as models of people who live the Christian life. In Sermon 33 he speaks of the example of faith the Old Testament saints provide for us as the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews says. Marsden describes this as:

The apostle to the Hebrews mentions many a name, who believed in the divine promises (and) obtained eternal salvation thru him. He begins with Abel and recites a long list of the Old Testament saints, of prophets and martyrs.²¹³

This is the way the Bible itself presents the people of God in the Old Testament and it is something Marsden has understood and used extensively in his preaching making it one of his ‘choicest topics’. The way Marsden saw the lives of the patriarchs giving living examples of how to live for Christ is expressed well in Sermon Three where he says of Abraham finding the ram caught in the thicket:

When God arrested his arm and forbad him to inflict the fatal wound, a light beamed in upon his soul. He beheld a risen saviour presented unto him under the image of his restored son. Abraham saw my day and was glad said our Lord.²¹⁴

Marsden has directly associated the saving of Isaac from the sacrificial altar with ‘a risen saviour’. This light that has beamed in upon Abraham’s soul is the same light that brings every believer to trust in ‘a risen and exalted Saviour’.²¹⁵ The example of the patriarchs is

²¹² Sermon 3:20

²¹³ Sermon 33:1

²¹⁴ Sermon 3:11

²¹⁵ Sermon 3:11

something Marsden thought upon and sought to live by. He has recognised the grace and gift of God in the midst of trials and has sought to shape his life following the pattern of the patriarchs. The fact that he named his property at South Creek ‘Mamre’ after the name of the land that God granted to Abraham is in this same pattern. Marsden has been thankful to God for His blessings and, in recognition of these blessings even in the midst of trials, he named the property in order to acknowledge God’s blessings. Reading the way Marsden expressed himself when he spoke of thankfulness to God for His blessings it is hard to agree with Karskens’ sarcastic comment²¹⁶ that Marsden was less than modest when he named Mamre.

Wealth

Marsden initially had some misgivings about accepting a grant of land which he was to work and wrote to his former teacher the Rev. Miles Atkinson to seek his advice. Atkinson put the question to a meeting of the Elland Society which unanimously agreed that:

in your present situation it is your duty. We cannot work unless we eat. And as the Colony stands in need of everyone’s help in procuring things necessary for your subsistence, everyone should lend a hand towards the common support.²¹⁷

The fact that Marsden continued to expand his farming and other enterprises long after his family was well provided for in the infant colony may have been one catalyst for the criticism that he was more interested in gaining wealth than addressing his clerical duties. His correspondence with Mr. & Mrs. Stokes contains a lot of discussion about agriculture showing that this activity remained an important aspect throughout his life in New South Wales. In one letter to Stokes on 26 November 1811 Marsden reflects, ‘I may be too fond perhaps of the garden, the field and the fleece.’ But he continues in this same letter, ‘These would be the first object of my attention was I placed among a savage nation. The man who introduced the potato into Ireland and England merited more from these nations than any

²¹⁶ Karskens. *The Colony*. ‘Mamre (named modestly for the biblical place where Abraham dwelt)’. p. 140.

²¹⁷ Letter from Atkinson to Marsden, 30 April, 1795. ML A1677-3. Volume 3, p. 17.

General who may have slain thousands of their enemies.’ By these words Marsden has indicated he had some belief that his involvement in agriculture was an opportunity for him to gain acceptance among a ‘savage nation’. Given that the strong focus of all his preaching was the salvation of the soul, Marsden’s desire to gain acceptance amongst the people to whom he ministered was with a view to bringing them the gospel of Jesus Christ. The sermons reveal that Marsden had a focus on the ultimate destiny of humankind.

In his understanding of the balance between religious observance and the pursuit of temporal business matters, Sermon 45 gives some indication of how Marsden viewed this balance:

Others urge them they must attend to the concerns of their families, they imagine that religion would injure their temporal interest, but these are vain excuses. True religion never stops men in the pursuit of their honest occupations. Men may fear God & work righteousness in all situations and ranks of life.

These words indicate Marsden’s concern to encourage his congregation not to allow pursuit of ‘their temporal interest’ to stop them from attending to their spiritual interests as well. Further to this and expanding this thought he says on Pages 11 and 12, ‘It was lawful for one to buy a piece of ground and examine it, but this was not to occupy all his thoughts. He was not to neglect the care of his soul on this account.’ Yet the statement that, ‘True religion never stops men in the pursuit of their honest occupations’ could be seen as a justification for the mix Marsden had between his duties as a clergyman and the pursuit of his own temporal interests in agriculture and trade. The passage certainly shows that in Marsden’s thinking there was no distinction between the sacred and the secular.

In his attitude to wealth, Sermon 76 gives a small insight into how Marsden perceived that a Christian should use money. In this sermon Marsden refers to the loss of the barque *Edward Lombe* which was noted in Chapter One. The sermon speaks about sins of commission and sins of omission and Marsden proclaims, ‘Hence our duty is plainly pointed

out unto us.’ As he then goes on to mention the survivors of the shipwreck, the implication seems to be that a sin of omission would be to neglect aiding in their relief. He says that his congregation is acquainted with the circumstances of the survivors, ‘and therefore it is not needful for me to state them nor to urge upon you to administer to them relief’. There is a natural expectation that because the survivors are in need the congregation will ‘administer relief’ without any urging from the pulpit other than this terse comment. Marsden continues the subject (though see transcription notes in Chapter One sub-heading *Sermon 76* for some difficulties here) by informing his congregation that the survivors ‘solicit our aid to relieve their temporal wants’. Marsden encourages his congregation by informing them that, ‘Christians of every denomination are called upon at all times to relieve the distressed.’ This statement indicates something of Marsden’s attitude to wealth and possessions. He does not lay it upon the hearts of his congregation to give as they are able, but makes it a duty of every Christian to relieve the distressed. This duty implies that one is not to count the cost, but to simply give relief. Implicit also is that this congregation does in fact have the means to give relief and Marsden is calling on them to share what God has blessed them with. He then turns to the awful prospect of judgement, but also adds that the Saviour will have a special place for those who are generous. Marsden declares:

Our Saviour who will be the judge of quick and dead at the great day of judgement hath told the notice he will take of the smallest act of kindness shewn to one of his followers. Even a cup of cold water given to one of his servants in his name shall not lose its reward. He will record all such acts in his book of remembrance, and take public notice of them before assembled worlds. We shall be all present when he shall address those upon his whom he has placed upon his right hand in the following words – Come ye blessed of my Father etc.

It seems Marsden is encouraging his congregation to be generous, not from altruistic motives, but for the recognition they will receive in the afterlife. He is not alone among colonial preachers in this. The Rev William Dry, the first person to be ordained in Tasmania, in one of his published sermons declares that money should be given to the poor, ‘for your own sake,

for your spiritual health in this world, and your eternal salvation in the world to come.’²¹⁸ The recognition in the afterlife of generous giving which Marsden declares will come from the Saviour who will take notice of the ‘smallest act of kindness’ by recording ‘such acts in his book of remembrance’. Then ‘public notice’, where everyone and all worlds are assembled, will be taken of these little acts of kindness. Marsden finishes by again calling on Christian duty and holding out the hope of reward:

Nay as Christians we are called to do good to all men etc. whatever their character or situation might be. The believer in Jesus will be rewarded for all acts of kindness that he has shewn.

In this statement Marsden expresses the belief that Christian duty is to be generous to all regardless of ‘character or situation’. The Christian is not to look on the worthiness of the individual but to give as a person has need. The prospect of reward is then again held out to the Christian person who does ‘good to all men’.

Judged at one level Marsden is encouraging his congregation to have less than pure motives in their generosity to those in need. The prospect of reward is constantly held out to them. Yet, at another level, the incentive to offer help out of one’s abundance is encouraged simply because a Christian has an obligation to help those in need regardless of their ‘character or situation’. When this aid is given the Saviour takes note and provides for an eschatological reward for these acts of kindness. This does not diminish the altruistic motive but rather points to the attitude that Jesus is pleased with such acts of kindness. The believer should do things on earth that please Jesus.

In Sermon 34, which is dealt with at length in Chapter Five, it is noted here that Marsden also speaks of the generosity that characterises the Christian person. The sermon is one that considers the work of missions around the world and encourages the congregation to be generous in its support of those missions so that people of every race may enjoy the

²¹⁸ William Dry. *Sermons*. Launceston, 1850. p. 66.

benefits of salvation in Christ. In this sermon, one of the longest in the Moore College collection, Marsden gives a great amount of detail about the work of various missionary organisations in different parts of the world, particularly that of the Church Missionary Society in Africa, India and Malta. In it Marsden addresses his congregation to encourage them to join the work of these missionary societies:

It is my most ardent wish (& that of my colleagues) to inspire you with a zeal for the salvation of a lost world, to call upon you (as a small branch of the British Nation) to imitate the example of the wisest and best men in the British Empire and join with them in so great a work, as the building of the walls of Jerusalem.

After expounding how the Scriptures show us that the message of the gospel will go out from the Jewish nation to the ends of the earth, Marsden turns to the work of the Christian societies of Britain to show that God is using this work to fulfil his promises. He encourages his listeners to begin to think about a financial contribution to the work of these societies by pointing out that while all Christian denominations are pouring their efforts into this great missionary task:

the poor widow adds her mite and teaches her orphan son to spare his money and to cast his penny into the Lord's treasury. To the widow's mite the rich and noble, the kings and queens of the earth give of their abundance.

The sermon then details the 'plans and operations' of these societies and their auxiliaries. An implied encouragement to give financial support to this work is then made again where Marsden says,

[the societies] have met with the countenance and support of all ranks, from His Royal Highness up to the Prince Regent upon the Throne, to the meanest poorest mechanic in the Kingdom.

In speaking about the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which worked in North America, and detailing its work among European descendants and 'the native Indians', Marsden has crossed out the words, 'Several thousand pounds are annually expended in this mission.' The reason he has deleted these words can only be

guessed at when he is preaching a sermon that has the clear intention of encouraging his congregation to give to the work of these societies. It may be that he did not want to give the impression that this society needed no more support, or it may be that he did not want to alarm his listeners with the high cost of doing this work and would simply rather encourage them to give whatever they were able. We can only speculate, but at the same time be sure that the intention of this sermon is to have his congregation use their temporal wealth for the extension of the Kingdom of God on earth. His intention is that his congregation should have an eschatological view of life, that they should be enthused about the marvellous work of the propagation of the gospel around the world through the work of these British societies and that they should give money so that this work may continue and that people may be won for Christ. This sermon shows Marsden, who was a man of means, with an eschatological focus. This focus indicates he did not seek wealth for wealth's sake. He saw wealth as the blessing of God and used this wealth for the advancement of the gospel which he saw as the primary task of the Christian minister and of the ordinary Christian as well. Marsden encouraged his listeners to use their means to join him and his colleagues in the spread of the gospel around the world.

In Sermon 34 Marsden has expressed his excitement about the world wide work of Christian mission that the British societies were doing. In the sermon he encouraged his congregation to join this work of God. Another very important sermon where Marsden deals with the issue of wealth is Sermon 19. In this sermon Marsden speaks on the Parable of the Talents and the right use of the gifts God has given people. This sermon can possibly be interpreted as an attempt by Marsden to justify his wealth. In the first part of Sermon 19 Marsden has defined the talents God gives with a very wide meaning. Essentially he declares that talents are any opportunity God has given us, whether that be, for example, the ability to reason, which raises us 'above the brute creation', or whether it be the Sabbath, by which we can spend time 'in meditation and prayer.' With regard to the ability to reason Marsden has

called upon his congregation to use this talent and improve it so that they may reason better. With regard to the Sabbath he has encouraged his hearers to spend time in meditation and prayer and not to dissipate the Sabbath in idle living. But according to Marsden ‘talents’ could be anything that God has given, even land or stock or crops or vessels. Towards the end of the sermon Marsden makes the following comment indicating that people will be judged negatively if they have not used their talents to make a gain or profit:

All must give up their accounts to him. Are we ready then to give up our accounts to him? Can we say Lord thy pound hath gained ten or five pounds. Can we say even upon good ground that it hath gained 1,000. Happy for us if we have the testimony of our consciences respecting this.

Notice the use of the word ‘accounts’ on two occasions, leaving the very clear impression of giving one’s financial books of account for audit. These words come very close to the man himself and reading them we cannot help but wonder whether there is not some boasting about how he himself has turned the Lord’s pound into 1,000. Could he have purposefully spent his time increasing his wealth because he believed this was what the Lord required of him? This must remain a possibility but as noted above, Marsden believed that his wealth should be used to aid people in need and to advance the cause of the gospel around the world. In this sermon Marsden has told his congregation that they must make the most of whatever the Lord has given them. It will be ‘happy testimony’ for those who can say to their Lord that his pound has made 1,000 under their stewardship. Alongside this must be placed the notion that Marsden saw his increased wealth as the Lord’s blessing with little input from the parson himself. On the one hand Marsden believed his wealth to be the blessing of the Lord. On the other he has implied in this sermon that he has been a good steward of what the Lord has given him and it has increased under his stewardship. These opposing views Marsden seems happy to hold in tension for the purposes of his current sermon topic.

The recurrent theme in all Marsden's sermons is the focus on the salvation of souls. Even in this, Sermon 19, at the end he encourages his congregation to think about the ultimate rewards for the servant who does well with the talents entrusted to him and the consequences for those who have not done as much as they could. While the words quoted above could be interpreted as a boast by Marsden in his own wealth, the overall focus of this sermon is much wider than money itself. In it Marsden has spoken of many talents and abilities and encourages his listeners to use them well in the service of the Lord with the prospect of reward for those who have done well and of shame for those who have squandered what God has given.

Notwithstanding the above, in the end Marsden cannot be judged as having put the pursuit of wealth before his ministry as a clergyman of the Church of England and as the Senior Chaplain to the colony of New South Wales. Some may have passed this judgement upon him because he became very wealthy and he continued his pastoral and other business pursuits long after they were a necessity for survival. In his preaching Marsden indirectly addressed this controversy. He proclaimed that wealth was a blessing of God, not a reward or vindication. He declared that a person should use their talents for the spread of the gospel, the relief of the poor and provision for those in need. These thoughts, expressed in his sermons, point to the character of a man who, despite criticism and controversy, maintained a benevolent outlook which encouraged others to bless God for His bountiful provisions.

Marsden's trade with the Māori and other South Seas islanders has been judged by both contemporary critics and later historians to have been a thin veil in the guise of missionary work to extend his temporal assets. Historians quote Commissioner Bigge's Report where he has said that Marsden was, 'less sensible than he ought to have been to the impropriety of combining operations of a mercantile nature with the duties of his profession'. The context of this remark is however usually not given. Bigge notes that, 'In the Criminal

Court it was proved, that the Missionary Societies had sustained losses by the trade that they carried on with the South Sea Islands'. In this context he notes Marsden's 'active participation and zeal'. Bigge then makes the comment that Marsden may have been less sensible than he ought to have been and continues the sentence with the following words:

yet I do not find that in this instance it extended further than the purchase of a vessel with his own funds for the benefit and for the purposes of the Missionary Societies. The general business and concerns of those societies were conducted by a mercantile house of the first respectability in Sydney, and I was not able to discover other instances in which Mr. Marsden was implicated to any greater extent on their account.²¹⁹

The sermons show that Marsden's focus was the salvation of men and women and that his belief was that Christian people should give of their abundance so that the work of the gospel could go on throughout the world. He proclaimed that the Christian should not gather wealth for its own sake, nor just to be comfortable in oneself, but to use the abundance the Lord has provided for the benefit of the preaching of the gospel around the world so that heathen may be saved. At the same time Christians should be generous in giving to those who need their aid such as the survivors of the shipwreck.

Aboriginals

Probably sometime in 1794 the Marsdens took into their home an aboriginal boy aged about four, whom they named Tristan.²²⁰ This 'adoption' of an aboriginal child seems to be typical of how the British settlers first began interacting with the local people. Before the Marsdens arrived, the Rev Richard Johnson and Mary, his wife, had adopted into their household an aboriginal girl by the name of Booron. Their aim appears to have been to train these children

²¹⁹ J. T. Bigge. *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry, on the Judicial Establishments of New South Wales, and Van Diemen's Land*. 21 February, 1823. "On the state of the Criminal and Civil Judicature of New South Wales, and Van Diemen's Land"

²²⁰ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p. 52. Few details are available but it seems the Marsdens may have adopted at least one other boy known as Harry, though this name is a generic one often applied to any Aboriginal male.

for useful domestic service. In a letter to Wilberforce Marsden speaks with some apparent pleasure that ‘my native boy ... can speak the English language very well, and has begun to read.’²²¹ In the same letter Marsden suggested that a qualified school master and mistress might be sent to the colony with a view to furthering the education of Aboriginal children. The Marsdens’ effort ended in failure. After bringing Tristan into their household, thirteen years later, on the voyage returning to England in 1807 and after being severely disciplined by Marsden, Tristan found the attractions of Rio de Janeiro more seductive than a life of service in an Englishman’s household. When he was finally brought back to Sydney some years later ‘in a diseased and miserable condition, he reverted to the bush.’²²² Marsden was perplexed by what he saw as the Aboriginal peoples’ ‘lack of wants’. What he and most of the colonisers do not seem to have understood is the Aboriginal peoples’ complete satisfaction with their own ways of life and their innate dignity of person. As Barron Field noted on his journey to Bathurst, the Aboriginal people were a people who bore ‘the stamp of their Maker’s image, cut in ebony ... [who] bear themselves erect, and address you with confidence, always with good humour, and often with grace.’²²³ With great insight into the nature of the Australian Aboriginal, Field further notes,

if he is the most independent who has the fewest wants, the houseless Australian is certainly our superior ... he looks upon us as ‘sophisticated:’ but he always treats our persons with respect, although he holds our servants very cheap, and looks down with a kind of stoical pity upon the various articles of comfort to which we have made ourselves slaves.²²⁴

²²¹ Marsden to William Wilberforce, 1799, Bonwick Transcriptions (BT) Missionary Box 49, Mitchell Library, p.77

²²² Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p. 113.

²²³ Barron Field. ‘Journal of an Excursion Across the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, October, 1822.’ in *Fourteen Journeys Over the Blue Mountains of New South Wales 1813-1841*. George Mackaness. Ed. Sydney. Horwitz Grahame. 1965. p.127.

²²⁴ Mackaness. *Fourteen Journeys*. p. 128. That Aboriginal people were, in Field’s estimation, a people who had ‘the fewest wants’ was something Marsden just could not understand.

Field's insight is remarkably similar to that of James Cook when he wrote about the people of the area now known as North Queensland:

They may appear to some to be the most wretched people upon Earth, but in reality they are far more happier than we Europeans; being wholly unacquainted not only with the superfluous but the necessary Conveniences so much sought after in Europe, they are happy in not knowing the use of them.²²⁵

Steeped in his own cultural background, encumbered with a blinkered vision of taking the everlasting gospel to the heathen of the South Seas in terms of the 'superiority' of a British culture and lifestyle, and seeing the desire of the New Zealanders to take from the British what could be for their profit and advancement, Marsden did not have the insight of Barron Field or James Cook to enable him to work out how to reach the Australian Aboriginal people with the gospel.

Such lack of insight however did not mean that Marsden gave up on them. As far as he knew how, Marsden continued to make provision for reaching Aboriginal people. In a letter dated 25 April 1810 to the Church Missionary Society, Marsden wrote in connection with the delay of sending missionaries on to New Zealand because of fears for their safety after the destruction of the *Boyd* and her crew in New Zealand.²²⁶ He proposed to retain these missionaries at Parramatta and put them to work in the 'instruction of the natives of New Holland'.²²⁷ This proposal was to 'make some little establishment for the accommodation of our own natives, and those of the islands who may visit us'.²²⁸ These are small indications of Marsden's desire to minister to Aboriginal people despite his lack of insight into how to do it effectively. While these indications do not constitute evidence that he directed purposeful

²²⁵ Cook, *Endeavour Journal, Description of New Holland*, at http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/cook_remarks/092.html Accessed 17 June, 2014.

²²⁶ Johnstone. *Pioneer*. p. 86

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid.

effort towards the civilisation or evangelism of Aboriginal people, they do show that later criticisms that he neglected the Australian Aboriginal in favour of more lucrative fields are somewhat exaggerated and misleading. Marsden's failure was due simply to his own ignorance and hidebound perceptions of a cultural superiority, not a personal and deliberate neglect. Marsden's attitude to Aboriginal people, his statements about them and his efforts to reach them with the gospel are discussed further in the following Chapter under the sub-heading *The Natives of the Colony*.

In Marsden's preaching there are only five direct references in the Moore College collection to Aboriginals. There are no references to any Christian work among them. In Sermon 34 Marsden speaks of the Christian work among the native peoples around the world, but again has no specific reference to the natives of New South Wales. Towards the end of the sermon he encourages his audience to become involved in the great enterprise of the British societies:

Use your utmost influence, and ability to spread the knowledge of your redeemer, both amongst the heathen and those with whom you sojourn.

The words, 'those with whom you sojourn', are most likely to mean, 'your fellow colonists' rather than to be a reference to Aboriginal people. Marsden is more likely to include Aboriginals under the title of 'heathen' in this sermon. This means, of course, that by encouraging the congregation to, 'Use your utmost influence, and ability to spread the knowledge of your redeemer ... amongst the heathen', that Marsden includes the Aboriginal people. He apparently wanted his hearers to do as much for the native people of New South Wales as they could do for other native peoples. The first point that is made in this sermon is that 'all the sacred writers have given testimony' that God, who is not a respecter of persons, loves all and wills that all should be saved. Clearly Marsden applied this desire of God to the natives of New South Wales, but history must judge that he failed in working out how to be the instrument of the fulfilment of that desire.

Marsden's Contemporaries

Marsden, as we have seen, was influenced in his preaching style by his mentor, Simeon, whose outlines are neat, logical and well argued. Were other preachers influenced by Simeon's style? The Rev Walter Lawry obviously knew Simeon's outlines well as he listened to Marsden's sermons and realised how indebted Marsden was to Simeon. Were other contemporaries as well informed and did they make use of Simeon's outlines? That Marsden should have used Simeon's outlines at all may cause some critics to grumble, but this was entirely the purpose for which Simeon published his outlines. It should be no surprise that Marsden, or any other preacher, should have put these aids to the purpose for which they were intended. Indeed, Marsden's contemporaries such as Cowper and Fulton are known to have been reliant on other published outlines as aids in their own sermon preparation.²²⁹ It is also probably safe to say that the Rev Walter Lawry, who criticised Marsden's dependence on Simeon's outlines, used the outlines himself. He could not have made his critical comment without being familiar with Simeon's outlines. Others who used Simeon's outlines in their own preaching included the Rev Thomas T. Thomason who became a missionary in Calcutta and the Rev David Dickson, a Presbyterian, who in 1795 became the first minister of the Chapel of Ease, Canongate in Edinburgh where he ministered until his death in 1820.²³⁰ How Marsden's preaching compares to his contemporaries in the colony is the subject of this last section of this chapter, and the following is an examination of sermons by various clergy who were contemporaries of Marsden. These include William Cowper and his son, the older

²²⁹ W.P. Crook to LMS, 18 June 1813 (ML: BT 49, Missionary, Vol. 1, 326-7). I am indebted to the Rev. Dr. Peter Bolt of Moore College for this information.

²³⁰ Thomason published a pamphlet 'for the benefit of the society' (presumably the CMS) containing some sermons by himself and others preached in 1804-05. The pamphlet is in the Cambridge University Library, Call Number: Pam.5.80.27. The pamphlet contains a sermon preached by Thomason in 1805 on 1 Chronicles 20:50. Simeon has no outline on this passage but the sermon has Simeon's usual structure. There is also a sermon in the pamphlet preached by Dickson in 1804 on Luke 2:10-11 which has used Simeon's outline.

having been recruited by Marsden to come to the colony, Henry Bobart, Marsden's son-in-law, Henry Fulton, the emancipated clergyman and Robert Allwood, who, though arriving in the colony shortly after Marsden's death was a leader in the colonial church of Marsden's legacy.

Archdeacon William Cowper preached at the consecration of the new St Phillip's Church on 30 March 1856. His text was Psalm 74:4. Simeon has no outline on this passage and we have no sermon of Marsden's on it to compare. Cowper did, however, use a structure that is familiar from Simeon, outlining three points his sermon would follow and then expanding each of those points in turn.

In a published sermon William Macquarie Cowper preached at the Anniversary Service of the SPCK on 19 July 1838, he took as his text Psalm 78:5-8. Simeon has one outline on Ps 78:8 where he compares Jews and Christians, but the thrust of Cowper's sermon is on the means by which God has ordained to preserve and increase religion. Cowper has clearly not relied on Simeon's outline. Equally, by a comparative content analysis of words and topics in Marsden's unpublished sermons, Cowper does not appear to have been influenced by Marsden.

Marsden's son-in-law, the Rev Henry Bobart also preached an Anniversary Sermon for the SPCK, this time on 20 June, 1837. His text was 2 Timothy 1:13. Simeon does not have an outline on this verse and there is no sermon by Marsden on it. An examination of Bobart's style shows that he was a very different thinker to both Marsden and Simeon. His language and style are very different to both men.

Henry Fulton preached a sermon at Castlereagh and Penrith on Friday 2 November 1838. Governor Gipps had appointed this a Fast Day in order to call upon God for relief from drought. It was to be, 'a day of fasting and humiliation, on account of the late

calamitous drought.’²³¹ Fulton’s text was Amos 4:12 and while he called people to repentance for their neglect and profanation of God and the breaking of His Sabbaths, the sermon speaks in general terms of how, like Israel, the people of God of the day must also turn to have a lively faith in God. This sermon is very different in form to that preached by Marsden in which he followed Simeon’s Fast Day sermon outline in November 1815 and called on the people of the colony to repent of sin following the signs of God’s displeasure of drought, famine and the death of the Judge Advocate. The redoubtable Presbyterian clergyman and politician, John Dunmore Lang, also preached on this Fast Day in November 1838. Lang took as his text Jeremiah 14:1-7 and listed three particular sins of which he thought the people should repent, namely the ill treatment of Aboriginal people, the pernicious nature of transportation and Sabbath breaking.²³² The first two of these topics are ones Marsden never preached on. The third topic was one of Marsden’s most common topics.

Robert Allwood was another preacher at the Anniversary of the SPCK. His turn came on 10 September 1840 and his text was Jeremiah 6:16. Simeon has an outline on this passage, but while Allwood does not appear to have relied upon it, the thrust of the sermon is nevertheless similar in vein to that of Simeon’s outline. Marsden also has a sermon on this text and in his usual way has slavishly followed Simeon’s outline thereby creating a very different sermon to Allwood.

Interestingly the sermon preached by Bishop Broughton at the funeral of William Cowper, while not obviously dependent on a Simeon outline, nevertheless used a style very reminiscent of Simeon’s normal structure.

²³¹ See J. D. Lang’s sermon on the occasion which notes that it is a sermon: ‘Preached Friday 2 November 1838. Being a day appointed by his Excellency Sir George Gipps, as a day of fasting and humiliation, on account of the late calamitous drought.’

²³² The sermon is held at ML. 285.2944/11

Rather than Marsden becoming the trend setter in this style of preaching, however, we must conclude that he was simply part of a homiletical style which was common during the 18th and 19th centuries which nevertheless became prominent among the Sydney Anglicans up to the early 1960s. As to what influence Marsden did bring, Bill Lawton suggests that in his preaching Marsden ‘reveals an independence from ecclesiastical authority’ which ‘also laid the groundwork for a long history of evangelical action that is prepared to cross parochial and diocesan boundaries, and, if necessary, to disregard episcopal authority.’²³³ Marsden himself was never seen to show any disregard of episcopal authority but he certainly demonstrated an independence from the opinion of others who thought he exhibited ‘daily neglect of the Spiritual concerns of his Parish’.²³⁴ Marsden’s focus was on preaching the ‘everlasting gospel’ and believed that ‘[m]any fall by means of their excessive care about worldly business’. He further believed that, ‘God allows us plenty of time to attend to the concerns of this world, as well as to that which is to come.’²³⁵

This very brief outline of some of the sermons preached by Marsden and his contemporaries suggests that they were all fairly independent of each other. Marsden, whom we know was slavishly bound to the homiletical tradition of Charles Simeon, may well have been exceptional in that respect. The survey does show, however, that in terms of a genre of preaching these men had very similar styles, following a method of preaching that started with a biblical text and sought to explain it and apply it in a fairly systematic way. Their focus was first on the biblical text. Most of the sermons were evangelistic, calling upon the hearers to put their trust in the Lordship of Christ. In none of them are contemporary issues of government, business or other social issues addressed, with the exception perhaps of Lang’s

²³³ Bill Lawton. ‘Australian Anglican Theology’ in Bruce Kaye (Ed) *Anglicanism in Australia: a history*. Melbourne. MUP. 2002. p. 187.

²³⁴ Quoted in: Bill Wannan. *Very strange tales: the turbulent times of Samuel Marsden*. Melbourne, Lansdowne Press. 1962. p. 176

²³⁵ Sermon 24:14

Fast Day sermon which addressed the treatment of Aboriginals and convicts. While it is impossible to say that any one person was the sole influence for this style of preaching in the early colony, it is clear that this style prevailed amongst the Protestant preachers and has even continued in large extent into the 1960s.

Conclusions

Samuel Marsden grew up in and was nurtured by the evangelical movement in the Church of England. He became close friends and a regular correspondent with significant men of this movement. The primary focus of their vision in sending chaplains to the colony of New South Wales was to see the gospel proclaimed to the people of the South Seas. They believed that the establishment of the colony was God's providential working in creating a foothold in this far flung corner of the globe for this mission. This expectation was contrary to the expectations of government authorities who thought the best use of the chaplains sent to New South Wales was to encourage the settlers in moral behaviour. This may explain the confusion by contemporaries and later historians alike over Marsden's roles as a minister of the Church of England and as a magistrate in the colony. Most have not been able to distinguish these roles in the same way Marsden himself was able to do. They have said that because Marsden had no apparent success as a minister or preacher that he accepted the role of magistrate to augment his power thereby trying to achieve as a magistrate that which he could not achieve as a minister.²³⁶ While Marsden has said that part of the role of a minister was to remind people of their duties as members of civil society and to 'obey magistrates',²³⁷ he did not believe that the role of a minister and the role of a magistrate were trying to achieve the same outcomes. Marsden has said that the role of the minister is to 'preach the everlasting

²³⁶ Yarwood, 'The Missionary Marsden'. p. 31.

²³⁷ See Sermon 23:1 – 2: 'The office of ministers is to preach the gospel of Christ but whilst they preach the doctrines of the gospel, they must not overlook its duties: nor in stating its duties, must they pass by those, which pertain to us as members of civil communion. ... [Ministers must] put them (the professors of Christianity) in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates.'

gospel'.²³⁸ It was Marsden's view that this preaching is done with a view to preparing people for heaven. The role of the magistrate on the other hand was said by Marsden to be for the good ordering of society: 'The office of magistrates is to do all in their power for the suppression of iniquity.' (23:4) Yet at the same time 'magistrates ... are appointed of God' and 'rulers ... are the ministers of God to thee for good, revengers to execute wrath upon them that do evil.' (89:4) Marsden's view of the roles of ministers, magistrates and rulers was nuanced. He did not believe that the roles of minister and magistrate were trying to achieve the same end. In fact he drew a clear distinction between them in Sermon 89:4 where he has said, 'Christian forgiveness does not interfere with human laws'. This non-interference is because God has appointed rulers as His ministers to punish the lawbreakers. In Marsden's view there was no cross over between what the preacher may say of Christian forgiveness and what the magistrate or ruler may do to 'execute wrath'. While we may agree that accepting the role of a magistrate resulted in Marsden's reputation being sullied and led to him becoming more well known as the 'Flogging Parson' than as a man who 'preached the everlasting gospel' we cannot agree that Marsden was trying to achieve the same ends in what he perceived to be two very different roles.

In this chapter the statement of one of Marsden's biographers, J. B. Marsden, has also been examined and found wanting. As noted earlier J. B. Marsden had said of Marsden that 'love of the country and of rural scenes gave a strong colouring to his preaching'.²³⁹ Having found no such references at all in the sermons we are left wondering where this idea originated. What it does highlight is the importance of studying this primary resource, Marsden's sermons, before definite conclusions are made about anything to do with him. The importance of studying Marsden's sermons has also been highlighted in trying to understand

²³⁸ Samuel Marsden, *Diary – 1793-1794*. Mitchell Library, C245. Entry dated 27 July, 1793; and Sermon 23:1 'The office of ministers is to preach the gospel of Christ'.

²³⁹ J. B. Marsden *Memoirs*. p. 262.

his motivations. Both Yarwood and Karskens have made the mistake of declaring motive without any reference to the things Marsden has said in his preaching. This has led them into error and thereby to misunderstand him. J. B. Marsden's reputation can be rehabilitated, however, when it comes to one of Marsden's 'choicest topics ... in the pulpit'. By examining the sermons it is clear that Marsden often referred to 'the patriarchs, their lives and characters'. This again highlights the importance of the sermons in understanding Marsden. Without studying them it would not have been possible to verify J. B. Marsden's claim.

Two other themes of Marsden's preaching have been examined in this Chapter, namely his attitudes to wealth and to Aboriginal people. These are important issues in our historical understanding of Marsden because they are both topics for which he received heavy criticism. It has been argued in this chapter that Marsden's efforts in agriculture and in trade were not engaged in by him in order to become wealthy. The sermons show that Marsden's attitude to wealth was that the Christian has a twofold responsibility. First, the Christian's wealth should be used for the relief of those in need. Secondly, Christians should use their money for the propagation of the gospel. Marsden has argued in Sermon 19 that Christians should be good stewards of the talents God has given them. While his definition of 'talents' is wide, it does include money. He declared that God expected His people to make good use of these talents. Marsden could certainly make that claim for himself and his money. This is understood in the context of what Marsden has said about the use of money for the relief of those in need and for the support of the missionary effort.

While the sermons overall have little reference to Aboriginals, in Sermon 34:24 they may be included in Marsden's reference where he encourages his congregation, 'to spread the knowledge of your redeemer ... amongst the heathen'. Study of Marsden's sermons shows that he had not completely given up on the Aboriginal people of New South

Wales. This topic is examined more closely in the following chapter under the sub-heading *Natives of this Colony*.

Comparing Marsden's sermons with those of some of his contemporaries has shown that many of these preachers had a similar style and theological perspective. A more detailed examination of this topic is not possible in this dissertation, but would be a valuable area of research for others. Particularly in the light of comments by Inglis and Cruickshank²⁴⁰ a study and comparison of sermons as the predominant form of public speech in Australia would be beneficial.

In this Chapter the study of the morphology of the sermons has shown that where Marsden has used the sermon outlines of Charles Simeon in most cases, but not all, he has almost mindlessly followed their form and structure. This criticism applies to the first few pages of many of Marsden's sermons which he has written out in full, copying Simeon almost word for word. This criticism must be balanced with the observation that in every sermon where Marsden has used a Simeon outline the second part of each sermon is entirely Marsden's own work. The fact of Marsden copying so much of Simeon does not diminish the value of the extant sermons as primary documents. They still pay handsome dividends filling out our knowledge of Marsden, his background, motivations, attitudes, relationships and work. They demonstrate that Marsden was a man with integrity of character and give a more balanced understanding of some of the controversies he faced.

²⁴⁰ Inglis. *Speech Making*. Cruickshank. 'Anglican Sermons.'

Chapter Four

What Marsden's sermons reveal about the local context

Introduction

Marsden's sermons provide a rich cache of primary documentation from the early colony of New South Wales, amounting to almost five hundred thousand words. This corpus has not previously been examined in detail. The sermons are not only a valuable resource in understanding Marsden's preaching and therefore the man himself, his character and his motivations. We can also glean from them some further understanding of the colony as Marsden referred in his preaching to various events and happenings within the colony at the time. This chapter examines every instance in the Moore College collection where in his preaching Marsden made a direct reference to events in the colony. This includes subjects such as the gallows, the execution of innocent men, marriage and adultery, magistrates, the Aboriginals, prostitution, drunkenness, gambling, extortion, Sabbath observance and Christian charity.

Marsden himself lived in the colony through times of change from a penal colony to an increasingly free society. It is clear in the collections of sermons he preached to audiences of convicts and of free settlers. His later sermons reflect the more settled times where he calls on his congregations for benevolent action. His earlier sermons indicate his struggle against immoral and illegal behaviours of those living in a penal colony.

The sermon Marsden preached following the death of Ellis Bent gives insight into one particular and controversial event.²⁴¹ It also adds a valuable insight into the relationship between Marsden and Macquarie as that relationship continued to deteriorate. As this sermon will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Six of this work it will not be considered in this chapter

²⁴¹ This sermon is held by the Mitchell Library, Sydney. ML. CY762.

where we are looking exclusively at the sermons and soil notes in the Moore College collection.

The issues that Marsden constantly dealt with in his sermons were, on the surface, moral ones. In Sermon 4:3 Marsden says:

many of us have lived in the open and avowed violation of his laws. In Sabbath breaking, in profanation of God's name, in theft, in adultery, in drunkenness and every vice that would render us obnoxious to an holy God.

Yet the focus of Marsden's concern was not morality and social reform but salvation. This is clear in the above quotation from Sermon Four. In it Marsden has said that these behaviours 'render us obnoxious to an holy God.' His focus on moral behaviour was not to encourage people to be upright citizens, even though he would have loved to see such an occurrence. Yet in his preaching Marsden addressed moral behaviour as an indication of a person's spiritual state and urged his congregations to be reconciled with God. Reconciliation with God, he believed, would result in moral behaviour and see social change.

Sabbath breaking and profanation of God's name were activities in the colony that were of particular concern to the chaplains. Marsden's first sermon in New South Wales is reported by Marsden's biographer, J. B. Marsden, to have been on the topic of Sabbath Breaking.²⁴² A notorious incident concerning Simon Burn provides a vignette of the dilemma in which the chaplain found himself with regard to both drunkenness and Sabbath breaking.²⁴³ Burn spent a considerable amount of his time in a state of inebriation. This particular incident involved Captain John Macarthur, the commanding officer in Parramatta at the time, and

²⁴² Marsden. *Memoirs*. p. 10

²⁴³ It seems that in the colony these two sins often went hand in hand. When the convicts were not required to work on Sundays they often spent their time in drunkenness and therefore were in no fit state to attend Divine Service. Note Marsden's words in Sermon 7:26, 'God's Sabbaths afford no rest to you from sin. Nay you probably commit greater sins on this day than you do on all the other days of the week.'

ultimately left Marsden and Macarthur at enmity for many years. Marsden was so incensed by Macarthur's attitude and inaction that he felt compelled to make an official complaint to the Governor. In the letter of complaint Marsden detailed the behaviour of Burn. Burn had approached the preacher one morning after divine service and in Marsden's words, 'insulted me in the most daring manner'.²⁴⁴ Marsden believed Burn to be drunk at the time and turned to the head constable, who was present, insisting that Burn be arrested and taken before Macarthur. To the parson's dismay, Macarthur thought the complaint vexatious and dismissed Burn in his state of intoxication despite Marsden's allegations that Burn's behaviour had been riotous all that day.

For Marsden, Burn's intoxication on the Sabbath and consequent neglect of attending the Lord's House put Burn's soul, and those of others who behaved in a similar manner, of whom there was no shortage in the infant colony, at risk of eternal damnation. That Macarthur, a person of rank in the colony, should dismiss Burn and Marsden's complaint, was clear indication, in Marsden's mind, that good government and true religion were a thing far from the colony. As a minister of the Church of England, Marsden regularly led his congregation in prayer for good government and true religion,²⁴⁵ but in the colony of New South Wales he would have to continue to work hard and long and at every level to see this prayer answered.

Macarthur may well have considered Burn's behaviour a bit of harmless frivolity. Seeing drunken convicts in the street on a Sunday when they were not required to work was a common occurrence. Marsden, on the other hand, believed that 'To neglect God's Sabbaths is a great sin' and that those who made 'God's day a day of pleasure and riot and dissipation' did so 'to the great guilt and condemnation of your souls' (Sermon 7:26-27). As noted in

²⁴⁴ A. T. Yarwood. *Marsden of Parramatta*. Kenthurst, N.S.W.: Kangaroo Press, 1986. p.21

²⁴⁵ *Book of Common Prayer*. Holy Communion. Prayer for the Church Militant.

Chapter Three Marsden's concern was not for what he termed 'scanty morality', but for the salvation of souls. This controversy in dealing with Burn's drunken behaviour on a Sunday and Macarthur's dismissal of the complaint highlights Marsden's character. His statements in his sermons indicate that he had not taken personal affront at Burn's behaviour (though his reaction to Macarthur may be a different matter) but his concern was the salvation of the man's soul.

In Burn's case it was his drunkenness that led him to break the Sabbath and abuse the chaplain. And yet it must be emphasised that in addressing moral issues Marsden never simply called upon his congregations to, 'stop it!' His call was always to be cleansed in the blood of Christ. While he stated clearly and unequivocally that, 'It is not to preach a scanty morality that we are called,' he continued, 'but to publish the glad tidings of a free and full salvation to a lost world, to sinners of all characters, a salvation founded in the blood of Christ purchased by the price of that blood.'²⁴⁶ This statement shows that Marsden was not interested in 'scanty morality'. He did not simply want people to become 'respectable' in moral behaviour, but saw immorality as an indication that people ignored the claims of Christ on their lives. Marsden did not want to see people cut off by death in a state of drunkenness because he believed that this would lead to eternal damnation. Burn suffered this very fate of dying in a drunken stupor only weeks after his encounter with Marsden. Marsden had seen it happen too often. 'O ye drunkards, what if God should in the midst of one of your drunken fits arrest you by death, as he has many amongst us.' (31:5)

The statement also highlights the fact that Marsden knew his various roles well. In preaching, he was the pastor who cared that his flock should know that the remedy to sin was not the avoidance of moral imperfections but a trust in the shed blood of Jesus which paid the price of that sin. While, as a magistrate, he may have earned the epithet 'Flogging Parson', his

²⁴⁶ Sermon 93:12

sermons do not show the same apparent glee for flogging that his magisterial role indicates. In his preaching Marsden was simply the Parson who demonstrated a pastoral concern for his people. It seems, therefore, that Marsden was able to compartmentalise his various roles. As the Parson he exhibited all the traits of the compassionate pastor who, as his ordination vows reminded him, had the 'Cure of Souls', whereas as the Magistrate, he was able to bring the harshest punishments to bear on the bodies of the guilty (and in some cases the not guilty) in the form of the cat of nine tails.

While mostly Marsden pointed to the common sins of the inhabitants of the colony in the hope that they would view them with respect to the consequences for their eternal destiny, in Sermon 97:14 he warned that certain behaviours would also bring the judgement of civil authority:

Many of you are guilty of uttering the most diabolical speeches in the most open and public manner, such as decency forbids me to mention in this place. Let your own consciences point them out to you. Your conduct in this respect not only calls upon me as a minister to warn you but also upon the civil the civil (*sic*) power to exercise its authority to restrain your licentious and obscene speeches.

This is the only sermon in which Marsden brings together, in such close juxtaposition, the roles of the minister and of the civil power, seeing both to have a responsibility to curb immoral behaviour. This does not negate his understanding of the different purposes of the two roles. As a minister he saw the first priority to be the salvation of his people and as a magistrate his role was to bring order to society. In his preaching Marsden highlighted compassion for his people by emphasising the need to trust in the shed blood of Jesus to cleanse from sin. Had Wannan been more aware of Marsden's preaching he may not have made the astounding comment noted previously that, 'In the final analysis, Marsden was not a deeply religious man.'²⁴⁷ Marsden may have had a reputation as a harsh magistrate and come

²⁴⁷ Wannan. *Early Colonial Scandals*. p.178

under censure for neglecting the duties of his 'parish' for more worldly pursuits, but it is clear from his preaching that he took his role as pastor seriously. In contrast to Marsden's ability to compartmentalise his roles, one of the men he recruited from the U.K. to help bear the load of the chaplaincy within the colony, the Rev William Cowper, held a different view. Cowper believed that the role of Magistrate was so incompatible with that of chaplain that he refused to accept any appointment as a Magistrate.²⁴⁸ The bulk of the content of Marsden's preaching shows that his concern was the spiritual wellbeing of the members of his congregation. He wanted them not to be punished for their sins in eternity but to turn from them and trust in the One who has taken the punishment for them.

The Exclusives

Marsden was also a member of a group of people in the colony who came to be known by the pejorative title, 'The Exclusives'. He believed in ranks and order in society and was particularly reticent to see emancipists being accepted into the 'higher ranks'. Shortly after returning from England in 1810 Marsden discovered through the *Sydney Gazette* of 31 March that he had been appointed by the new Governor, Lachlan Macquarie, as a commissioner on the turnpike road to the Hawkesbury. Marsden was to share this role with Simeon Lord and Andrew Thompson, both of whom were emancipists and living in *de facto* relationships. Marsden objected to this appointment and thereby earned the ire of the Governor. He wrote some years after the event, 'I conceived that it was too much for the Governor to require any officer to lower his rank in society by such an association, and that the measure would be attended with the most serious evils.'²⁴⁹ This incident highlights Marsden's attitude both to emancipists and to morality. He informed the Governor that it was an affront to his 'sacred

²⁴⁸ Peter Bolt. *William Cowper (1778-1858) The Indispensable Parson. The Life and Influence of Australia's First Parish Clergyman*. Bolt Publishing. Sydney. 2009. p. 104.

²⁴⁹ Marsden. *Answer to Certain Calumnies*. London. 1826. p. 4.

office' to have to sit on this board with two men 'who had been under sentence of law'.²⁵⁰ To Wilberforce Marsden had written, 'It is not consistent with morality, religion, or sound policy to nominate men magistrates, who have been convicts and who are still living in open profligacy.'²⁵¹ Marsden's recollection of what he had said to Macquarie, written 16 years after the event, was to do with ranks in society. In explaining his actions to Wilberforce Marsden added that his objection included the issue that Thompson and Lord were 'living in open profligacy'.

While Marsden's stance against working in an official capacity with men who were living in *de facto* relationships can be understood, Macquarie's inconsistency on this matter is a little harder to comprehend. Having arrived in the colony to discover how prevalent was the practice of men and women living together without the sanction of marriage, he issued a decree condemning the 'scandalous and pernicious custom ... of persons of different sexes cohabiting and living together unsanctioned by the legal ties of matrimony.'²⁵² We can only guess at Macquarie's reasons for appointing Lord and Thompson to an official position whose living arrangements he had labelled as 'scandalous and pernicious'.

Not wanting to be associated with emancipists in an official position speaks clearly of Marsden's attitude towards the ranks and orders within society, the attitude which marks him as a member of a group of colonists who became known as the 'Exclusives'. It is an attitude to the ordering of society that Marsden derived from his understanding of how heaven is ordered. In Sermon 23:3 he says, 'Even in heaven he has established different rank and orders amongst the angels'. Not only does this order exist in heaven amongst the angels, God has directed that it also be followed on earth: 'on earth also he has seen fit, that a similar order should be maintained'. While these ranks and orders exist both in heaven and on earth

²⁵⁰ Marsden. *Answer to Certain Calumnies*. p. 6.

²⁵¹ Letter from Marsden to Wilberforce, 27 July, 1810. BT. Box 49. p. 85.

²⁵² Macquarie. 24 February, 1810. *HRNSW*. Vol. 7. p. 292.

all people are treated equally when it comes to salvation: ‘the Lord will reward every man according to his works, of what rank he may be in society whether learned or ignorant’. (19:8) Marsden also calls on his congregation to consider what an exalted rank, above the angels, they will have in heaven: ‘Consider the dignity of your character, the rank you hold in heaven and to what an inheritance you are heir to.’ (28:25, 27)²⁵³ Marsden believed these orders and ranks were appropriate on earth for good government. He declared that even from the first, one person was appointed to rule the other: ‘Adam should rule and that Eve should obey’. Since then God has appointed parents as ‘the natural governors of their children’ and societies ‘had their respective governors, some in one way, and some in another’ (23:3-4). Marsden held that these ranks and orders on earth were not for repression and subjugation. He believed that the way we treat our fellow human beings will be a particular focus on the day of judgement.²⁵⁴ He demonstrated Christian compassion for those whom he regarded as being of the ‘lower ranks’ by calling upon those with means to support the people living in the Benevolent Asylum:

Many of them have a just claim to your benevolence, who have spent their time and strength in your service or in improving the general welfare of the community. They have laboured and we have entered into their labours. They have contributed to build our houses, to clear our lands, (to) plant our vineyards, to feed our flocks and herds, and to raise our bread, and to add to our comfort, (prosperity) and safety. They have made highways for us thro the wilderness. Now their natural strength is exhausted, by age, toils, sickness, and numerous infirmities on account of which they claim, and justly, our benevolence and compassion. (66:23)

²⁵³ Page 26 of this sermon is blank.

²⁵⁴ Sermon 66:2-3. In speaking of what will happen on judgment day Marsden says, ‘That the whole of our principles and conduct will be taken into consideration, there can be no doubt, but there is one point that will be inquired into, and will be regarded as a certain evidence of all the rest, viz., our activity in doing good to our fellow creatures for Christ’s sake.’

Marsden has been described by some as a vindictive, petulant, even psychopathic personality. A contemporary, W. C. Wentworth, has described him as, 'a reverend hypocrite; a crafty, turbulent, and ambitious priest; a man of the most rancorous and vindictive spirit.'²⁵⁵ Sermon 66 gives a different insight into the man. In this sermon Marsden has expressed a clear understanding of how he and others have benefitted from the labours of others. He speaks about his concern for those who have laboured for the 'general welfare of the community' and he has the belief that they 'have a just claim on our benevolence'. With these words we see in Marsden a person who is genuinely thankful for the work these people have done and we see a compassion for them who are now spent and in need of care in their old age and infirmity.

In a context of an evangelical heritage M. A. Roberts speaks of a 'moral reform tradition' in which he believes the middle class evangelicals developed a sense of obligation 'aroused by unease about the moral consequences of material advance.'²⁵⁶ It may be that in this tradition of voluntarism Marsden was supporting, and encouraging others to support, the Benevolent Asylum because of some unease about the moral consequences of his own increased wealth. Despite this unease and an expression of concern for the welfare of people who had laboured hard for him and for others, Marsden's views on the ordering of society were in line with the 'Exclusives'. It is right that he be included in their ranks for the attitudes he expressed towards emancipists in particular. He believed that God had so ordered societies around the world with those who rule and those who obey. His dealings with Macquarie on the issue of his appointment as a commissioner on the turnpike road, however, show that he

²⁵⁵ White. *Early Australian History*. p. 217.

²⁵⁶ M. J. D. Roberts. *Making English morals: voluntary association and moral reform in England, 1787-1886*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. 2004. p. viii. On the issue of what might have been motivating evangelicals to form voluntary societies Roberts further says, 'By means of volunteer associational action they created and successfully transmitted across several generations a collective memory of cultural heritage and obligation, as well as a commitment to a form of public action self-consciously presented as aiming to transcend individual or sectional self-interest.' p. viii.

did not believe that the ruler's decision could not be challenged. From a spiritual perspective Marsden believed that, whatever rank a person held in this life, all were equal before God and those who put their trust in Him would receive an equal inheritance in heaven.

The Gallows, Innocent Men and Women of Shame

Marsden does not preach on topical issues and he refers to very few subjects from contemporary colonial life to illustrate his sermons. This means there is not a great deal of content in the sermons about incidents in the colony, though they are not entirely bereft of references. Through these we are able to gain a glimpse of the preacher's perspective on colonial life at this time. Two specific activities Marsden addresses in Sermon 4:3 are theft and adultery. It is interesting to note that these two activities often went hand in hand in the colony. Marsden was not the only person of rank in New South Wales to note that illegitimate liaisons often led men and women into crime and eventually to suffer the full weight of the law. Hunter was one who lamented the fate of fine soldiers who were eventually brought to the gallows having been found guilty of theft, resulting, he believed, from their desire to please their mistresses. In looking at this issue in detail we will do so in the overall context of a consideration of capital punishment in the colony and what Marsden had to say about it in his preaching.

In Sermon 13:14 Marsden has written down the side of the page a comment that gives rise to the possibility he thought some who had been executed in the colony had been innocent men. In the last paragraph of this page Marsden speaks of the injustice Jesus suffered at his trial and says that even the betraying Judas declared Jesus innocent. He then makes the point that the laws under which they now live would not permit such a miscarriage of justice, and yet, down the side of the page he has written the comment, 'There are instances amongst ourselves where men have been condemned.' In the context of this sermon it is clear that Marsden meant that he thought that within the colony *innocent* men have been condemned.

The period between 1826 and 1837 has been described as, ‘the heyday of capital punishment’ in New South Wales where ‘377 prisoners were hanged’.²⁵⁷ G. D. Woods writes, ‘As to early punitive savagery, the sheer number of executions was staggering’.²⁵⁸ In another article Castle says, ‘One of the bloodiest periods for public execution in New South Wales occurred under Governors Darling and Bourke from 1826 to 1836, with 363 executions taking place’.²⁵⁹ In this environment, of itself, there is nothing surprising about Marsden’s comment written down the side of a page of this sermon. It seems, however, from the context of his sermon, Marsden is referring to innocent men being hanged. In speaking of the innocence of Jesus, who was yet condemned, it is likely Marsden means ‘innocent men’ in the colony have been condemned, even though he has stated in the body of the sermon that under British law such a miscarriage of justice would not be permitted.

Marsden also believed that, despite the superiority of British law, perjury led to the condemnation of innocent people. In Sermon 91:4 in speaking on the issue of perjury he says:

It is a crime that has risen to the most dreadful heights amongst ourselves and instances are not wanting in this Colony where the innocent have been condemned and executed on the evidence of perjured persons.

In Sermon 91 when preaching about Jezebel’s use of corrupt magistrates against Naboth, Marsden again comments on the superiority of the British legal system:

²⁵⁷ Tim Castle, "Constructing Death: Newspaper Reports of Executions in Colonial New South Wales, 1826-1837," *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 9, no. 2007 (2007). p.51.

²⁵⁸ G. D. Woods, *A History of Criminal Law in New South Wales the Colonial Period, 1788-1900*, ed. Mark Findlay Chris Cunneen, Julie Stubbs, Sydney Institute of Criminology Monograph Series No 17. Sydney: The Federation Press, 2002. p.1.

²⁵⁹ Tim Castle, "Watching Them Hang. Capital Punishment and Public Support in Colonial New South Wales, 1826–1836," *History Australia* 5, no. 2 (2008).

it would hardly be possible under British laws to induce the magistrates and judges to join in a conspiracy to cut off the life of an innocent person. (91:6)

If it was Marsden's belief that innocent men had suffered execution, he was not alone in it.

Other chaplains in the colony took action when they believed in the innocence of a man who found himself at the end of a hangman's rope. The execution of Thomas Lynch is reported in the *Sydney Gazette*, 13 January 1829. Both J. D. Lang and Father Power believed Lynch to be innocent and made last minute attempts at a temporary stay of execution.²⁶⁰ It seems that despite Marsden's observation in his sermon of the superiority of British law, executions of innocent people could and did happen in the colony.

While the intervention of the clergy in the execution of Thomas Lynch may have been a rare and even isolated incident, it is clear from his preaching Marsden believed that a man could be brought to the gallows from what, initially, would be seen by most as the most trivial of reasons. He states quite clearly on several occasions his opposition to idleness. He extends this in Sermon 76:22 to a belief that idleness leads to the gallows. He says,

If men would only use moderate industry, none would be brought to the gallos (*sic*) here for breaking this commandment. How wretched depraved & corrupted are the minds of those men who rather chose to withdraw themselves from all civil society than eat the bread of honest industry.

But it is not idleness alone that will bring a man to the gallows. It is the company men keep that will see them strangled in the hangman's noose. In Sermon 7:24 Marsden says,

Few ... come to the gallos (*sic*), but who are led there by some infamous strumpet. Alas for these men. They see their sin and folly in their punishment, often too late for reformation. Let me entreat you as Moses did the Israelites to refrain from the tents of these wicked women. Avoid their company and society as you would avoid hell. Let them wander unnoticed as vagabonds & outcasts from society till a sense of sin and shame bring them to repentance & reform.

²⁶⁰ "Constructing Death". p.60.

Marsden has some support from Karskens for this wariness of convict women, and their ability to lure men to their ruin. Karskens writes, ‘Men in authority were wary of convict women too, because of their power to seduce soldiers away from their duty and sailors from their ships.’²⁶¹ She goes on to quote Hunter²⁶² who blamed the company of convict women for the downfall of six marines, ‘the flower of our battalion’. The six, James Baker, James Brown, Richard Dukes, Thomas Jones, Luke Haynes and Richard Askew, were hanged in March 1789 for robbing the stores.

To be fair, Karskens believes this attitude to the convict women left a long legacy, which ignored the ‘women who were householders, workers, business- and tradeswomen, mothers and makers of community in early Sydney’.²⁶³ Perhaps Marsden contributed to this ignorance. Certainly this sermon shows that he believed good men were being led astray by ‘abandoned’ women. There is no sermon in the collection that shows Marsden’s praise for women who were ‘makers of community in early Sydney’. And yet Marsden is not a one-eyed misogynist. It was not just the women who led the men astray. In Sermon 61:13-14 Marsden lamented the total disregard of the injuries licentious men do to hundreds of women in the colony:

How many hundreds of unfortunate women are there in these settlements who may date the origin of their disgrace, their banishment and their sufferings to the arts and designs of ~~abandoned~~ (vicious) libertines, who are totally regardless of the injuries they do by their licentious (*sic*) passions.

²⁶¹ Karskens. *The Colony*. p.318.

²⁶² John Hunter. *Historical Journal*. London. 1793. p. 94.

²⁶³ Karskens. *The Colony*. p.321.

Marriage and Adultery

Marsden has come under criticism from many quarters for referring to women living in a *de-facto* relationship as ‘Concubines’.²⁶⁴ This statement in 1806 seems to have stained his reputation from then on with regard to his attitude towards the women of the colony. Babette Smith in *Australia’s Birthstain* writes that Marsden’s ‘campaign to reform the morals of the women convicts in particular played a significant role in creating their bad reputation’.²⁶⁵ Smith does acknowledge that there were others who had similar views to Marsden and quotes

the now infamous passage where Lieutenant Ralph Clark described his reaction at Botany Bay of the sight of more female convicts arriving on the *Lady Juliana* in 1790. ‘No, no – surely not! My God – not more of those damned whores. Never have I known worse women.’²⁶⁶

Annette Salt, in *These Outcast Women*, referring to the Female Factory at Parramatta acknowledges that the:

Factory became the means of socially controlling ... women. It could control their promiscuity by providing the means and incentive for contracting sanctified marriages. It could control the deployment of labour, and provide productive and profitable employment for convicted women.²⁶⁷

Salt then shows that Marsden’s description and others like it, was not uncommon. She names Patrick Colquhoun,²⁶⁸ T W Plumber,²⁶⁹ and William Henry²⁷⁰ as men who had described these women as ‘prostitutes’. She also names ‘George Sutter, a settler, [who] contrasted

²⁶⁴ ‘Statement of the married and unmarried women and the number of their children in NSW, 1806’. *Essays 1806*. ML. M 18

²⁶⁵ Smith. *Australia’s Birthstain*. pp. 206-207.

²⁶⁶ Smith. *Australia’s Birthstain*. p. 207. Ref: Ralph Clark. ‘The Letter Book’. ML. Call Number: MLMSS 3429

²⁶⁷ Salt. *These Outcast Women*. p. 120.

²⁶⁸ Salt. *These Outcast Women*. p. 26. Ref: Thompson, E. P., *The Making of the English Working Class*. Harmondsworth, 1977. p.60.

²⁶⁹ Salt. *These Outcast Women*. p. 35. Ref: T W Plumber to Macquarie 4 May 1809. HRNSW, 7. Sydney, 1901. p.120.

²⁷⁰ Salt. *These Outcast Women*. p. 38. Ref: Wm. Henry to LMS. 29 Aug 1799, HRNSW 3. p.715.

convict women with 'virtuous women' as though the two terms were mutually exclusive.²⁷¹ Marsden was also not alone in wanting to see women married so that the moral behaviour in the colony might be raised. Salt points to the fact that 'Surgeon Cunningham advocated that female convicts be speedily married, as the resultant responsibility would make them industrious, offset male depravity and increase the population.'²⁷² Salt also notes that 'The *Sydney Gazette* advocated marriage and parenthood as "the greatest inspiration to reform and industry in female convicts."²⁷³ The imbalance in the sexes and the lack of adequate accommodation gave rise to a high level of immorality in the colony which was remarked on by numbers of people who sought solutions to the problem. Marsden was among them but alone as the one singled out for criticism for his description of the women caught up in this system.

When he first arrived in the colony, Governor Lachlan Macquarie noticed immediately that *de facto* relationships were common practice and decreed that men and women should regularise their cohabitation by entering into marriage. Marsden was not averse to mentioning this particular issue in his preaching. In Sermon 88:20-21 he says,

How many (married) men and women are there amongst us who have forsaken their own husbands and wives and gone after others, and are at this moment living with them. Tho these men (married) and women did faithfully promise before God the angels and their fellow creatures in the most solemn and religious manner in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost that they never would be guilty of this offence. And yet they are living in the habitual commission of adultery (*sic*) notwithstanding their solemn vows and promises. Surely these people can never believe that their (*sic*) is a God that taketh vengeance. If they did they would sooner suffer strangling and death than act in this very way. (88:20-21)

²⁷¹ Salt. *These Outcast Women*. p. 38. Ref: Suttor to Bligh. 10 Feb 1809. HRNSW p.23.

²⁷² Salt. *These Outcast Women*. p. 42. Ref: Peter Cunningham. *Two Years in NSW*, London, 1827, p.323.

²⁷³ Salt. *These Outcast Women*. p. 80. Ref: SG 'Report on the Female Factory' 24 June 1826

The issue was not simply that men and women were living in *de facto* relationships but that many of them had left wives and husbands back in England and had taken up temporary cohabitation in the colony. Further, their living together in the colony was producing offspring. Once a man had served his time and wished to return to England these children and their mothers were abandoned as the man returned to his legal spouse and their legitimate children. Ultimately, it is the spiritual condition and prospects of people that Marsden was concerned about in these comments. If people who ‘are living in the habitual commission of adultery’ believed that there is a God who will take vengeance, they would prefer ‘strangling and death’ rather than to continue in their adulterous relationships.

While Marsden may have preached against this immorality and Macquarie may have stated his opposition, neither approach appears to have had much success in raising the moral standard of the colony. Marsden declared this to be the case. While he may have made his efforts at improving colonial morality both from the pulpit and the bench, Sermon 68:9 gives an insight into how the magistrate and preacher ultimately viewed these efforts:

We see (daily) that nothing can alter the dispositions and conduct of wicked men, that all calls from heaven, and all punishments from men are ineffectual.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁴

Despite not being able to stop the practice Marsden did show some compassion and understanding on December 27, 1820 when he gave evidence to the Bigge Commission concerning two touching cases. He was asked, “Have you frequently discovered that women who are married here after their arrival, had husbands in England and that those husbands join them here after their second marriage?” He responded, “I have seen several instances of this kind, and one very affecting instance in a person named Patrick Emmetter, who lived at Parramatta. He married a prisoner here, a young woman of two or three and twenty and they seemed to be very happy. Walking down the street one evening with her husband she came up to me and in great agitation said, My first husband is come Sir, & is now at the Derwent. She was so distressed she did not know what to do, her first husband had gone on board a man of war and she thought he had been dead. I told her she did very wrong not to inform me that she was married and that she deserved to be severely punished. In a short time her first husband arrived & they all three, the 1st & 2nd husband & the wife came to my

If Marsden thought both his efforts as a preacher and as a magistrate were ineffectual, why did he persevere, or why did he not look for some other strategy? Some believe he just gave up the struggle and turned his focus elsewhere. According to Governor Brisbane, he gave his energies more to indulgence 'in private trade'.²⁷⁵ Likewise, the modern-day historian, Meredith Lake, writes that Marsden saw his vindication from God came not from his efforts as a clergyman or a magistrate but from 'the prosperity of his labours'. She says Marsden's prosperity, 'was a sign of divine vindication [and] was at the heart of Marsden's self-understanding',²⁷⁶ but references no evidence to back this claim. A closer look at what motivated Marsden as he preached shows that both the contemporary commentator and the modern-day historian have not understood the man. His sermons show that Marsden had a

house. She said that her 2nd husband had been a kind and good husband to her, & he said that she had been a good wife & lived happily together. They were all three greatly affected. I said to the woman you now have 2 husbands, with which do you think you can be the most happy. She said I have been very happy with the 2nd husband but if I could have my choice I would take the first. I told her she had done very wrong, but that as the 1st husband had a legal claim upon her she must adopt him. The 2nd husband was much affected, & indeed they all were, and she left Parramatta that evening with the 1st husband. The 2nd husband had been very unhappy ever since. I remember also a man named John Jennings, who was a Chief Constable at Parramatta and succeeded G. Barrington. He called upon me one day and told me that his lawful wife had arrived at Sydney & wished that I could advise him what step to take, as he had 2 children by the women with whom he was then cohabiting. He was greatly distressed, & I told him that he would be obliged to receive his wife tho he said that he had been separated from her for 9 years. He could not muster resolution to go to Sydney and see his wife but she at length arrived at Parramatta and after learning where he lived knocked at the door & asked whether John Jennings lived there. The woman with whom he lived having heard something of it, said that no John Jennings lived there. Jennings was in the next room and called out before he saw her, 'Fanny I am here'. They met, & in great distress of mind he furnished the other woman with means to live and return home and she went to England to her friends. On my arrival there I enquired after her, & I was informed that she had been hung for some crime that she had committed. Jennings himself died of a broken heart very soon after the woman quitted him." Marsden's evidence to Bigge, 27 December, 1820.

²⁷⁵ J. D. Heydon. 'Brisbane, Sir Thomas Makdougall (1773 - 1860)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 1, Melbourne University Press. 1966. pp 151-155.

²⁷⁶ Meredith Lake, "Samuel Marsden, Work and the Limits of Evangelical Humanitarianism," *History Australia* Vol 7, no. 3 (2010). p.57.8

genuine desire to see men and women converted to Christ and he gave his energy and passions to seeing this happen as he preached each Sunday. He believed if a change were to come about in a person, it would be by the movement of God's Spirit in their lives. It would not depend on the cajoling words of a preacher alone, nor the sentence passed by a magistrate. As Marsden wrote to Mrs Stokes after having been in the colony for just two years, 'There has not been any shaking yet among the dry bones, but the Son of Man is commanded to prophecy and I hope by and by the Lord will command the wind to blow. Stir up thy strength O God & come amongst us.'²⁷⁷

The reference to the shaking of the dry bones is a reference to Ezekiel 37 where the Spirit of God comes upon a valley of dry bones and gives them the breath of life so that they become the people of God. Clearly Marsden believed this movement of the Spirit of God was necessary to move people into life. He also believed it was his task to call upon people to take up life whilst, once he had done this duty, the responsibility lay back on the hearers themselves to respond:

I am commanded to warn every man, to entreat every man, to exhort every man to turn to God and live. (46:22)

It is my duty to warn you, to exhort you, and to beseech you to turn to God and live. But when I have done this I am clear from your blood. Your sin will then be found upon your own heads. (68:19)

In Sermon 6:3 he makes it clear that, without the Spirit of God, people only have a 'relish for sensual gratifications', but if they are 'born again of the Spirit' they will have 'experienced a divine change to have passed upon their souls'. What Marsden is in fact saying is that only by this 'divine change' would there be any change in the morality of colonial life. If he had been consistent in this theological position he may well have declined the role of Magistrate.

²⁷⁷ Mackaness. *Private Correspondence*. p. 17.

On Magistrates and the rule of law

Marsden saw his duty as a preacher was to be an obedient proclaimer of the things of God. If he did his job, the Holy Spirit would follow with His work of changing the hearts of men and women. Marsden's preaching also gives an insight into the duties and responsibilities of the role of Magistrate as he saw it. Sermon 56 deals specifically with the issue of magistrates.

Marsden writes:

magistrates as well as all in authority are bound by every civil moral and religious obligation to punish evil doers – they do not bear the sword of justice in vain. (56:5)

The magistrate is simply bound to 'punish evil doers'. And so, 'The institution of magistrates and judges is a necessary part of every well-ordered government.' (56:4) 'Indeed without such an institution the laws themselves would be altogether vain and useless' (56:5). On this view magistrates are functionaries of the law which they simply administer. The law stands on its own for the good government of society: 'men must be kept within the bounds of established laws which are enacted for the general good' (56:5).

While Marsden believed that his roles as preacher and magistrate were not trying to achieve the same ends, he nuanced this view with an understanding that preachers and magistrates did not have mutually exclusive roles. The duties of the preacher included the duty to 'put them (the professors of Christianity) in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates' (23:1-2). 'The office of ministers is to preach the gospel of Christ'. At the same time they must not overlook the duty that the gospel of Christ puts on the people 'as members of civil communion' (23:1). In Marsden's view, God had placed magistrates and governors in a civil society to 'do all in their power for the suppression of iniquity' (23:4). The 'civil magistrate is a minister to the[m] for good, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil' (27:1). Further, Marsden believed that magistrates were to use their influence for 'the maintenance of piety in the world ... and are therefore called his ministers' (63:3-4). These views on the roles of magistrates and governors in the ordering of

society for suppression of iniquity and maintenance of piety, gesture towards an evangelical understanding of mission. This is not that Marsden thought that a well ordered society was the way to do Christian mission but rather that a well ordered society created a safe place in which to do mission. This idea may explain Marsden's understanding when he accepted the role of a magistrate. He was not trying to convert people with the lash, but rather he expected a well ordered, and therefore safe society, was the best place to do mission. As a magistrate he could help create a safe place. As a preacher he could then proclaim the gospel to a people who inhabited a safe place.

Marsden also believed there was a distinction between Christian forgiveness and the penalty of law:

Christian forgiveness does not interfere with human laws. It does not forbid governors and magistrates to execute them since they are appointed of God on purpose to enforce them. (89:4)

Because governors and magistrates are 'appointed of God' it is appropriate for the punishment of the law to be carried out, taking precedence over Christian forgiveness.

While it is plain that Marsden saw the roles of preacher and magistrate as distinct but complementary, Quinn misses the point when he comments that Marsden 'was soon convinced of the greater efficacy of the lash'.²⁷⁸ Quinn's thesis is that Marsden thought he might have greater success in converting people through his role as a magistrate where he was not able to as a preacher. In Sermon 97:6 Marsden answers this accusation long before it is made: 'Outward restraints are good, but can avail but little towards inward conversion.' He knew that 'inward conversion' is the work of the Holy Spirit. He did not believe he could persuade anyone to true religion by ordering a flogging. Any 'divine change' in a person's life came from being 'born again of the Holy Spirit' (6:4). A person could not even approach God

²⁷⁸ Quinn. *Altar Ego*. p.56.

unless drawn by the Holy Spirit: ‘We have no will to approach unto him unless the Holy Spirit incline our hearts’ (95:4). The work of conversion was the work of the Holy Spirit. The work of the preacher was to preach. The work of the magistrate was the appointment of God for the good government of society which created a ‘safe place’ in which the gospel could then be preached. Punishments meted out from the bench, however, would not be tempered by Christian forgiveness.

While Marsden constantly called on his congregations to resist sin and turn away from all immoral behaviour, he recognised a person could only do this in the power of the Holy Spirit:

St. Paul tells us that he resisted sin and strove against it ... This however cannot be done effectively but by the assistance of the Holy Spirit ... all our help must come from God. To attempt this work without calling upon God for the gracious aid of his Holy Spirit will be in vain. (43:10)

‘The Natives of this Colony’

In the entire Moore College collection of 98 sermons there are just two where Marsden makes a reference to Australian Aboriginal people. These references say nothing of the state of the people nor express a hope of their improvement or conversion. In the first reference which comes from Sermon 10:15 Marsden says:

We need not go amongst the untutored Africans or Indians, or the natives of this colony to be made sensible that mankind have lost all fear and reverence for a supreme being, but even we who have been born in a Christian country and blessed with the knowledge of divine revelation, give the fullest demonstration of our enmity against God, and manifest this enmity by our wicked works.

This is a telling comment about how Marsden saw the spiritual state of the colonisers. In his view it is to be expected that the ‘untutored Africans or Indians or the natives of this colony’ would have no fear or reverence for God because they have not heard of the Christian God. But Marsden’s focus is on the behaviour of the colonists. Having ‘been born in a Christian

country and blessed with the knowledge of divine revelation' it may be expected that their behaviour would reflect that knowledge. Marsden's point, though, is that even with this knowledge, there is no behavioural change which would show evidence of this knowledge of God. Rather there continues to be 'enmity by our wicked works.'

This is the call of the preacher for consistent behaviour. This is the call of the preacher to reflect on the fact that having heard of the Christian God, the hearers must consider what changes should take place in their living. Marsden again demonstrates his pastoral focus in his inclusive language. He is not blasting his congregation for *their* behaviour but he speaks of '*our* wicked works'. The preacher identifies with his congregation. Ultimately Marsden is speaking of an inconsistent Christian living and he is calling on his people to respond to the message they have been privileged to hear; to show that they have understood the gospel message by changed behaviour in life.

This reference to the Aboriginal people is also of interest because of Marsden's well known critical comments against them. Marsden is on record as saying that the Australian Aborigine is the most degraded of all human beings.²⁷⁹ He is not, however, the only person of the time to make derogatory comments about the Australian Aboriginal. Te Pahi, the Māori chief who visited Sydney in 1805, challenged the Aboriginals for going about stark naked.²⁸⁰ LMS missionaries who had fled to Sydney from Tahiti also made adverse comparisons between the Australian Aboriginals and other South Sea Islanders.²⁸¹ The

²⁷⁹ Marsden to Pratt, Secretary to the CMS, 24 February 1819, in Elder, *Letters and Journals*. pp. 231-2.

²⁸⁰ Standfield. *Race and Identity*. Kindle edition: Location 87.

²⁸¹ See Marsden's letter to the Rev Josiah Pratt, 24 February 1819, quoted in Elder, 1932, p. 231. On others making disparaging comments on the Australian Aboriginals and other native peoples see: "Religious News" *Montreal Daily Witness* April 4. 1868 which reports on the Moravian mission, 'to those most degraded of all human beings, the inhabitants of the interior of Australia.'
<http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=33&dat=18680404&id=QNYdAAAAIBAJ&>

comments in this sermon are not so much critical as a statement of fact as Marsden sees it. He refers to several people groups who have no knowledge of the Christian God and holds them up to his congregation as an example, pointing out that they, who have been ‘blessed with the knowledge of divine revelation’, should have a greater demonstration in their lives of godly Christian behaviour.

In the second reference to Aboriginal people in the Moore College collection the ‘natives of this Colony’ are again held up to the congregation as examples of people who are ignorant of God:

Many here would not be men of such wicked and abandoned characters if they had no more knowledge of men and things, no more knowledge of the supreme being than the ignorant natives of this Colony. (81:10)

As much as the natives might be ignorant of the things of God, Marsden is saying to his congregation that if they had as much knowledge as the natives of the things of God, they would demonstrate that knowledge with better behaviour than they now have. These comments place a different perspective and context on Marsden’s words that the natives of the colony were the ‘most degraded’ of all human beings. The comments in this sermon are an acknowledgement by Marsden that the Aboriginal is morally superior to the convict.

<http://books.google.com.au/books?id=nh8DAAAIBAJ&pg=1952,4419169> Accessed 26 Dec. 2013. Willets, Jacob. A *Geography for the Use of Schools*. Potter. 1831. ‘The Hottentots are described as some of the most degraded of all human beings’ p.112. Digitised by Google.
http://books.google.com.au/books?id=5AEWAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA112&lpg=PA112&dq=%22most+degraded+of+all+human+beings%22&source=bl&ots=GvDHdQZG-6&sig=1YbdbL_fZHcKHKfgkrYM8xf2POU&hl=en&sa=X&ei=9Eq7UtnbHIWViQe_y4CwCg&ved=0CC0Q6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=%22most%20degraded%20of%20all%20human%20beings%22&f=false Accessed 26 Dec. 2013. See also: Anne O’Brien, ‘Kitchen Fragments and Garden Stuff: Poor Law Discourse and Indigenous People in early colonial New South Wales’, *Australian Historical Studies* 39 (2008), p.152.

Another reference to ‘natives’ in Sermon 34:23-24 is a more generic reference.

The reference is to ‘natives’ in general rather than ‘the natives of this Colony’ in particular. In this sermon Marsden uses them as an example to his congregation of those who are responding to the gospel and who will be in heaven while members of the congregation who are not responding to the good news proclaimed to them will be barred from entrance:

What anguish, what despair, what agony, what weeping, what wailing,
what gnashing of teeth will seize your souls when you shall see the
natives of the south sea islands, with other heathen natives sitting in
the kingdom of God and ye yourselves thrust out.

These few references to Aboriginal people in the Moore College collection of Marsden’s surviving sermons indicate several things about Marsden’s understanding of the ‘native people of the Colony’. First, we again see that Marsden does not use his time in the pulpit to deliberate on controversial issues. He does not try to justify himself against the criticisms of Campbell, that he was more interested in being the ‘Mohamed of the South Seas’, than caring about the Aboriginal people of the colony.²⁸² He is consistent in the demarcation of his roles and here is faithful to the task of the preacher. His sermons, showing his pastoral heart by his

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In a letter under the nom de plume of *Philo Free*, Campbell (the Governor’s Private Secretary) had written in the *Gazette* of 4 January 1817, accusing those involved in the South Seas mission of introducing alcohol and guns to their own financial advantage while neglecting the native population of New South Wales. Campbell defended his action to the governor in publishing the letter on the grounds that he had been indignant that Marsden had not attended a meeting of the natives at Parramatta which the governor had convened, believing that Marsden was opposed to any efforts at civilising the Aboriginals. Far from neglecting the welfare of the Australian Aboriginals, in a letter dated 25 April 1810 to the Church Missionary Society, Marsden wrote in connection with the delay of sending missionaries on to New Zealand because of fears for their safety after the massacre of the crew of the *Boyd* in New Zealand. He proposed to retain these missionaries at Parramatta and put them to work in the ‘instruction of the natives of New Holland.’ This proposal was to ‘make some little establishment for the accommodation of our own natives, and those of the islands who may visit us.’ Letter from Marsden to CMS Committee, 3 May 1810 in Johnstone. *Pioneer*, p.86. See also Chapter Five *Sanction and Strategy*.

inclusive language, constantly call upon his hearers to examine themselves and to be cleansed by the blood of Jesus. He does not muddy the waters with political issues.

Secondly, his references to the ‘ignorant’ natives are not derogatory in nature. Marsden uses the term as a simple statement of fact. Those who have not heard the gospel are ignorant of the things of God. This ignorance, however, does not place them in an inferior position. All people have equal opportunity to respond to the gospel and those ‘natives of the south sea islands, with other heathen natives’ will be ‘sitting in the kingdom of God’ (Sermon 34:24) because they will leave their ignorance behind and respond to the gospel when they hear it, whereas those members of Marsden’s congregation who have been born in a Christian country but have not responded to the gospel, will be left out and not sitting in the Kingdom of God.

Marsden made efforts to engage with the Aboriginal people by bringing children into his household, training them as domestic servants. These efforts invariably proved unsuccessful both in seeing these children become members of a white community and in conversion to Christianity. This attitude to the Aboriginal people is well criticised but it did not mean for Marsden that he believed that Christianity was only for ‘civilised’ people. His sermons show his belief that all people of whichever race must make their own response to the offer of salvation in Jesus Christ. If those of British decent were not responding they would see the natives of the South Seas entering heaven before them.

Whoredom, Sobriety and Children

In calling people to more moral behaviour Marsden wanted them to reflect on their lifestyle choices primarily in the light of the account they may give to God. While he did call for social change in his sermons, as was common within the evangelical milieu, his sermons reveal more of a desire to see people making sure of a place in heaven:

Let me exhort you who have run to the greatest excesses in iniquity to stop this day and come to some serious reflection. Had God punished

you as your crimes deserved where would you now have been? I leave your consciences to answer. (Sermon 9:22)

‘Drunkenness and whoredom’ are two crimes Marsden singles out that ‘keep the Colony in a constant state of torment and alarm’ (75:13). He believed these were the two causes of a man turning to theft, perjury and murder:

These crimes find constant employment for the different benches of magistrates thro the Colony and our Court of Criminal Jurisdiction. They lead to every kind of robberies, (&) perjuries and murders. They bring the utmost ruin and distress upon families, destroy the prospects of the rising generation, and fill the Colony with poor distressed orphans, or children forsaken by one or both their parents. There is scarcely a week passes but but (*sic*) some man or woman falls a sacrifice to the sin of drunkenness or ~~whoredom~~, with respect to drunkenness there is scarcely a street a lane a highway, ~~or even a prison~~ (in the Colony) in which some drunkard has not breathed his last breath in a state of intoxication. (75:14-15)

And yet Marsden is not simply concerned at the sight of people dying in the streets from intoxication and the effect that has on the general population. When he notes that ‘Some of you who are accustomed to be intoxicated at every opportunity’, his desire is to call upon his hearers to consider the consequences of this behaviour for their eternal salvation: ‘what do you think in your serious sober moments. Do you ever think that you shall not inherit the kingdom of God?’ (88:10). In his sermons this eschatological focus is more evident than a social reform agenda for which the evangelicals were well known. Further to this Marsden says that the sight of women rolling drunk in the streets was not uncommon:

To see women rowling (*sic*) drunk in the streets and to hear them belching out the most horrid oaths [and] curses has ever been considered as the greatest disgrace to any society. Yet is it not uncommon amongst us. Women have lost all regard for God, their sex and society & are only fit fuel for hell. (97:15)

So common had the sight of drunken people in the street become that Marsden believed the ill effect of it on the general population is not apparent:

The Corinthians were also accused of drunkenness. And may not many of us be charged with the same beastly crime. It is become so common a practice (*sic*) amongst us that its malignity does not appear. (88:22)

But his concerns were not limited to drunkenness and whoring. Marsden believed that every sin that people could possibly be addicted to was flagrantly practiced in the colony:

There is scarcely a single sin which the apostle hath specified by name, and to which the heathens were addicted but what is most flagrant amongst us. (88:19)

Part of Marsden's concern in delineating the sins of the people in the colony was a desire to see them honouring God and making sure of a place for themselves in heaven. But he could see the ill effects the behaviour he opposed was having on the coming generations and spoke about the bad example being set by those who were parents:

They bring the utmost ruin and distress upon families, destroy the prospects of the rising generation, and fill the Colony with poor distressed orphans, or children forsaken by one or both their parents. (75:14)

There are two other references in the Moore College collection of Marsden's sermons to the plight of children in the colony, Sermons 35 & 88. They are in a similar vein, speaking of children who have lost one or both parents. Marsden is likely to have also been aware of the decision of leading evangelicals in York in 1786 to establish Sunday Schools declaring them to be 'necessary to the rescuing of the children of poor parents from the low habits of vice and idleness'.²⁸³ And yet in his preaching there is no call to action to promote or support any social activity in this area. Here is a notable trend in Marsden's preaching. In the colony he was active in promoting the evangelical social reform agenda, as evidenced by his involvement in education, in the establishment of the Benevolent Asylum and the women's

²⁸³ J. Howard. *Historical Sketch of the Origin and work of the York Incorporated (Church of England) Sunday School Committee*. Second edition. York. 1896. p. 7. Quoted by Edward Royal. 'Evangelicals and Education.' in John Wolffe (Ed.) *Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal: Evangelicals and Society in Britain 1780-1980*. London. SPCK. 1995. p. 118.

factory at Parramatta against inaction by Governor Macquarie. However, in general, he does not promote this social agenda in his preaching by a call to action. The exception to this is Sermon 66 discussed earlier and the sermon following the wreck of the *Edward Lombe* where he called on his congregation in this specific incident to give to those in need. Other than these two examples Marsden's sermons serve simply to warn. He does this by pointing out unacceptable behaviour. The only call to action is a call to trust in the shed blood of Jesus. Marsden's sermons are not a vehicle of evangelical social strategy with a call to social reform.

In Sermon 81 Marsden spoke about how Abraham, Isaac and Jacob passed on the things of God to their children through 'holy conversation'. He tried to encourage his congregation to follow these godly examples, but says 'I fear we have few Abrahams amongst us. Few that make it their study to train up their children in the way they should go' (81:14). He then asked directly if there were any such parents in the colony and answered his rhetorical question in the negative:

Do we see any parents amongst ourselves take pains to instruct them in their duty? On the contrary they seem rather to study to corrupt their infant minds with everything that can render them obnoxious to ~~society~~ God and society, and bring themselves to shame (&) ruin. (81:15-16)

Marsden believed that most children in the colony had been corrupted by their parents' poor example but called upon those parents to cease their immorality out of pity for the children:

There are few children here but have acquired a great degree of knowledge how to do evil. They are ripe in iniquity. You who are parents ought to abstain from many scandalous vices in which you live out of pity to your own children. Few of you would wish your children to be situated as you are or have been. You would not wish them to be brought to that public disgrace which your vices have brought you to. (81:16)

Of note here is Marsden's assessment of the effects these crimes had on families and the colony as a whole. He believed these crimes destroyed the prospects of the rising generation and filled the colony with poor distressed orphans and forsaken children. There was scarcely

any street where a drunken person did not die every week. So little value did the people of the colony in general put on human life that very little thought was given to those terrible circumstances.

Marsden's concerns alert us to the fact that these things were a common enough occurrence. They paint for us a picture of people in destitute circumstances having an adverse impact on the young people of the colony and of the general population. So common have these circumstances become, the people have become indifferent to them. Of drunkenness specifically Marsden painted a bleak picture. He says in Sermon 75:14-15:

There is scarcely a week passes ~~but~~ but some man or woman falls a sacrifice to the sin of drunkenness or ~~whoredom~~, with respect to drunkenness there is scarcely a street a lane a highway, ~~or even a prison~~ (in the Colony) in which some drunkard has not breathed his last breath in a state of intoxication. Yet the living lay it not to heart. These awful deaths are so common that they are thought no more of than a ~~butch~~ butcher slaughtering an ox or a sheep. So little value is put upon human life

Licence may be allowed for the preacher's hyperbole where he says, 'there is scarcely a street a lane a highway in the colony in which some drunkard has not breathed his last'. And yet Marsden's lament seems more to be at the apparent indifference to the loss of life. It is interesting to note that the death of Simon Burn just weeks after his encounter with Marsden was at the hand of a butcher who ran him through with a knife. Marsden may well have had Burn's death in mind as he penned these words lamenting how cheap life had become in the colony.

In Sermon 31 Marsden gives further insight into how he viewed drunkenness in the colony. His text for this sermon is 1 Peter 4:7, 'The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober & watch unto prayer.' In the sermon he enjoined his listeners to be sober in all things and to pray. It is one of a number of New Year sermons in the Moore College corpus. In these Marsden speaks of how God had taken many people from their midst in the past year.

He then calls on the congregation to consider that in the coming year they may face their own death. There is no guarantee that they will see out the coming year before God requires their soul of them.

In taking up the call of the biblical text to be sober, Marsden inevitably turns his attention to drunkenness in the colony. He makes several appeals to his hearers not to be drunk and speaks of some specific incidents of drunkenness within the colony that have led to disaster:

How many individuals even in this colony have been brought to ruin & destruction by, and also many families have been greatly injured. We have seen persons inflamed by drunkenness to commit adultery, robbery & murder. (Sermon 31:4)

Such a course of events fuelled by alcohol could well describe any age and any culture. There is nothing unusual here. Yet, again:

O ye drunkards, what if God should in the midst of one of your drunken fits arrest you by death, has (*sic*) he has many amongst us, and say unto thee thou fool, this moment shall thy soul be required of thee.

Again, there is nothing peculiar to the colonial experience here which is not uncommon to all societies. People in 'drunken fits' are known to be arrested by death in every society and every age. And yet a comment in this sermon relates to the death rate in the colony. Marsden was not only concerned about the high death rate due to drunkenness, but he also states that the death rate is higher in infancy and 'the bloom of life' than those who reach old age:

We see more cut off either in their infancy, or in the bloom of ~~age~~ life, than what come to the grave in old age. (Sermon 31:16-17)

While in this sermon Marsden expressed concern about high infant mortality, rates in the colony were no different to those in England. Milton Lewis reports that, 'Infant death rates in

large colonial cities were often of much the same order as those reported in English cities.’²⁸⁴

Marsden may have had in mind that many of those who died in the streets from drunkenness were in the ‘bloom of life’. Burn was probably about 40 when he died at the hand of the butcher. Drunkenness remained a continual problem for the colony both within and outside the prisons. A parliamentary committee of inquiry in 1849 into the administration of Darlinghurst gaol found, ‘debauchery, drunkenness and irregularity of every kind.’²⁸⁵

Sabbath neglect, Gambling and other sins

Compulsory church attendance for soldiers and convicts alike in the early colony was the initial, but never enforced, expectation. As an example, on Christmas Day 1793 in Johnson’s newly-constructed church building, designed to hold 500 people, there were just forty or so in attendance. Marsden found that church attendance did not improve until a much later time. In his preaching he expressed concern that many in the colony did not attend church. There are those:

who never upon any occasion enter the house of God. Many I know whom I have never seen at a place of public worship upon any occasion. (58:17-18)

But it also seems Marsden did not hold much confidence that those who did attend would gain much benefit. There were many who attended church, ‘but never regard one word they hear’ (Sermon 58:18). However, in his more compassionate moments Marsden was able to hold out, to those who might hear something of his preaching, a word of grace:

None need to fear to come, who wish to know the Lord however sinful they may be. The precious blood of Jesus is sufficient to atone for all sins. (Sermon 58:24)

²⁸⁴ Milton James Lewis, *The People's Health: Public Health in Australia, 1788-1950*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003. p.59.

²⁸⁵ ‘COUNCIL PAPER.’ *The Argus*. Melbourne, Vic. 1848 – 1957. 1 Sep 1849. p. 4. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article4765015> Accessed. 22 Dec 2013

Of important note is what Marsden said about those who had come to the colony as convicts. He believed they may well have had better prospects but because of a spiritual condition have fallen 'into the snares of the devil':

How many hundreds are there in this Colony who at one period of their lives had a fair prospect of happiness and honour and comfort before they fell into the snares of the devil, when their understandings were blinded by sin, their passions enslaved, and their hearts hardened. Such men have gone on progressively from crime to crime until they have ruined their fortunes, and characters and many have, and forfeighted (*sic*) their live (*sic*) or liberty to the State. (Sermon 61:8-9)

It is only the preacher, who has a spiritual perspective on life, who can express such a view of why people have come to a life of crime. At a time when there were more convicts than free settlers in the colony, Marsden noted:

What an awful scene have the greatest part of this Colony before them. I need not say you are ungodly. I need not tell you that you are sinners. (Sermon 68:11)

Gambling was supposed to be illegal in the colony yet the authorities mostly turned a blind eye to it. Marsden, however, saw that gambling led many into crime:

Gaming is also a great cause of this sin. Many there are probably in this Colony who would never have openly violated this command, thou shalt not steal, if they had not been addicted to this vice of gaming. (Sermon 75:8)

He said he thought many would agree that the beginning of their troubles could be seen in their involvement in gambling and yet, like his comments on what has led many into crime, he spoke of gambling in terms of its being a spiritual issue:

I doubt not but there are many in this Colony who may date the beginning of their misfortunes from their love of gaming, & yet notwithstanding all the punishment they have suffered in consequence of (it) even banishment from their country & friends besides many other unknown calamities which they would never have experienced are yet as fond of this vice as they were the very first day they committed it, and are not yet convinced of its evil tendency. Nothing

can demonstrate more strongly how blind we are to our real interest than the general conduct of mankind. No punishments are equal to bring them to reflection nor even the sanctions of the divine law, which are eternal rewards & punishments sufficient to deter them from vice. (Sermon 78:9)

Turning his attention to other crimes, in Sermon 75:11 Marsden says there was no reason for stealing in the colony because there was no real want amongst them. With only a little bit of effort, everyone could be comfortable:

In every country men have temptations to commit this sin, but perhaps there is no country in the known world where they have so little temptation as in this Colony. There is no real want possibly existing amongst us. Every person may be easy and comfortable in his situation provided he only be (is) industrious. Every person may abound in plenty without extreme labour and toil. It requires no more than a bare moderate industry to live well here.

The establishment of a penal colony at Botany Bay had met with unrelenting ridicule from some quarters at its very suggestion. It was regarded as a ‘regressive step and an inhumane solution to the nation’s penal problems’.²⁸⁶ Despite this attitude back home Marsden believed that the colony provided great opportunity for anyone ‘with moderate industry to live well’. The ensuing prosperity of some emancipists bears testimony to this. And yet Marsden bemoans, ‘we find that there are hundreds in this Colony who cannot be induced to labour for their own support’ (Sermon 75:13). They ‘choose to starve and steal’ rather than to ‘live by honest industry.’

The general character of the people of the colony

Marsden’s disquiet for the general lack of concern in the colony for the lives of those who lay dying of intoxication in the streets has been noted above. In Sermon 86:18 he stated:

²⁸⁶ Babette Smith, *Australia's Birthstain : The Startling Legacy of the Convict Era*. Crows Nest, N.S.W. Allen & Unwin, 2008. p. 203.

If we were to judge from the general character and conduct of the inhabitants of this Colony, we should be ready to infer that God had in his righteous displeasure given many up to their own heart's lusts.

In another sermon Marsden compared the colonists to the people of ancient Corinth to whom the apostle Paul wrote, condemning their immoral behaviour:

Tho it is upwards of seventeen hundred years since the great apostle of the gentiles gave this account of the Corinthians, yet had he been sent at the present day he would have to preach the gospel in this Colony, he would have found it necessary to have addressed too many of us in the same language he addressed the heathens in this passage. (88:7)

Marsden saw the sin of fornication as one of the most serious among them:

The people of Corinth were addicted to the sin of fornication and are not we guilty of this abominable sin as much as the most ignorant heathens? Perhaps there never was so small a society as we are so much given up to the commission of this sin. (88:19-20)

It is clear that Marsden's understanding was that immorality was rife in the colony. He wondered out loud if it is not true to say that there was not more immorality in the colony than in any other society. Scattered throughout the sermons there are brief comments on other immoral behaviours that are simply worth noting for Marsden's understanding of behaviour in the colony.

On sodomy

The Corinthians were also charged with sodomy. And I would to God this sin has no existence amongst us, but this sin is too black and shocking for me to dwell upon here. Only let such persons know that they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (88:21)

The Select Committee on Transportation in 1837, known as the Molesworth Committee, declared that the system of transportation, which assigned convicts as servants and labourers to free settlers, was nothing more than slavery and also believed transportation was the cause

of homosexual activity.²⁸⁷ Babette Smith²⁸⁸ makes a cogent case that the report of Molesworth was more to do with the sensitivities of the conservative evangelical clergymen of the colony than reality. As noted earlier however, Smith allows her own prejudices to show when she overstates the case with regard to perceptions of the morality of the women convicts when she says that Marsden, ‘played such a significant role in creating their bad reputation’ and quotes Lieutenant Ralph Clark’s comments about ‘damned whores’.²⁸⁹ If, as the quotation from Clark shows, the women had a bad reputation before Marsden had even arrived in the colony, he can hardly be blamed for having a ‘significant role in creating their bad reputation’ especially by the strange logic that it was his ‘campaign to reform the morals of the women convicts’ that created their bad reputation.

Yet Marsden’s comment in Sermon 88 on homosexual activity cannot be discounted. While the comment is not proof to backup Molesworth’s assertions it does indicate that homosexual activity was known in the colony. In a letter to Wilberforce in February 1800 Marsden urged his friend to exert his influence to encourage more women into the colony.²⁹⁰ Yarwood believes this request from Marsden came as a result of his desire not to see young girls, born in the colony from illegitimate liaisons, ending up in prostitution due to an ongoing shortage of women in the colony. Yet it may have also included the thought that with sufficient women available, men may have not been tempted into homosexual activity.

²⁸⁷ British Parliamentary Papers. Vol. 19 No. 518. pp. 5-317 and Vol. 22. pp. 1-139.

²⁸⁸ Smith. *Birth Stain*. pp. 200-221. 25 Clergy in Van Diemen’s Land had signed a petition in July 1846 sent to the Home Office asking for the end to the probation system in that colony because they believed it encouraged homosexual practices. See Correspondence Relative to Convict Discipline 1847 Vol. 8. p. 44. Cited in *Fatal Shore* p. 531.

²⁸⁹ Smith. *Birth Stain*. pp. 206-207

²⁹⁰ Quoted by Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p.74.

On reviling

The Corinthians were guilty of reviling one another. Are we free from this sin? Many of us study to slander our neighbour and injure his character and reputation in the world. (88:22)

It is tempting to see an autobiographical note in this statement as Marsden faced many accusations that sought to ‘injure his character’. Perhaps one did more than any other. Already noted is the letter published in the *Sydney Gazette* by ‘Philo Free’. Another letter by ‘A Free Settler’²⁹¹ accused Marsden of avarice. Governor Brisbane’s view that Marsden was too involved in trade has been noted earlier and is a comment that continues to cause a negative assessment of his character. Over and above all these issues stands Macquarie’s dealing with Marsden when their relationship finally broke down irreparably. On 8 January 1818 Marsden was summonsed to appear before the Governor. Macquarie mistakenly believed Marsden to have been the author of a letter to the Home Office complaining of Macquarie’s administration. In front of William Cowper, J. T. Campbell and Lieutenant Watts, Macquarie read a prepared statement in which he declared Marsden to be ‘a secret Enemy of mine’ and ‘the Head of a Seditious Low Cabal’. Macquarie then said that he consequently regarded Marsden ‘unworthy of mixing in Private Society or intercourse with me’ and informed him that ‘I never wish to see you excepting on Public Duty’.²⁹² Cognisant of the Governor’s strong opposition to him, Marsden later offered his resignation from his position as Magistrate.²⁹³ Macquarie appears to have ignored the letter, but must have taken some delight in causing to be published in the *Gazette* two weeks later a terse announcement that the Governor was ‘pleased to dispense with the services of the Rev Samuel Marsden as Justice of the Peace and

²⁹¹ This letter is discussed more fully in the following section.

²⁹² Letter from Macquarie to Marsden. 8 January, 1818. III. Correspondence of Lachlan Macquarie, 12 May 1809-16 June 1822. State Library NSW. A 797.

²⁹³ Letter from Marsden to Macquarie. 10 March, 1818. *Bigge Appendix*. ML. Box 16. p.2145

Magistrate at Parramatta'.²⁹⁴ This must have been particularly galling for Marsden. In January, just days after Macquarie had notified him that he never wished to see him again, the Rev Robert Cartwright had resigned his position as Magistrate. The *Gazette* on that occasion recorded the Governor's high praise of Cartwright and his regret at the loss to the community.²⁹⁵ Marsden may well have had these events in mind as he prepared Sermon 88. His own character and reputation had been slandered and he could have believed that Macquarie was one of those 'many' in the colony who 'study to slander' those with whom they disagree.

On extortion and avarice

The Corinthians were also guilty of extortion. Are not we also justly chargeable with this crime? I must confess that this extortion is become so common amongst us, that we seem to have forgot that there is such a sin in the world. I believe that extortion was never committed with more agravating (*sic*) circumstances attending it than what it hath been here. Many seem to think that they may, without extortion, without any injustice to their buier (*sic*), take any price for the articles they may have for sail (*sic*), their avarice craves. (88:23)

Numbers of incidents of extortion and avarice could be named as those Marsden might have had in mind in this sermon. From as early as 1803 the *Sydney Gazette* was reporting bakers being brought before the Magistrates and fined for selling short-weight loaves of bread. The *Gazette* reports the practice continuing for decades. One Benjamin Barrow, a recidivist short-weight baker was brought before Magistrate Marsden on 16 October, 1813. Barrow was 'charged with exposing for sale 13 loaves short of weight' and was fined three pounds ten shillings.²⁹⁶

Another form of extortion can be seen within the colonial military ranks. The military officers at the time of Governor King were enjoying exorbitant profits from the sale

²⁹⁴ *Sydney Gazette*. 28 March, 1818.

²⁹⁵ *Sydney Gazette*. 31 January, 1818.

²⁹⁶ *Sydney Gazette*. 23 October, 1813

of imported spirits. King tried to restrict this trade only to find, through the economic laws of supply and demand, the cost to the public increased. Marsden himself was caught up in an apparent extortion racket when grain growers were holding onto their crops for a better price while government stores were empty.

The farmers of the colony were not exempt from accusations of extortion. The *Gazette* of 5 February, 1814 reported the Governor's Order to growers of grain that if they did not sell their grain at a reasonable price to the stores he would be forced to bypass them and buy imported grain which could 'be done at half the Price now paid for that purchased in this Colony.' This extortion of government was particularly obnoxious said the Governor because these farmers stood, 'considerably indebted to the Crown' for cattle, land and government men. He further declared that this order was to be read by the chaplains over two Sunday mornings. While Marsden may have been one of the recalcitrant grain growers, he condescended to read the Order on the first Sunday but refused to do so again on the second. The Governor's ire was raised, letters were sent backwards and forwards to London and Marsden found himself at odds with Macquarie again after some quiet years since his refusal to be a Commissioner of the turn pike road to the Hawkesbury in 1810. Just one month later Marsden found himself in an embarrassing situation. With the appearance in the *Gazette* of several letters from '*A Free Settler*' beginning on 5 March 1814, Marsden was accused of greed in keeping for himself a substantial library of donated books meant for distribution to members of the colony. In a plea to Macquarie to cause the unveiling of the identity of '*A Free Settler*' Marsden denied he had held onto the books because of avarice, but that it was more to do with his general busyness. He just hadn't gotten around to it.²⁹⁷

Considering some of these incidents of extortion and avarice in the colony where the finger could well have pointed directly at Marsden, it is interesting to note his comments

²⁹⁷ 9 April, 1814. *Bigge Appendix*. ML. CY1298-9.

in this sermon against such practices. Could he have been so bold in his sermon as to simply and blatantly say, 'It's not me doing these things!'? Could it be that he just had no concept of his own wrong doing? Or could it be that the accusations against him were overstated? One's own prejudices usually determine the answers to such questions. It is hard to impute motive for good or ill without prejudice. The evidence seems to be against Marsden when it comes to his dealings with the donated books for the lending library. In other dealings the negative accusations seem to come more from those who are predisposed against Marsden. If he was in any sense aware of false dealings in his own business interests it is certainly a very bold statement against such practices in Sermon 88:23.

Covetousness

In speaking of the act of Jezebel having Naboth stoned to death and Ahab subsequently taking all his property, Marsden speaks against the sin of covetousness:

Dreadful as this was, and far surpassing what is commonly found in the British nation, it is in many respects imitated by many amongst us. It is surely no uncommon thing for men at this day to covet what does not belong to them and so inordinately to desire it as to use unlawful (& dishonest) means of obtaining it. (91:7)

Here Marsden is following Simeon, but whereas Simeon speaks in general terms Marsden is specific in applying the teaching to 'many amongst us'.

On the receiving of stolen goods:

Let valuable articles be offered for sale, tho the possessor has obtained them by dishonest means, how few will turn them away. If they can only protect themselves from the lap of the law, they give themselves no further concern, but will connive at the (conduct of) [the] common (thief) and suborn to conceal his thefts if they can only gain anything by so doing. Alas the world is full of characters whose hearts are set on covetous practices, and when they are likely to be detected and brought to justice will deliberately perjure themselves on all occasions with the utmost unconcern, as if this was no crime. If we presume to remonstrate with such persons we shall soon see how indignantly they take reproof tho conscious of their guilt. They labour to substitute impudence & assurance for innocence and integrity. (91:8-9)

In Sermon 91 Marsden seems to have an autobiographical note, indicating that his own remonstrations with sins in the colony tended to meet with less than godly repentance.

The conduct of Ahab serves to shew what is in the heart of all wicked men against the faithful ministers of the Lord. They are sent as God's monitors to shew the house of Jacob their sins. But who welcomes them in that character? Let them go to any company or to any individual that is violating the laws of God and let them testify against the evil that is committed. Will their admonitions be received with thankfulness. Will not their interposition be deemed rather an impertinent intrusion? And will not the minister become an object of hatred as Elijah was? Yes, such is the light in which ~~is the light in which~~ his conduct will be viewed, however gross and unjustifiable the sin is that has been committed and reprov'd men cannot bear to have their favourite sins touched. They immediately shew their enmity and indignation. (91:10-11)

Marsden recognised all the trouble within the colony caused by the many and various crimes he dealt with as a Magistrate. Surprisingly there is another trouble that he observed was not present but wished it was. As only one who had a concern for the spiritual state of the colony and its people, Marsden bemoaned the lack of persecution for righteousness sake within the colony. He wished there were more:

It is many (*sic*) be remarked that in the Colony there is little persecution for righteousness sake. What is the reason of this. Because there is little righteousness among us. There is nothing to excite persecution. I would to God there were. (97:11-12)

The lack of persecution for righteousness sake is indicative of all the unrighteousness Marsden observed. While he listed all the troubles that came upon the members of the colony because of extortion, avarice, reviling, covetousness and the like, he would rather that the only troubles that came were to do with persecution that arises against those who are seeking to live in the world according to God's righteousness.

On foul language

The common conversation of many of you is nothing but obscene and impure language. ... You can hardly open your mouths without belohing (*sic*) out oaths, curses & blasphemes. (97:13)

Marsden showed concern for the next generation of the effects of sinful behaviour within the colony:

You have sold yourselves to work iniquity and will be guilty of as many crimes while you live as God & the society in which you are will allow you, but it is necessary that you should be checked and restrained for the good and wellbeing of the rising generation, lest they should imitate your spirit & manners and follow you in the road to ruin & destruction. (97:15)

Soil Notes

As noted in Chapter One, included with the collection of Marsden's sermons in Moore College, is a series of notes on soil. While Karskens notes that the image of early farmers in the colony as 'hopeless, inept, lazy, sinfully wasteful' came from observations of visitors to the colony,²⁹⁸ Marsden says much the same thing. In his Soil Notes he bemoans the fact that to date (though the date of this document is not known) government has not sent anyone who knows anything about agriculture to oversee the work of farming.

Unfortunately for this Colony there never was any professional husbandman sent out by government to this day to superintend the cultivation of the ground and to point out the best mode for carrying on the concerns of agriculture. (SN:7)

Cultivation had been carried out by those who knew nothing about it, or if there were those with knowledge, they were occupied with other duties:

The whole of this important science upon (the precepts of) which the riches and poverty of a nation depend has been managed hitherto either by persons who had no knowledge of farming on their arrival in the Colony, or if any officer happened to ~~have~~ know any thing of agriculture he had other concerns to attend to in the line of his

²⁹⁸ Karskens. *The Colony*. p.115.

profession, which prevented him from giving up his time & attention to these studies. (SN:7-8)

Marsden also spoke of the inappropriateness of giving the work of cultivation to a criminal class who had known nothing but idleness:

Experience has already clearly evinced what little advantage the Colony is likely to derive from permitting such persons as have been prisoners to become settlers. These men in general have not been brought up in the habits of industry, but of extreme idleness. They have the greatest aversion to labour, to subordination and good government. Their idle, licentious & ungovernable habits are fixed in many of them for life. They set no value whatever on property. Present gratification is their only object. Their farm, their crops, their stock and all they possess they will sell for the ~~near~~ sake of indulging themselves in a few bottles of liquor. (Soil Notes:8-9)

A further objection Marsden raised against former convicts being given grants of land in the hope that they might become prosperous farmers was their complete lack of knowledge of the principles of cultivation.

There is another urgent objection against many of the prisoners becoming settlers when the time of their servitude expires, which is their total ignorance of agriculture. When they have obtained a grant of land they are at a loss how to proceed to its cultivation. Many of them have been known to sow their lands with wheat without so much as previously breaking up the ground, it being in its original state, not so much as an hoe or spade put into it. After the wheat is sown they have just chopped the ground over two or three inches deep and left it to take its chance. This method they have adopted partly thro ignorance & partly thro idleness. (Soil Notes:9-10)

In Soil Notes:11 Marsden noted one further problem:

If there happens in a district to be a labourious (*sic*) industrious man ~~in a district~~ who is anxious to obtain a competence (for himself and family) and to live comfortably he is sure to be plundered of his grain & stock ~~constantly~~ by his idle licentious neighbours. This is a dreadful evil and puts the severest check upon the industry even of the well disposed. A man and his family may labour but they are never certain of enjoying the fruits of it. If they possess anything they run a risque not only of losing their property but their lives if they dare to defend it.

Plundering and risk to life await the industrious farmer and in Marsden's estimation:

At present there can be no comparison between the number of the ~~idle~~ ignorant idle & profligate (land holders) ~~settlers~~ and the experienced industrious & sober, who have been allowed to become settlers. The number of the former so far exceeds the latter.

As Karskens has made us aware, visitors to the colony made many of the same observations as Marsden has done in these notes on soil and the men who farm it. The visitors and Marsden were not alone in these observations. Governor Macquarie was also so disturbed by what he saw in the Nepean and Hawkesbury districts on his inspection tour following the general muster that he was moved to write a decree on 9 December 1815 to encourage better farming practices. He noted that 'among the lower Order of the Settlers great Slovenliness and neglect of the most obvious and necessary Duties of Farmers were but too frequent and evident in their personal Appearance, and the State of their Farms, in Regard to Cultivation and Improvement.' He further observed that the 'Farms, although long in a certain Degree of Cultivation, still remained totally devoid of Fences, whereby the Crops of Grain are continually exposed to the Inroads of wandering Herds and Flocks, and are frequently thereby destroyed'.²⁹⁹ The slovenly appearance of the farmers and their farms disturbed Macquarie. In the same decree he encouraged them not to neglect the Sabbath and called them to a pious observance of the day. It is interesting to note that Macquarie and Marsden are in full agreement on these issues. It is a great pity that a power struggle between them prevented them from working together for what, in some ways, were the same goals. This power struggle is explored more fully in Chapter Six.

Christian Charity

Most of the references in Marsden's preaching that refer to events or conduct in the colony we have looked at so far in this Chapter have been moral issues which he addressed in the hope

²⁹⁹ *Sydney Gazette*. Saturday, 16 December, 1815.

of exciting some spiritual reform. A significant reference to another event in the colony excited Marsden's call on his people to exhibit Christian charity to those in need. This incident was the wreck of the *Edward Lombe* noted in the previous Chapter. In his sermon on this event Marsden called upon his congregation to show Christian charity to those left destitute by the wreck. He encouraged them to give generously out of Christian duty and for the eternal reward they will receive.

Conclusions

This survey of references to colonial events in Marsden's preaching enhances our understanding not only of Marsden the man, but also gives new perspectives on colonial life. It has given us an insight into how Marsden understood life in the colony and how it impacted on people from a spiritual perspective. It has shown us that Marsden, while referencing events and particular behaviours in the colony, is in his preaching primarily concerned for the spiritual wellbeing of his hearers. Where he has elucidated the varying duties of ministers and magistrates he has done so with a view to calling people to repentance and faith and amendment of behaviour. Where he has spoken of the 'natives of this Colony' he has done so with a view to encouraging his congregation to make sure that they will act on the revelation they have been blessed to receive to make sure that they will be in heaven. Where Marsden has spoken of particular sins such as whoredom, drunkenness, Sabbath breaking, covetousness or sodomy he has done so in order to call people to a sober judgement of their own behaviour in the light of the fact that they will one day (even maybe within the next year) give account to the One who judges justly. This eschatological focus is more evident in Marsden's preaching than a call to social reform.

When Marsden turned his attention to industry, or lack of it, within the colony we are reminded of his comment in Sermon 75:11, 'Every person may be easy and comfortable in his situation provided he only be (is) industrious.' In his Soil Notes he is scathing of the lack of industry he observed in the colony. While there is no spiritual application in Soil Notes, it

is clear that Marsden believed with only a little effort any person could adequately provide for themselves from their farm.

Chapter Five

The New Zealand Mission³⁰⁰

Introduction

This chapter looks at how the Rev Samuel Marsden prepared for his mission to New Zealand and what he said in his sermon when he got there. On the beach at Rangihoua in the north of the Bay of Islands, New Zealand Marsden preached what is regarded as the first Christian sermon in New Zealand on Christmas Day, 1814. Contemporaries and later historians have criticised him for this mission, believing that by engaging in it he was at once neglecting the Australian Aboriginal and seeking to gain for himself both wealth and reputation. Certainly, Marsden expressed that his focus was fully on the mission to New Zealand despite other matters of a pressing private and public nature. To Josiah Pratt, secretary of the CMS, he wrote of the New Zealand mission, ‘this I consider of more importance than any other, and feel it my call to follow the openings of Providence.’³⁰¹ Whether or not this mission, ‘of more importance than any other’ duty, meant the neglect of these other duties is the subject of this chapter. What the mission certainly shows is Marsden’s strength of character amongst these

³⁰⁰ The basis of this chapter was originally presented as two seminar papers. The first was a paper at a Conference in Waitangi New Zealand on 27-29 November 2012. The Conference was titled: ‘IWI – CHRISTIANITY – TAUIWI Hei Kohikohinga Kōreromō te Hāhi Karaitiana ki Aotearoa Re-evaluating Christianity’s Influence in Shaping Aotearoa New Zealand c.1800 to c.1860.’ The paper in an expanded form has since been published: David Pettett. ‘Samuel Marsden – Christmas Day 1814. What did he say? The Content of New Zealand’s first Christian Sermon’ in Stuart Lange Allan Davidson, Peter Lineham, Adrienne Puckey, eds. *Te Rongopai 1814 'Takoto Te Pai!' Bicentenary Reflections on Christian Beginnings and Developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Auckland. General Synod Office, 'Tuia', of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia, 2014. pp. 72-85. The second paper was delivered at the Moore College Library Day in July 2013 on the subject of ‘Preparing for Mission.’ It has since been published in: Peter G. Bolt & David B. Pettett Eds. *Launching Marsden’s Mission; The Beginnings of the Church Missionary Society in New Zealand, viewed from New South Wales*. London. Latimer Press. 2014. pp. 79-88.

³⁰¹ Marsden to Josiah Pratt [CMS Secretary], 20 Sep 1814. Hocken Library (HL), University of Otago, MS-0054. Item 47 PC-0119. pp. 242-5

controversial assessments. From his many years of strategic planning, negotiating and equipping, to the fulfilment of the establishment of the CMS mission to New Zealand we see Marsden as a man of vision who persevered in the face of many setbacks to achieve what he had long believed was the calling of a benevolent God.

This chapter first examines the ideas that Marsden had neglected other duties by doing two things:

1. Studying Marsden's purpose (and the purpose of his backers) in accepting the chaplaincy to New South Wales.
2. Demonstrating from his own preaching how he thought about mission and wealth. We will discover how he thought strategically about doing mission and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

Great Commission

Marsden viewed the Great Commission of Matthew 28:29, 'make disciples of all nations', as encompassing a promise. He believed that until the gospel had been preached to all nations, 'this commission will not be fully executed'.³⁰² Marsden believed that the promise encompassed in the words of the Great Commission was that God, 'would save the heathens, and take out of them a people for himself'. He believed that:

These words ... give the missionaries of the gospel of peace a roving commission. They have authority from the King of Kings to navigate all seas, to visit every island upon the bosom of the great deep, to traverse all continents, to sound the silver trumpet of jubilee, and to inform the nations of the earth that the year of release is at hand, and to invite the ransomed sinners to return to their once forfeited (*sic*) possessions. God had promised by the mouth of all his prophets that he would save the heathens, and take out of them a people for himself.

³⁰² Sermon 34:2.

What's more, Marsden believed this 'roving commission' applied to himself. Leaving his homeland for the first time in 1793 Marsden's desire was to see 'the Conversion of many poor Souls'. He was going to the South Seas 'to preach the everlasting gospel.'³⁰³ His sponsors hoped that the Rev Richard Johnson, who had arrived at Botany Bay in the First Fleet in 1788 as the first chaplain to New South Wales, would be gracious enough to share with Marsden the title of 'Apostle to the South Seas'.³⁰⁴ Government authorities thought they were getting a chaplain simply to engender a sense of morality in the convicts and soldiers. With expectations of seeing the gospel proclaimed throughout the South Seas, Johnson and Marsden had other ideas. Marsden in particular was not about to dish up a 'scanty morality'. His purpose was 'to publish the glad tidings of a free and full salvation to a lost world'.³⁰⁵

As noted in Chapter Three of this dissertation, at a very early stage, the evangelical leaders of the Church of England were active in efforts to see the evangelical gospel proclaimed throughout the British Empire and beyond. Wilberforce, through his friendship with Pitt, made sure that the First Fleet sailed to Botany Bay with a chaplain. Simeon had developed a close relationship with Charles Grant of the East India Company and was actively recommending young evangelical preachers to him as chaplains. It is no surprise therefore that these two men, Wilberforce and Simeon, along with the Rev John Venn and others, were key in the establishment of the Church Missionary Society in 1799. It was to this Society that Marsden suggested in April 1808 that the people of New Zealand were a 'very superior people in point of mental endowments' and therefore provided a fertile ground for the bringing of civilisation and the gospel. It was Marsden's idea that the Society should provide the fruits of civilisation by sending artisan missionaries who would simultaneously

³⁰³ Samuel Marsden, *Diary – 1793-1794*. Mitchell Library, C245. Entry dated 27 July, 1793.

³⁰⁴ John Newton, Letter to the Rev Richard Johnson 24 May 1793. NSWHR Vol. 2. p. 27.

³⁰⁵ Sermon 93:12

bring the arts of civilisation and the proclamation of the gospel.³⁰⁶ Those who believe Marsden emphasised the fruits of civilisation as a necessary precursor to the bringing of the gospel have misunderstood Marsden's careful, nuanced and strategic thinking about mission. A. T. Yarwood,³⁰⁷ for example, has made a concerted effort to try to show that Marsden's priority in his missionary endeavour was 'civilisation before conversion', though he acknowledges Marsden later emphasised the precedence of gospel proclamation.

On the contrary, Marsden expected that his missionaries would take the arts of civilisation as well as the proclamation of the everlasting gospel. To the Church Missionary Society, he said, 'Though the Missionaries might employ a certain portion of their time, according to local circumstances, in manual labour, this neither would nor ought to prevent them from constantly endeavouring to instruct the natives in the great doctrines of the Gospel'.³⁰⁸ Indeed, as Marsden took the first missionaries to New Zealand in 1814 he began the Mission with a very clear and detailed proclamation of the 'Glad tidings of great joy' from Luke 2:10.³⁰⁹ At a much earlier time, once he had reflected on the failure of the first missionary efforts to Tahiti, Marsden wrote to the Directors of the London Missionary Society about 'the absurdity of the idea of the missionaries employing their time only in conversing and instructing the natives'.³¹⁰ In this letter Marsden's idea was that it was absurd to expect missionaries to do nothing but preach. Yet his priority was not 'civilisation first', but rather 'gospel and civilisation together'.

³⁰⁶ Samuel Marsden. Letter to CMS 7 April 1808. Hocken Library, University of Otago.
³⁰⁷ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*, pp. 85-86.
³⁰⁸ *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East*. London. 1806-1809. pp.961-63.
³⁰⁹ See my reconstruction of Marsden's 1814 Christmas Day sermon:
<http://alltogether.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Christmas-Day-1814.pdf>
³¹⁰ Marsden to LMS Directors, 30 Jan 1801

Marsden saw it as providential that after a two year recruiting drive back in England, as he began his journey back to New South Wales in 1809 on board the *Ann*, he discovered one of the crew to be his acquaintance, the young Māori chief, Ruatara. The details of when Marsden might have first met Ruatara are a little confusing. Ruatara's uncle Te Pahi had visited Sydney in November 1805. The *Sydney Gazette* announced that Te Pahi had arrived on board the *Buffalo* with his sons on 27 November. The *Gazette* reports that the number of Te Pahi's sons accompanying him was five.³¹¹ *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* has the number as four.³¹² Te Pahi remained in Port Jackson as the guest of Governor King and attended church each Sunday, engaging Marsden in numerous conversations about his God. On 23 February 1806 the *Gazette* reports that the *Lady Nelson* was expected to leave Port Jackson the following day with Te Pahi and his sons on board. Ruatara arrived in Port Jackson on board the *Argo* in April and again in September 1806.³¹³ He may well have met Marsden on both of these occasions. In his journal, Marsden says, 'About two years after Tippahee (Te Pahi) departed, the young chief Duaterra (Ruatara) ... came to Port Jackson which gave an opportunity to me of having frequent communication with this very interesting people.'³¹⁴ Clearly Marsden's memory of the time frame is incorrect. If Marsden met Ruatara about 'two years after Te Pahi departed' this would place the meeting in about February 1808. Marsden had left for England twelve months previously.

³¹¹ *Sydney Gazette* 1 December 1805.

³¹² <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1t53/te-pahi> Accessed 9 June 2014.

³¹³ Elder, *Letters and Journals*. p. 63, indicates that Ruatara joined the *Argo* in 1805 without specifying the month but the *Gazette* reports that the *Argo* left Port Jackson for the Bay of Islands on 15 September 1805. Marsden's journal indicates that Ruatara joined the *Argo* which sailed the coast of NZ for five months and then, with Ruatara still on board, went to Port Jackson and then a six month fishing trip 'on the Coast of New Holland' before returning to Port Jackson where Ruatara was discharged without pay. If Ruatara joined the *Argo* in late September or early October 1805, spent five months fishing then sailed to Sydney followed by a further six months fishing, this would place him back in Sydney probably in September 1806. The *Gazette* of 21 September 1806 reports that the *Argo* had arrived in Port Jackson the previous day.

³¹⁴ Elder, *Letters and Journals*. p. 60.

A more accurate account of Ruatara's movements is that shortly after the *Argo* arrived in Sydney on 20 September 1806 the second time with Ruatara on board and discharged him, Ruatara made passage back to the Bay of Islands on board the *Albion* on 12 October 1806.³¹⁵ This was the last time Ruatara visited Sydney until he returned in 1810 on board the *Ann* with Marsden returning from England. After leaving Sydney on the *Albion* Ruatara remained at home for about six months and then joined the *Santa Anna* on a sealing expedition and then eventually journeyed on to England where he arrived about July 1809. In late 1814 Marsden has written in his journal that he had known Ruatara 'nine years before',³¹⁶ and in a letter dated 28 October 1815 that he had known him 'nearly ten years'. The estimates of years by Marsden place his first acquaintance of Ruatara in 1805, but if Marsden's recollection is that he first met Ruatara 'about two years after Te Pahi departed', it is much more likely that Marsden's first meeting with Ruatara was in September 1806 when he arrived in Sydney on board the *Argo* and departed three weeks later on the *Albion*. Ruatara may well have spent these three weeks living in Marsden's household as he did for several months after they arrived back together from England in 1810.

Ruatara had made his way to London on board the *Santa Anna* and had hopes of a meeting with King George. He had gotten no further than the docks because of the ill treatment of the ship's captain who even refused to issue him with slops and dismissed him without pay. Ruatara was at this time aged about twenty-two according to Marsden.³¹⁷ In a fairly destitute state he was able to find passage back to New South Wales on board the *Ann*. Fresh in Marsden's mind was the prospect of the CMS starting a mission to New Zealand. He had encouraged the Society just 12 months before in the benefits of starting this mission. Here he was, now on board the *Ann*, returning to New South Wales in company with missionaries

³¹⁵ *Sydney Gazette* 12 October 1806. The *Gazette* notes that the *Albion* was expected to depart that same day.

³¹⁶ Elder, *Letters and Journals*, p. 62.

³¹⁷ Marsden states this in his letter to J. M. Good from Rio de Janeiro, 15 November 1809

bound for New Zealand. The providential meeting of Ruatara on board this ship must have confirmed in Marsden's mind that the timing was right for the start of a mission to New Zealand. Ruatara became very ill, so much so that Marsden feared for his life. He nursed Ruatara back to health and began to learn the language developing a mutual trust that would last until Ruatara's untimely death six years later in February 1815.

Strategic Thinker

When Marsden met Ruatara on board the *Ann* in 1809 he took the opportunity to learn the Māori language. This is indicative of his purpose, foresight and long term planning to take the gospel to the New Zealanders in their own language. Equally instructive of his strategic missionary thinking is Sermon 34 in the Moore Theological College Collection. In this sermon Marsden speaks of the work of various British missionary societies around the world. The sermon shows that Marsden was not just pleased to see the gospel being proclaimed around the world but that he believed that the places where the gospel was sounding forth had been chosen for their strategic locations. For example when speaking about the establishment of missionary work by the Church Missionary Society in western Africa in Sermon 34:12-15 Marsden says,

If the Christian religion once begins to send forth its living waters on the shores of western (Africa), it will soon spread its fertilizing streams thru its burning deserts, and turn that barren wilderness into a fruitful field. The voice of joy and gladness will be heard in those dreary regions of moral darkness, where the poor ignorant African pays his devotions to demons.

Marsden clearly believed the effect of this proclamation begun on the west coast would be the conversion of the African continent:

The same almighty word which said, let there be light and there was light, can command the Son of Righteousness to arise upon Africa with healing under his wings. Africa shall then (be free, shall then) be enlightened with divine truth, the glory of the Lord shall be revealed amongst them, and the kingdom of Satan shall fall like lightning from heaven, and they shall hear no more the voice of the oppressor. ...

The only object of the society in their benevolent exertions here, is to free Africa from the bondage of sin and Satan, from the oppressions and cruelties of the slave trade and from the intestine (*sic: internecine*) wars connected with that bloody traffic.

Marsden's vision was large. He has recounted in the sermon the deeds of the missionaries and the difficulties they had faced; how settlements and schools had been burned; how, 'When one missionary has fallen a sacrifice to the climate, another hath stepped (*sic*) into his station and filled up the broken rank.' He records successes where 'Two churches have been erected, and schools opened for more than 2000 native children many of whom have been redeemed from slavery'. And yet as exciting and as hopeful as these missionary efforts were, Marsden's vision was raised to see beyond this western coastal fringe to see the whole continent being won for Christ. As he continued in the sermon to speak about the work of the CMS in Malta, again he believed it was a strategic decision to have begun the work there. He speaks of Malta as a central location for the spread of the gospel throughout the Greek islands and also onto the African continent where it was his hope that the gospel would, 'in due time spread its branches over Egypt, and the various nations in that part of the globe'. He says 'The seed which the society is now scattering in the Mediterranean tho at present as small as a grain of mustard seed may grow into a great tree' (Sermon 34:16). In this sermon as Marsden recounted the efforts of missionaries in Africa and the Mediterranean, he also looked beyond those particular efforts, with a strategic focus, to see greater things being accomplished through these small beginnings. As Marsden discovered Ruatara on board the *Ann* and began to learn the language of New Zealand, we see a man who thought strategically about the spread of the gospel, and no doubt learning the language at this point was part of his strategy for taking the gospel to New Zealand.

Marsden's vision was not limited to what the Societies were doing in Africa, the Mediterranean and North America. Nor was it limited to what he was doing in New South Wales and New Zealand. As he had brought with him the expectation of John Newton that he

and Richard Johnson would share the title ‘Apostle to the South Seas’, Marsden believed that the establishment of a British colony in New South Wales was a providential ordering for the spread of the gospel throughout the South Seas. He expressed the thought as early as 1812 that:

The Colony promises to become a place of great importance to all the South Sea Islands. It is from N S Wales that proper missionaries are to be raised up for the instruction of the heathen in these parts. I trust that some of the rising generation will become a seed to sow the land.³¹⁸

His wish that ‘some of the rising generation’ would become those missionaries to the South Seas was fulfilled in what may be a most unexpected way. A man who was a single missionary from Tahiti had fallen in love with the daughter of former convicts who had since become ‘pious’.³¹⁹ Falloon comments:

In a sense, this was Marsden’s emancipationist agenda for the Colony – that, unlike North America, God would evangelize the South Sea Islands, not using, said Marsden, ‘an army of pious Christians’ or ‘men of character and of principle’, but men taken, ‘from the dregs of society – the sweepings of the gaols, hulks, and prisons’.³²⁰

Sanction and Strategy

Marsden came under heavy sanction from various quarters when he launched his mission to New Zealand. The declaration by Secretary Campbell in his libellous *Philo Free* letter in the *Sydney Gazette* that Marsden’s voyage to New Zealand to establish the mission demonstrated a supposed lack of interest in the Aboriginal people of New South Wales was not just disingenuous but an error of fact. Like Johnson before him, who had brought a young Aboriginal girl to live in his household, Marsden had made efforts to reach the Aboriginal

³¹⁸ Marsden to Avison Terry, 29 Jul 1812. Alexander Turnbull Library (ATL), Wellington, MS-Papers-0453-01, item 2.

³¹⁹ Marsden to Josiah Pratt, 18 Jun 1813. HL, MS-0054, item 8 [PC-0118, pp.37-44].

³²⁰ Falloon, ‘“Openings of Providence”: The shaping of Marsden’s missionary vision for New Zealand.’ In Bolt & Pettett *Preparing for Mission*. p. 133. Falloon quotes from Marsden, in *Missionary Register* (1823), p.66.

people of the colony by bringing two young boys into his household. With the delay of the New Zealand mission due to the *Boyd* incident Marsden proposed to the CMS that he retain at Parramatta the missionaries who were bound for New Zealand and put them to work in the ‘instruction of the natives of New Holland.’ This proposal was to ‘make some little establishment for the accommodation of our own natives, and those of the islands who may visit us.’³²¹ With these words Marsden expressed an interest in and a desire to reach the Aboriginal people with the gospel. When these efforts had failed to achieve their hoped for results Marsden was at a loss to know how to reach a people who, to his Western educated mind and cultural focus, demonstrated ‘no material wants’. It was not that he had no interest in the Aboriginal people. It was more that when, blinkered by his Western cultural focus, he was unable to make progress with them, he saw a more responsive people in the natives of New Zealand and directed his efforts there.

Marsden had a larger vision for the gospel when he saw missionary efforts taking place in strategic locations such as the African west coast and Malta. The response of the Aboriginal people in New South Wales to the limited efforts made by Marsden and others in bringing them the good news of salvation was small and disappointing. The greater potential from a people who Marsden felt would be more responsive, directed him to what he could see as a more strategic opportunity: to see the Māori first won for Christ. Strategically this could then open the way for the spread of the gospel among the less responsive Australian Aboriginal people.

One great work of God

In speaking of the work of various missionary societies established in London, Marsden made the point that they were, ‘connected together as links in one grand chain, for the promotion of the gospel’ (Sermon 34:8). This statement shows that in Marsden’s thinking, strategically, in

³²¹ Johnstone. *Pioneer*. p.86.

God's providence, these individual societies form the one great work of God. There is no one mission to this people and another to that people. Each mission combines to form the one effort of promoting the gospel to the far flung ends of the earth. This 'one grand chain' does not leave one people group behind but continues to link peoples throughout the world. Linking people of similar ethnic origins or of geographical proximity strategically opens the way for the gospel to spread back and forth across the globe.

Marsden believed the words of Jesus in the Great Commission gave 'the missionaries of the gospel of peace a roving commission'. He said that the missionaries 'have authority from the King of Kings to navigate all seas, to visit every island upon the bosom of the great deep, to traverse all continents' (Sermon 34:32). As a man who had been sent by the leading evangelicals of his day to take the 'everlasting gospel' to the South Seas, Marsden took seriously his own place as a participant in this Commission. Charles Grant of the East India Company in a letter on 17 March 1791 to Charles Simeon refers to Marsden as a 'missionary'.³²² In his letter to Johnson, John Newton had implied as much when he encouraged Johnson to share the title, Apostle to the South Seas, with Marsden.³²³ Marsden saw himself not as a keeper of public morals in a prison colony but as a missionary taking the everlasting gospel to the people of the South Seas. To do this successfully, and in answer to his own prayer as he set out from his native shores in 1793, Marsden had to be a man of far reaching vision and strategic determination.

Campbell, in his *Philo Free* letter, had not only accused Marsden of neglecting the Australian Aborigines but had also declared motives of self-aggrandisement. The letter referred to Marsden as the 'Christian Mahomet' averring that he was only looking for personal praise, honour, glory and profit in his efforts to take the gospel to the South Seas. On

³²² Simeon Papers, Ridley Hall Archives. The Simeon Papers at the time of my visit to Ridley Hall were kept in four boxes on top of a cupboard in the librarian's office.

³²³ Letter from Newton to Johnson. *HRNSW*, Vol. 2. p. 27.

the contrary, Marsden was very clear about to whom the honour should go for the spread of the gospel around the world. By informing his congregation of the missionary work being done around the world by various Societies, Marsden was clear that this was God's work. The Societies and those who supported them were 'secondary causes' in 'what God is doing in the world' (Sermon 34:18). Likewise, when he wrote about successes of the missionary efforts in Tahiti Marsden ascribed the triumph of this mission to the providence of God and expressed his views that those who spoke against the mission must now keep silent while the missionaries continue to do their work:

Many, even sober-thinking men, for years viewed the Mission to the Islands with contempt; and considered it as the offspring of intemperate zeal. The mouths of gainsayers must now be stopped, and infidels silenced. Nothing like this, as I have had occasion before to remark, has occurred since the days of the Apostles. We must look beyond all second causes, to the Great First Cause; and, while we do this, we must use such means as are within our reach, and follow closely the openings of Providence.³²⁴

Criticisms of Wealth

Another criticism Marsden faced was that of Governor Brisbane who accused him of engaging in 'trade cloaked under a surplice.'³²⁵ Brisbane's belief was 'that clergy, like government officials, should not indulge in private trade'.³²⁶ Commissioner Bigge also criticised him for being 'less sensible than he ought to have been to the impropriety of combining operations of a mercantile nature with those of his profession'.³²⁷ If Marsden's sensibilities had been on what the perceptions of those who were keen to find fault with him might be, this criticism from Bigge might be just. However, such criticisms fail to understand Marsden's priorities and the place and importance of wealth juxtaposed to the importance of

³²⁴ Marsden in *Missionary Register* (1820), p.127.

³²⁵ Quoted by Wannan. *Early Colonial Scandals*. p. 176

³²⁶ J. D. Heydon. 'Brisbane, Sir Thomas Makdougall (1773 - 1860)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 1, Melbourne University Press, 1966, pp 151-155.

³²⁷ Wannan. *Early Colonial Scandals*. p. 176

the gospel and his desire of using every means possible to create opportunity to spread the gospel.

Marsden's attitude to wealth can be seen in a small number of the sermons in the Moore College Collection. In Sermon 34:8, where he speaks of the works of the various missionary societies, he points out that the pious are giving their money to this work of spreading the gospel around the world.

the poor pious widow adds her mite and teaches her orphan school boy
to spare his pocket money and to cast his weekly penny into the Lord's
treasury. ... To the widows mite the rich and noble, the kings and
queens of the earth give of their abundance

In 1814 Marsden had purchased the ship *Active* to aid the progress of the work of the Church Missionary Society in the South Seas. With this vessel he also engaged in trade with the Māori of New Zealand and other South Sea Islanders, giving rise to the criticism from Governor Brisbane and others that he was more interested in gaining wealth from his missionary enterprises than gaining the souls of men. Marsden's intention in purchasing his own ship was to use it to enable a speedier means of bringing the gospel and civilisation to the Māori. It is unlikely that he seriously engaged in trade to expand his own wealth. In correspondence with the Church Missionary Society written on aboard the *Active* on his first journey to New Zealand, Marsden commended the welfare of his family to the Society should he not return, because, 'much of my capital has been expended in the work.'³²⁸ Not only had much of his capital been expended on this missionary cause but as Malcolm Falloon points out, 'The reality was that the cost of buying and outfitting (let alone operating) the *Active* was more than Marsden could personally afford at the time.'³²⁹ Though he had become a wealthy man his wealth was stretched to the limit. Nevertheless, Marsden used his wealth for the

³²⁸ Quoted in Johnstone. *Pioneer*. p.119.

³²⁹ Falloon. "'Openings of Providence': The shaping of Marsden's missionary vision for New Zealand.' In *Launching Marsden's Mission*. p. 131.

benefit of the missionary work which, in the event of an untimely death, would have left his family destitute without the intervention of the CMS for which he was undertaking this work.

Following the start of the New Zealand mission at Rangihoua Marsden recorded in his journal:

as there was no timber at Rangheehoo fit for erecting the necessary buildings for the settlers, I determined to take the *Active* to the timber district ... as this would save considerable expense and supply what was wanted at once.³³⁰

With a view to saving both money and time, Marsden used his ship to establish this missionary presence in New Zealand.

The Mission Delayed

The occasion of the mission to New Zealand was a significant one for the Māori chiefs and people who welcomed Marsden and his missionaries on one of the first European adventures into New Zealand waters since the attack on the company and destruction of the ship *Boyd* in December 1809. On 10 March 1810 the *Sydney Gazette* reported that the *Boyd* had been ‘captured by the New Zealanders’. The initial reports of the attack come from the Supercargo of the *City of Edinburgh*, Alexander Berry, who reported to Governor Macquarie that the *Boyd* had been taken in Whangaroa where on 31 December 1809 Berry had found the ship ‘burnt to the copper sheathing’ and only four survivors: Mrs. Ann Morley, her infant daughter, another toddler, Elizabeth ‘Betsey’ Broughton and a young cabin-boy, Thomas Davis. The rest of the crew had been killed and eaten.³³¹

As Marsden and others rowed ashore at Rangihoua at the northern end of the Bay of Islands on that Christmas morning they were greeted by the Māori chiefs Korokoro, Ruatara and Hongi Hika dressed in British Regimentals provided to them by the Governor of

³³⁰ Elder. *Letters and journals*. p.94

³³¹ 6/1/1810, Historical Records of New Zealand 1.295–296

New South Wales, Lachlan Macquarie. Their men were drawn up in regimental fashion under the British flag flying over New Zealand soil. This led Marsden to record in his journal that he considered this was ‘the signal for the dawn of civilization, liberty, and religion in that dark and benighted land’ and then to express the hope that these British colours ‘would never be removed till the natives of that island enjoyed all the happiness of British subjects’.³³² Behind this friendly, warm, welcoming scene lay years of hard work Marsden had put into establishing this mission to New Zealand. While official enquiries were progressing and apportioning blame after the *Boyd* incident which had so stalled meaningful contact between Westerner and Māori, Marsden was hard at work in the background, making his own enquiries and putting his own life at risk to bring reconciliation and peace between Māori tribes embroiled in the fallout of the incident.

Following Berry’s report, official blame for the destruction of the *Boyd* and the murder of its crew had been laid at the feet of the Māori chief Te Pahi who was well known in Sydney, having been the first Māori chief to visit there. Between November 1805 and February 1806 Te Pahi had been the guest of Governor King and also an inquisitive attender at Marsden’s church each Sunday. Yet as more evidence was gathered and a report from a Tahitian, who was considered to be impartial, was given, it became clear that Te Pahi had had nothing to do with the murders. He had arrived in Whangaroa the day after the initial attack and tried to rescue some of the crew who had climbed for safety into the rigging of the *Boyd*. As the *Sydney Gazette* reported in September 1810, ‘it appears that neither Tippahee [Te Pahi] nor his son Mytye [Matari] had any share in the barbarous acts committed by these sanguinary miscreants; but that the old chief had on the contrary endeavoured to preserve the lives of several of the crew.’ This report, however, came too late for Te Pahi. In retaliation for his alleged role in the *Boyd* incident, six whaling ships had sailed to Te Pahi’s village in the

³³² J. R. Elder, Ed., *Letters and Journals of Samuel Marsden 1765-1838*. Dunedin: Coulls, Somerville, Wilkie. 1932. p. 93.

Bay of Islands, some miles to the south of Whangaroa, and raided it. Te Pahi himself was wounded in this fight by bullets to the neck and chest and about sixty of his people killed. Marsden reports that Te Pahi received seven shots and died.³³³ A Māori woman who had given the whalers information about Te Pahi's whereabouts was taken to Port Jackson for her protection³³⁴ where she was interviewed by Marsden who then reported to the Church Missionary Society:

I saw a New Zealand woman yesterday, who [arrived in the *Perseverance*] and she related the melancholy Story to me. The cause of this misfortune is not yet exactly known; as the natives had, at all times, previous to this Affair, been kind and attentive to our people. It is generally believed here that we were the first Aggressors. [...] I believe it will be found that we have treated the New Zealanders with the greatest injustice. It is much to be lamented that Englishmen should be such Savages as they often are, when amongst poor Heathen whom they imagine they have in their power.³³⁵

Considering the varying accounts of why the *Boyd* had been attacked, Marsden came to the conclusion that it was because of the ill treatment given by ship's masters to the natives of the South Seas. But things had gone into turmoil amongst the New Zealanders as well. With the death of Te Pahi at the hands of the Europeans for his alleged involvement, the people of the Bay of Islands declared war on the people of Whangaroa. Marsden recorded, 'This most awful calamity extinguished at once all hopes of introducing the Gospel into that country'.³³⁶ Not to be deterred from his goal however, Marsden set about to determine the truth and to bring reconciliation between all involved.

It was five years after the *Boyd* incident that Marsden finally arrived in New Zealand. He set about to bring peace between the warring tribes. Landing first at Whangaroa,

³³³ Elder. *Letters and Journals*. p. 61.

³³⁴ *Sydney Gazette* 28 April 1810.

³³⁵ "Reverend Samuel Marsden, Parramatta, to Reverend Josiah Pratt, Secretary" 3 May, 1810. Hocken Library: MS-0498/008/234

³³⁶ Elder. *Letters and Journals*. p. 61.

the site of the destruction of the *Boyd* and her crew, Marsden spoke to the chiefs. He determined from them the facts surrounding and the reasons for their attack on the *Boyd*. There was much discussion late into the night about the consequences of the attack, particularly how it had affected relationships amongst the New Zealanders themselves. With an assurance from the chiefs that they no longer wanted to fight and that they were ready to make peace Marsden recorded in his journal:

When these ceremonies were over, I expressed my hope that they would have no more wars, but from that time would be reconciled to each other. Duaterra, Shunghie, and Koro Koro shook hands with the chiefs of Wangaroa, and saluted each other as a token of reconciliation by joining their noses together. I was much gratified to see these men at amity once more.³³⁷

Marsden, Nicholas and Hongi from the Bay of Islands stayed on shore and slept on the beach among the people of Whangaroa. Marsden, with feelings he could not express, wondered at the ‘mysteries of Providence’ as he lay down that night ‘surrounded by cannibals, who had massacred and devoured our countrymen’.³³⁸ With such acts of trust, Marsden felt ready to bring his message of reconciliation between humankind and God just a few days later in the Bay of Islands.

In Sermon Two in the Moore College collection, on the same passage Marsden preached on in his first sermon in New Zealand, he says on page 13, ‘He [Jesus] came to bring about an immediate reconciliation between God and humans.’ No doubt, as he thought of these words in preparation for the mission to New Zealand and what he might say on Christmas Day 1814, Marsden had high hopes that the gospel message would bring about reconciliation between Westerner and Māori and between Māori and Māori.

³³⁷ Marsden. *Memoirs*. p. 100.

³³⁸ Elder. *Letters and Journals*. p. 89.

The young chief Ruatara had become an intimate friend of Marsden. He may have accompanied his uncle Te Pahi when he visited the colony of New South Wales in 1805 and made the acquaintance of Marsden. It may be that on this occasion Ruatara had been counted as one of Te Pahi's sons. The *Sydney Gazette* reported that Te Pahi arrived in Port Jackson with four sons and departed with five!³³⁹ In 1814, in preparation for his mission to New Zealand, Marsden wrote to Ruatara whom he 'had known nine years before'³⁴⁰, indicating that Ruatara may well have been in the company of his uncle in 1805. Certainly Ruatara arrived in Sydney on board the *Argo* on 20 September 1806 and departed on the *Albion* on 12 October of that year,³⁴¹ and it is likely that Marsden, having been impressed with the New Zealanders, met Ruatara on this occasion. Marsden again encountered Ruatara on his return voyage from England in 1809 when the young man, in an appalling state of bodily infirmity, was nursed back to health by Marsden. Their friendship was cemented on this voyage. Marsden took the opportunity to learn the Māori language and, when the ship finally arrived in Port Jackson in February 1810, Ruatara spent the next nine months living as part of Marsden's household before leaving New South Wales on board the *Frederick* in November of that year. The master of this vessel was not a man of his word and despite sailing frustratingly close to Ruatara's home at the northern end of the Bay of Islands in the North Lands of New Zealand, so that his people were in sight, finally abandoned him and his fellow countrymen on Norfolk Island. With the providential arrival of the *Ann* at Norfolk, Ruatara was given passage back to Port Jackson and again came under the hospitality of Marsden and his family. Marsden records that Ruatara 'had been about three years in my family',³⁴² over this time before he was finally able to make passage back to New Zealand on board the *Ann* after her next return from England.

³³⁹ See *Sydney Gazette* of 27 November 1805 and 1 December 1805.

³⁴⁰ Elder. *Letters and Journals*. p.62

³⁴¹ Memoir of Duaterra, HRNZ p. 338

³⁴² Elder. *Letters and Journals*. p. 69.

Being conscious of the importance of his proposed mission to New Zealand, Marsden sent his ship the *Active* to the Bay of Islands to bring Ruatara and the other chiefs to Sydney to accompany him on the voyage back to New Zealand. After some misgivings about the impact on his people of this missionary adventure to his native land, Ruatara was assured by Marsden that he would pull out of the mission if that is what the young chief wanted.

Finally Underway

With Ruatara's mind at ease the *Active* left Port Jackson. The voyage proceeded and the ship arrived at Rangihoua, Ruatara's land in the north of the Bay of Islands, just before Christmas after Marsden's encounter with the people of Whangaroa noted above. In preparation for the Christmas Day service on Sunday, 25 December 1814, Ruatara spent most of the day enclosing about half an acre of ground in which he built a pulpit and prayer desk. Marsden records in his journal that all this was at Ruatara's own initiative. Canoes were placed there as seats for the Europeans with the Māori men flanking them and the women and children and others encircling the whole. The service began with the singing of the 'Old Hundred Psalm'. Marsden then read the service with the Māori following the Europeans' lead and the direction of Korokoro. Marsden then preached on the text of Luke 2:10, 'Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy.'

While most historians believe that what Marsden said was dutifully translated by Ruatara³⁴³ there is a case to be made that Marsden spoke in the Māori language and Ruatara

³⁴³ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p. 175. E. M. Dunlop, *A great missionary pioneer: the story of Samuel Marsden's work in New Zealand*. London. SPCK, 1914. p. 57. James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian settlement to the end of the nineteenth century* Auckland:Penguin, 1996. p.143. Alison Jones & Kuni Jenkins, *Words Between Us - He Korero First Maori - Pakeha Conversations on Paper* Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2011. p. 86. Both Belich and Jones & Jenkins believe that rather than Ruatara translating, he simply said to his people that they should make as though listening to Marsden because there were great advantages to be had through association with him. This ignores the fact that Marsden had learnt to

was prevailed upon to explain those parts of the Christian message his fellow countrymen did not understand. Marsden had learnt the language from Ruatara on his return voyage to New South Wales from England in 1809 so that they conversed in the Māori language daily.³⁴⁴ It is within the bounds of possibility that he attempted to communicate the Christian message on that Christmas Day in 1814 in the language of the local people. Marsden was taking the Christian message to the people of New Zealand as the first CMS missionary to that place. He reports in his 1809 journal that he could make himself clearly understood in the Māori language. It really is unimaginable that a man with such a sense of occasion and sense of ‘taking the gospel to the heathen’ for the first time would not make some attempt to communicate that message in the language of the people. He wrote in his journal that ‘The natives reported to Duaterra (Ruatara) that they could not understand what I meant.’³⁴⁵ His use of the word ‘meant’ rather than ‘said’ is of significance in that, if he was speaking in the Māori language, he may have been speaking with an accent that made it difficult for the listeners to understand or he may have been speaking with awkward grammar or simply that he was communicating concepts so new to the hearers that they needed further explanation. Furthermore, if Marsden had been preaching in English there would have been no need for ‘the natives to report to Ruatara that they did not understand’. If Marsden had been preaching in a foreign language (English), their lack of understanding would have been expected and a

speak the language. Belich believes that Ruatara ‘translated Marsden’s sermons as he chose, shortening them considerably for one thing’ (p. 143), but gives no reference to the translation of other ‘sermons’ (plural) and no evidence that the ‘translation’ was a considerably shortened account of what Marsden had said. I emailed Prof. Belich to ask if he had any references to these claims. On 29 August 2012, Prof. Belich replied, ‘I am afraid that I wrote this so long ago that I cannot help beyond the references in *Making Peoples*.’

³⁴⁴ Samuel Marsden, *Notes on the Language of New Zealand*. Marsden Papers. Mitchell Library, Sydney. A1999. Vol. 8. p. 618. Marsden notes, ‘From daily conversation with Duaterra & from asking him a thousand different questions I am able now to converse with him upon any common subject, and can make myself clearly understood.’

³⁴⁵ Elder. *Letters and Journals*. p. 93.

report to their chief of their lack of understanding would be redundant. John Nicholas, who accompanied Marsden on this voyage, kept a journal of events which he later published as a *Narrative of a voyage to New Zealand*. What he says in this narrative about Marsden's sermon is also instructive. Nicholas recorded on page 205 that Marsden spoke 'through the medium of Duaterra' who 'was ready enough to act as interpreter'. This accords with Marsden's statement that the people did not understand his meaning. Nicholas wrote that Ruatara acted as an 'interpreter' not a 'translator'³⁴⁶, a distinction nuanced enough to possibly be of no significance, but interesting enough to lend weight to the theory that Ruatara did not act as a translator of Marsden's sermon, but interpreted the meaning when his people found Marsden's Māori words difficult to understand. In fact Nicholas records that so interested in the message of 'the only true God' were the New Zealanders that they had 'several importunate questions ... regarding the minute particulars of the subject'. This describes a situation where new and interesting things are being heard for the first time and those hearing are keen to understand. It hardly describes a situation of deception where Ruatara and the other chiefs present were supposedly keener to encourage their people to gain the Europeans' confidence than to give an accurate account of the message Marsden was bringing.³⁴⁷ John King was also present on the beach in Rangihoua on Christmas Day 1814 when Marsden

³⁴⁶ The Oxford English Dictionary on line, accessed on 9 September 2012, <http://www.oed.com.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/view/Entry/98205?rskey=AYCGDO&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid> indicates the usage of the word "interpret" in the 18th century could be "of interpreting authors, not to the words but to the sense." Likewise the OED on line accessed on 9 September 2012, <http://www.oed.com.simsrad.net.ocs.mq.edu.au/view/Entry/204840?rskey=GwVq8A&result=1#eid> for the word "translate", indicates an 1803 usage with the meaning "translate a note" from one language to another. These meanings of the two words from the 18th and early 19th centuries indicate meanings as we would understand them today. While modern day professional translators and interpreters use the words in the technical sense that an interpreter interprets the spoken word and a translator translates the written word, colloquial usage, both in the early 19th century and today, is more in line with the OED definitions.

³⁴⁷ This is the basic thesis of Jones and Jenkins in their chapter Eight, 'Not a sermon: an educational event on Christmas Day, 1814.'

preached, and in a letter the following February to the Rev. Daniel Wilson said, ‘The first Sunday that Mr. Marsden preached on shore Duaterra (Ruatarua) made him a pulpit. After the sermon Mr. Marsden asked him to explain it to the natives that were present.’³⁴⁸ This accords with Marsden’s account that the New Zealanders did not understand his meaning and that Ruatarua was prevailed upon, not to act as translator, but to explain what Marsden meant. One final account of Marsden’s sermon will suffice to make the point. Mrs. E. M. Dunlop, writing for the Centenary of the event stated, ‘... prayers were said and lessons read, the service of the Church of England being followed and in a manner translated and explained with the assistance of Ruatarua. Then Mr. Marsden gave out the text: “Behold, I bring unto you glad tidings of great joy.” He told the story of the day, in all its grandeur and simplicity, and Ruatarua made efforts to explain the subject of the sermon.’³⁴⁹ This account, written one hundred years after the event and giving no references for its information, nevertheless makes a very clear statement that Ruatarua translated the service but explained the sermon. Clearly, the service of the Church of England would have been in English and in need of translation. The sermon, however, did not need translation, but it did need explanation. This account therefore also gives weight to the notion that Marsden preached in the Māori language but in such a way that his ideas needed further explanation.

In the end, it is implausible to suggest that, if Marsden were speaking in English, Ruatarua did not faithfully translate what he was saying. We know Marsden could speak the language. If Ruatarua was not faithfully translating what he was saying, Marsden would have been aware. It is quite unlikely that Ruatarua would have tried to deceive his long-time friend in this way. The three contemporary accounts of what happened as he preached on that Christmas Day in 1814, the account of Dunlop in celebration of the Centenary, and the fact that Marsden had a facility in the language make it most likely, that in all probability,

³⁴⁸ Elder, *Marsden’s Lieutenants*. p.98.

³⁴⁹ Dunlop. *Missionary Pioneer*. p. 57.

Marsden made some attempt at communicating his Christian message in the language of the New Zealanders. We also know that Marsden, on a later occasion, taught the Māori some very sophisticated theological ideas in their own language. On Sunday 4 April 1830, he recorded that ‘In the afternoon the natives met to be examined and catechized. I then spoke to them as well as I could in their own language.’³⁵⁰ Where he wasn’t sure of the correct word he referred to, ‘Mr King to explain the meaning.’³⁵⁰ While this doesn’t prove that he preached in Māori in 1814, it does show that Marsden had the ability to teach the Christian truths in Māori and that he used that ability when the occasion arose. We know that he learnt the language in 1809. It is reasonable to assume he used the language in his sermon in 1814 with the aid of Ruatara to explain his meaning as he did in his teaching in 1830 with the aid of Mr King to explain his meaning.

What Marsden actually said on that Christmas Day is of great interest and a number of hopes have been expressed at various times that it might be possible to publish the sermon to mark various times of memorial or celebration.³⁵¹ As noted in the Introduction of this work there are quite a number of Marsden’s sermons in various collections around the world. In all of these collections there are two sermons on the passage from which Marsden preached on Christmas Day 1814, Luke 2:10. A third sermon begins on another passage but then turns to Luke 2:10. All of these sermons are in the Moore College collection. We will come to consider them in a moment.

It is known that Marsden also on occasion preached extempore.³⁵² J. B. Marsden reports, ‘In his later years, when he was no longer able to read his sermons, he preached

³⁵⁰ Elder. *Marsden’s Lieutenants*. pp. 480-481

³⁵¹ See for example, A. H. and A. W. Reed, *The First New Zealand Christmases*. Dunedin: A. H. Reed 1933. p. 5.

³⁵² Taylor, *Journal*. Alexander Turnbull Library, 19 Dec. 1836, p. 208. Quoted in Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p. 272.

extempore.³⁵³ In some of his written sermons, which are in the main written out in full, there are notes to himself to ‘expand this’³⁵⁴ indicating that at this point in the sermon he would extemporise during the delivery. If Marsden wrote out the sermon he preached on that Christmas Day in the Bay of Islands it is probably lost to us. But it is most likely that this sermon was preached extempore. This is the expressed opinion of his granddaughter, Elizabeth Betts.³⁵⁵ Her mother, Martha, Marsden’s youngest daughter, accompanied Marsden in his old age on his seventh and last voyage to New Zealand in 1837.

It is interesting to speculate what Marsden might have said on that occasion of the first New Zealand sermon on Christmas Day 1814 as he preached from Luke 2:10 in the Māori language with the assistance of his friend Ruatara. It is possible to make a case for what he might have said on that occasion by examining what we know he did say on other occasions when he preached on that passage. But before we come to that point it is necessary to address a curious objection raised by recent scholars that on that occasion in 1814 which has gone down in history as marking the beginnings of the proclamation of the Christian gospel in New Zealand, Marsden did not preach a sermon at all.

Alison Jones and Kuni Jenkins, following Prof James Belich’s idea that Ruatara translated Marsden as he chose,³⁵⁶ believe that Marsden did not preach a sermon at all.³⁵⁷ Jones and Jenkins are emphatic that ‘in the Māori world of Rangihoua *there was no sermon*

³⁵³ Marsden. *Memoirs*. p. 287.

³⁵⁴ See for example *Sermon 43:13* in the Moore College Collection. In these written sermons there are also many occasions, especially when quoting a scripture passage, that Marsden’s sentence ends with the abbreviation, “etc”. Clearly, Marsden finished the reference from memory as he was preaching indicating he felt free enough from his notes to expand upon what he had written.

³⁵⁵ A. H. Reed, *Samuel Marsden: greatheart of Maoriland*. London. Pickering & Inglis. 1939. p. 5.

³⁵⁶ Belich. *Making Peoples*. p. 143.

³⁵⁷ Belich also tends towards the idea that Marsden did not preach a sermon at all when he says, “It was his words [Ruatara’s], not Marsden’s, that Māori understood at the first sermon.” *Making Peoples*. p. 143.

on 25 December 1814.³⁵⁸ Curiously, they believe, incorrectly, that because Marsden was speaking in English, and therefore the New Zealanders didn't understand his words, there was therefore no sermon. Their point is that Marsden spoke, the people didn't understand, therefore there was no sermon. Now if this is the sole criterion by which we determine what a sermon is, I beg to suggest that there are very few sermons ever preached at all! If a sermon is regarded as not preached because some in the congregation have not understood the preacher, then there have been very few sermons ever preached. On the contrary, Marsden did preach a sermon that morning, on the words from Luke 2:10, 'Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy.' Whether or not the listeners, be they New Zealander, colonizer, or missionary, understood his meaning does not make it any less a sermon.

Jones and Jenkins unfortunately also follow Belich's mistaken idea that Ruatara did not dutifully translate his friend's words on that occasion. It seems they do not know the fact that Marsden had learnt the language in 1809 and that he had Māori living with him at Parramatta from the beginning of 1810 until he first travelled to New Zealand. They say, 'Marsden could understand neither the people's questions nor Ruatara's words.'³⁵⁹ In the end, the speculation that Ruatara did not faithfully translate Marsden's words is just as curious as the belief that Marsden did not preach a sermon. We know that Marsden learnt the language from Ruatara so that they could carry on daily conversations and Marsden could make himself understood. If Marsden preached in English, the fact of his facility in the Māori language remains. He would have understood any translation Ruatara would have given. If Ruatara was translating from English to Māori, contrary to Jones and Jenkins, Marsden would have understood what he was saying and, if he had not been making some attempt to explain what Marsden was saying, but rather was simply telling his people to pay attention because with him great prosperity would come through trade, Marsden would have been aware that Ruatara

³⁵⁸ Jones & Jenkins. *Words Between Us*. p. 87. The italics are in the original.

³⁵⁹ Jones & Jenkins. *Words Between Us*. p. 83.

was not faithfully translating his message. In the end we must reject the notion that Ruatara was deceptive on that occasion as he aided Marsden in the proclamation of the Christian gospel.

The idea that Ruatara, who had spent about three years living with Marsden in Parramatta, was only interested in material benefits ignores Ruatara's meticulous preparations for this Christmas Day gathering. It implies that the Christian influence on Ruatara over his nine years of friendship with Marsden had had no effect. It further implies that the preparations Ruatara made by enclosing about an acre of ground and building a pulpit for Marsden to preach from were an elaborate deception. More than this, the implication that Ruatara had no interest in the Christian gospel, but was only interested in gaining wealth through trade, flies in the face of Māori oral tradition.

The Rt. Rev. Te Kitohi Pikaahu, Anglican Bishop of the Northlands, New Zealand says that oral tradition has it that Ruatara prepared his people to receive the message Marsden was to bring. They were not expecting him to talk about trade and material benefits, but responded with song and dance to Marsden's sermon as the harbinger of a new season of the gospel being planted amongst them. Bishop Kitohi says that following Marsden's sermon the Māori present responded immediately in song and dance with these words:

It is moving; it is shifting
It is moving; it is shifting
Look to the open sea of Waitangi
Spread before us
like the shinning cuckoo
It is good, all is well
Change is coming soon,
is on the horizon
It is good, all is well,
let peace be established³⁶⁰

³⁶⁰ Davidson et. al. Eds. *Te Rongopai 1814*. p.24.

In explanation Bishop Kitohi says that the ‘shinning cuckoo’ ‘is the gospel messenger that points to something that is coming ... And what is coming? The power of the gospel is coming to establish the Kingdom of God’.³⁶¹ In response to Marsden’s sermon, ‘there was a new creation, there was a new people established, and why Ngāpuhi (the people of the Northland) had the dance of joy on receiving the gospel, following the sermon.’³⁶² Bishop Kitohi’s understanding of the occasion, derived from Māori oral tradition, is that the local Māori in 1814 were well prepared to hear the Christian gospel, understood the message that was proclaimed by Marsden, and responded to this message with expressions of hope that peace and the Kingdom of God was now established among them.

The Sermons

In the Moore College collection there are two sermons on the passage Luke 2:10 which is the passage Marsden preached on in Rangihoua in the Bay of Islands on Christmas Day 1814. There is a third sermon in the same collection where Marsden deals with the same text, but this sermon begins with a message on Matthew 13:16-17. In considering these three sermons an attempt is made here to discover themes or threads of thought common to each of them. It may then be assumed that if Marsden had consistent thinking each time he preached on this passage, it is likely that he followed the same thoughts in his sermon on Christmas Day 1814. A reconstruction of some of what Marsden may have said on that occasion is then possible. In the next section ‘Sermon Analysis’ a redaction is made of the three sermons on Luke 2:10 in a similar way that some New Testament scholars redact the Synoptic Gospels to find what they believe may be a common ancestor which they have labelled ‘Q’. In this way an attempt is made here to determine what might be the ‘Q’ document underlying these sermons and ultimately reconstruct the sermon Marsden preached on Christmas Day 1814.

³⁶¹ Davidson et. al. Eds. *Te Rongopai 1814*. p. 26.

³⁶² Davidson et. al. Eds. *Te Rongopai 1814*. p. 27.

Sermon Analysis

The first sermon to consider is Sermon Two in the Moore College collection. While the sermon is on Luke 2:10, it is clear that this was not the actual sermon Marsden preached in New Zealand. On the last page he refers to 'the very timbers in the building' indicating that this sermon was more than likely preached inside a building rather than in the open as happened at Rangihoua. The first paragraph of this sermon is, however, informative. In it Marsden makes some general statements about the value of the celebration of the birth of Christ declaring, 'If ever there was an event since the creation worthy of being commemorated by mankind this surely claims the priority.' The occasion was not lost on Marsden. As he wrote these words, more than likely at a time after his first visit to New Zealand, his thoughts would have gone back to the providential ordering of his arrival on the very day that gave him opportunity to preach to a people who were to hear for the first time in their history of that one event since creation that takes priority of being worthy of commemoration by mankind.

Marsden's understanding of the occasion is reflected in the second sermon on the passage in the Moore College collection, Sermon 33. This sermon begins, 'The birth of our blessed Saviour is one of the most important events that ever occurred since the foundation of the world for in it the happiness of all the human race was involved.' Then, in the third sermon, Sermon 47:6, he says, 'the news of a saviour's birth may with the greatest propriety be called good tidings of great joy.' With these words from three sermons on Luke 2:10 about the Christmas event having the greatest priority for joyous celebration by all peoples, it can be inferred that Marsden began his sermon on Christmas Day 1814 with a declaration to this effect.

It is interesting to note that in Sermon 47:9, in the context of speaking about the importance of this news, Marsden has made reference to the good news of Jesus illuminating the minds of people to turn them away from the 'worship of dumb idols to serve the true and

living God.’ This was his expressed hope for the New Zealanders and all those who had not yet heard the good news. He says in Sermon 34:2, ‘God had promised by the mouth of all his prophets that he would save the heathens, and take out of them a people for himself.’ In this sermon he speaks of the Great Commission which has given the missionaries of the gospel a roving commission. ‘They have authority from the King of Kings to navigate all seas, to visit every island upon the bosom of the great deep.’ In navigating all seas and visiting every island, Marsden expected that his missionaries would take the arts of civilisation as well as the proclamation of the everlasting gospel. To the Church Missionary Society he said, ‘Though the Missionaries might employ a certain portion of their time, according to local circumstances, in manual labour, this neither would nor ought to prevent them from constantly endeavouring to instruct the natives in the great doctrines of the Gospel’.³⁶³ While Marsden wanted missionaries to engage in manual labour in order to bring the arts of civilisation to native communities, he believed that this should neither hinder nor prevent the missionaries from a constant proclamation of the gospel. He thought that the labours of the missionaries should go hand in hand with their efforts to convert people. Marsden showed the practical outworking of this philosophy of mission as he set the priority for the missionaries he took to New Zealand with the arts of civilisation when he began that mission with a very clear and detailed proclamation of the ‘Glad tidings of great joy’ from Luke 2:10. As noted in earlier in this Chapter, Yarwood thought Marsden’s priority was ‘civilisation before conversion’.³⁶⁴ However, the fact of Marsden making a clear announcement of the gospel in his first sermon in New Zealand shows that he did not draw such a division between introducing Western arts and preaching the gospel that Yarwood wants to draw.

³⁶³ *Proceedings of the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East*. London. 1806-1809. pp.961-63.

³⁶⁴ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. pp. 85-86.

Not only is the coming of Christ the greatest event for all peoples, it has also been long and anxiously expected by the faithful in every age. In Sermon 2:3 Marsden speaks of the appearance of the Messiah as the 'Desire of all Nations'. He makes the point that the Messiah was not just the expectation of the Jewish people but that in the providence of God, 'A general expectation prevailed amongst both the Jews and Gentiles that [a] great king was soon to be born.' In Sermon 2:2, he makes the point that kings and prophets had longed to see this event but knew that it was still far off. At the same time there were those who 'read the prophecies' and yet did not comprehend their full import. They 'expected no greater blessing from the promised deliverer than temporal enjoyment'. Marsden makes this same point in Sermon 33:2 where he says that the Jewish nation 'were anxiously looking for his appearance,' but, 'They expected that his advent would be distinguished by some outward significance, power and majesty.' The same point is made in Sermon 47:3-4, 'His advent had been ardently wished for by people of all languages.' But, 'They looked for and expected a temporal king & deliverer who should deliver them from human calamities and oppressions.' Herein lies the second point of all three sermons, that this greatest event for all peoples was long expected even though the expectation was more for a temporal king than for the Messiah who finally came.

Marsden may well have had in mind on the beach in Rangihoua his own long expectation of preaching the gospel in New Zealand and projected that thought onto his audience, that as the gospel had been long in coming to this furthest part of the earth, it had been long expected by the people. As modern scholars mistakenly believe Ruatara was encouraging his people to see Marsden himself as a kind of temporal messiah who would open for them the riches and blessings of Western material abundance, it is more likely that Marsden, in his sermon, was encouraging the New Zealanders to look beyond the agricultural and trading benefits they would receive through this new alliance, to see the true Messiah who

would bring them reconciliation with the one true God. He tells his congregation in Sermon 33:4 that Jesus was:

One who came not only to deliver one people, but a whole world not from temporal bondage and misery, but from sin, Satan, death and hell, and to save them with an everlasting salvation.

It is also interesting to note that these words in Marsden's sermons counter the accusation of Governor Brisbane who in a letter to Lord Bathurst on 31 August 1822 accused Marsden of 'engaging in trade under the cloak of a surplice'.³⁶⁵ These words imply that Marsden's motivations were less than honourable and that he was seeking simply to increase his own wealth. However, if we can take the words from three of Marsden's sermons on the same passage that he preached from on 25 December 1814 to indicate his primary concern in making contact with the people of the South Seas was not just to see them gaining material prosperity, but for them to come to know the true Messiah, then we can say that Brisbane was mistaken in his understanding of Marsden's motives. Marsden did not want to introduce the New Zealanders to a temporal messiah of trade, wealth and material prosperity but to the Messiah whose birth was announced by the angels of heaven and who would save them with an everlasting salvation.

This announcement of the occasion of the birth of the Messiah by angels and their subsequent rejoicing is also a common theme. In Sermon 2:6-7 we read, 'They (the shepherds) had no sooner received this divine salutation from the angel, than a multitude of heavenly hosts joined the angel praising God and saying glory to God in the highest'. In Sermon 33:7 the announcement was 'a matter 1st of exceeding joy. ... An angel from heaven was the messenger'. And in Sermon 47:5-6 Marsden makes the point that angels have been sent with 'the news of a saviour's birth [which] may with the greatest propriety be called good tidings of great joy'.

³⁶⁵ *Historical Records Australia* Series 1, Volume 10. pp.725-6

Another point with regard to angels made in two of the three sermons is that the angels, in speaking to the shepherds, did not announce that a Saviour is born for us, but that a Saviour has been born for you. In Sermon 33:7 Marsden has said, ‘An angel from heaven was the messenger but he was not privileged to say, to us is born a saviour. No, there was no saviour provided for the fallen angels but for man a saviour was provided. When man fell God became incarnate.’ And in Sermon 47:16 he has said, ‘The angel does not say he was born for (us) angels, but to you is born’. Marsden makes the point that the Saviour is not for fallen angels but for fallen man. He became a human being to bring salvation to those who will repent and believe his offer of salvation.

Despite the fact that this joyful announcement was made by the angels of heaven, Marsden makes the point that Jesus was not born, as might be expected, in the halls of kings. While the greatest news ever told of the coming of the Messiah is announced even by angels of heaven with great rejoicing, we are not to expect this king to be born in a palace. This Messiah was born in a stable. When ‘good old Simeon ... took him up in his arms ... he was not disgusted with the mean appearance of his parents’ (Sermon 2:4). Marsden continues in Sermon 2:8:

We may here observe that access to the Saviour has at all times been open and free. There was not a person in the city of Bethlehem but what might have visited him in the stable if they wished. The poorest peasant could there see him that was born King of the Jews, and present him with such gifts as he had, the sacrifice of a grateful heart. The meanness of his parentage opened a door of access for all.

In Sermon 33:2-3:

The eastern ~~maji~~ magi expected to find him in Herod’s palace, when they saw his star and hastened to Jerusalem to pay their homage to him. On their arrival they said where is he etc. But as his kingdom was not of this world he was not to enter into it ... an earthly prince. ... We have here the birth of Christ proclaimed and the city wherein he was born. Go to Bethlehem said the angel to the shepherd and there shall ye see him, wrapped in swadling (*sic*) cloths lying in a manger.

Marsden's point here was that, as special as the birth of the Messiah, and the announcement of it was, and as special as was the coming of this great King of Kings, access to him was not restricted to the rich and powerful, nor to the noble and wise. Access, even at his birth, was open to all. Not only were poor shepherds told by an angel of heaven to go and visit him in a stable, but even the lowliest of Bethlehem's citizens could have wondered in that night to lay their own eyes on this Messiah. For those listening to Marsden on Christmas Day 1814, the message was clear that even they, the poorest people at the farthest end of the earth, could visit this Messiah and receive from him eternal salvation.

Two of the sermons also mention the role of the Evil One and the place of Hell. In Sermon 2:9 Marsden points out that God's plans are not thwarted by the Evil One. Sermon 33:4, tells us that this Saviour is superior to other saviours who have come because this one saves from Hell.

Finally, a theme common to all three sermons shows the pastor's heart as Marsden reaches out to implore his congregation to take notice and change their allegiance from the world to following this Jesus who has come to give them eternal life. There are those who ignore the angelic announcement and the preacher's imploring and continue in their sin and will therefore not inherit the kingdom of God (Sermon 33:17). But there are also those who, like Simeon of old embrace the holy child and rejoice with him (Sermon 2:16). Indeed, some have already responded and received great joy (Sermon 33:14, 18. And Sermon 47:14, 17, 20-21). Along with this is a warning common to Marsden's preaching in several sermons. In Sermon 33:15-16 he gives the grave warning that his congregation should not put off following Jesus because they may die before the next Christmas comes around. It is tempting to see in this warning a melancholy recollection that his friend Ruatara died soon after the first Christian Christmas in New Zealand without ever having given clear evidence as far as Marsden knew that, despite having made elaborate preparations for the Christmas Day

service, the message of the gospel had caused a personal change in his own heart to follow the Messiah who offered eternal life.

In summary, knowing Marsden's common themes when he preached on the text of Luke 2:10, we can safely say that on Christmas Day 1814, on the beach at Rangihoua at the northern end of the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, when he preached the first Christian sermon, in the Māori language, Marsden made the following points:

1. The birth of Christ is the most important event the world has ever seen.
2. It is good tidings of great joy for all people.
3. This event has been long and anxiously expected by the faithful.
4. Those who are awaiting a temporal messiah will be disappointed because this Messiah brings spiritual blessings.
5. This event has been announced with great rejoicing by the angels of heaven who have declared a Saviour for mankind.
6. This Messiah was not born in a palace, but a stable, making him accessible to all people.
7. This is the superior Saviour because he defeats the Evil One and saves from Hell.
8. Now is the time to follow this Saviour because you may not be alive next Christmas season.³⁶⁶

On this occasion Marsden called on his congregation, missionary, settler, and Māori alike to understand that the message of this day was the greatest message for all humankind. The announcement of a saviour brought great rejoicing in heaven and on earth and called upon all people to respond. Thus began the Christianising of New Zealand.

³⁶⁶ A full reconstruction of what Marsden might have said in this sermon is included in Appendix 2 and is available at : <http://alltogether.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Christmas-Day-1814.pdf>

Conclusions

Marsden was the product of the evangelical movement that oversaw the beginnings of the spread of the gospel by Church of England missionaries throughout the world. He saw himself as part of the fulfilment of the Great Commission and thought strategically about how to do mission. Going to the penal colony of New South Wales, his vision was not limited as the chaplain to a role as the keeper of morals. He was looking for opportunities to take the ‘everlasting gospel’ to the ‘poor benighted heathens’. While still wanting the Australian Aboriginals to respond to the good news, but running out of ideas on how to accomplish this, Marsden was turning his attention to the Māori who had shown more interest and who, in the providential ordering of events, as Marsden saw it, had come across Marsden’s path, presenting more opportunities for him to direct his missionary efforts to New Zealand. In these efforts Marsden was a visionary.

His failure to understand the Australian Aboriginal people arose because of his hidebound adherence to his own English cultural background and his strict loyalty to a theology and belief that his part was simply to preach the gospel. The Holy Spirit would then do the work of conversion.³⁶⁷ Marsden did not understand cultural differences. He was perplexed by the Australian Aboriginal people’s apparent ‘lack of wants’ as he described it and could not think outside his own parameters to reach across the cultural barrier. In this sense Marsden was blinkered to the opportunities of bringing the gospel to the Aboriginal. The Māori on the other hand demonstrated a great desire to have many things that the English had brought with them. Their wants and Marsden’s understanding dovetailed providentially in the establishment of the CMS mission to New Zealand. To begin this mission Marsden used

³⁶⁷ As noted in Chapter Three Marsden saw it as his duty ‘never to give up’ and in Sermon 72:8 asks the rhetorical question, ‘what could I have done more for you, than I have done?’ And in Sermon 95:4 he says that it is God’s work to convert people, ‘We have no will to approach unto him unless the Holy Spirit incline our hearts.’

his language skills, his considerable strength of character and his wealth, not for his own reputation and earthly gain as others have said of him, but in his own words:

to sound the silver trumpet of jubilee, and to inform the nations of the earth that the year of release is at hand, and to invite the ransomed sinners to return to their once forfeighted (*sic*) possessions.³⁶⁸

Chapter Six

Marsden and Macquarie:

A deteriorating relationship highlighted by the sermon following the death of Ellis Bent.

Introduction

As the major emphasis of this dissertation is the interaction of Marsden with his community through his preaching, the relationship between Marsden and Governor Lachlan Macquarie provides a special focus. The relationship between Marsden and Macquarie did not get off to a good start despite high expectations of like-mindedness³⁶⁹ and it continued to deteriorate until it was entirely severed by Macquarie in 1818.³⁷⁰ This chapter examines how two men of extraordinary ability, energy and conviction, having generous hopes of working for the same cause of establishing a moral and prosperous society, could so antagonise each other that their relationship finally broke down completely. Inevitably our attention will be on Marsden's part in this relationship. As noted previously, Marsden's major focus in his preaching was not on creating a moral society but an eschatological one, a people who might bring social renewal by their own personal renewal in Christ, but still a people whose final hope was in heaven. His relationship with Macquarie highlights how Marsden was not successful in communicating this focus. As the 'blinkered visionary' he had high hopes that his evangelical message would bring about an improvement of morals in a people who looked to heaven, but he could not see how best

³⁶⁹ Note Marsden's correspondence to Hassall, 23 Sept 1808, HP, ML A859, Vol. 1, pp. 217 – 219.

³⁷⁰ On 8 January 1818 Macquarie summonsed Marsden to a meeting at which the Rev. William Cowper, the Colonial Secretary J. T. Campbell and Lieutenant John Watts were present. Macquarie informed Marsden that he now viewed him, 'as the head of a seditious low cabal and consequently unworthy of mixing in private society or intercourse with me, I beg to inform you, that I never wish to see you except on public duty.' See Macquarie's *Journal*. 1816-1818, ML. A773.

to communicate this message so that he left some confusion as to the thrust of what his message was.

In one sense it was inevitable that two such men should clash, but neither man was more at fault than the other in their tensions. Both had inconsistencies. Both made mistakes, misunderstanding each other's intentions. As strong minded men, faults lay on both sides. Macquarie never understood Marsden and took hasty actions based on inadequate information. At the same time Marsden, with exclusivist views and an inability to fully communicate his evangelical Christianity to a society only nominally Christian, is not without blame for the breakdown in relationships with the Governor. Marsden's very difficult relationship with Macquarie highlights the difficulties Marsden faced over a significant period with regard to his reputation in New South Wales. The controversies that arose for Marsden during Macquarie's time set the agenda for many of his opponents so that to a very real extent those controversies follow him to this day and are accepted without further analysis by most modern writers. The beginnings of Marsden's reputation as a harsh magistrate, however, were prior to Macquarie's time in the colony, despite Marsden's own statement that the charge of being a harsh magistrate was first made in 1817.³⁷¹

Marsden and his fellow magistrate Atkins received censure for a notorious incident involving the punishment of an Irish convict, Paddy Galvin, in September 1800. It was suspected that the Irish convicts were planning an insurrection and had stolen and hidden some pikes which were to be later used as weapons. It was believed that Galvin had knowledge of the hiding place of these pikes, but he refused to divulge the information. Marsden and Atkins therefore sentenced

³⁷¹ See *Certain Calumnies* p. 34. Marsden declares that the charge of severity as a magistrate was first made against him by Macquarie in a dispatch to Bathurst dated 4 December, 1817.

the poor wretch to a flogging of 300 lashes each day until he gave up the information. Such torture was seen to be harsh and illegal even by the standards of those days and greatly undermined Marsden's reputation. While Marsden and Atkins can be criticised for their sentencing of Galvin their appointment as magistrates highlights an issue that is rarely discussed by historians. These men were not qualified in law and yet they were expected to administer law and punishment in a penal colony. Thomas Moore, the former ship builder who settled with his emancipated wife in Liverpool, New South Wales, was also appointed as a magistrate with no experience. Moore was on the bench in Liverpool. He was named in a submission to the House of Commons in London in 1826 as being one of several magistrates in New South Wales who had ordered illegal punishment to gain information about a crime.³⁷² In the early 1820s Governor Brisbane instituted an enquiry into how justice was being served in the colony. The results were tabled in the House of Commons in 1826.³⁷³ As the Galvin incident from the beginning of the century is the most famous incident of torture being administered by the judiciary in the colony, this practice seems to have become something of the norm. The members of the Commons were not so much interested in the severity of punishments in New South Wales, but in their legality. In legal action that followed this inquiry Moore pleaded ignorance saying, we 'had not much reference to law in those times'.³⁷⁴ If this was the general situation with magistrates in the colony, it is probable that Marsden was singled out for his harsh and illegal judgements because the general expectation of a clergyman was that he would show greater leniency and mercy. Later, when Macquarie declared Marsden to be the harshest magistrate in the colony, Marsden's

³⁷² Peter G Bolt. *Thomas Moore of Liverpool: One of Our Oldest Colonists. Essays & Addresses to Celebrate 150 Years of Moore College*. Camperdown. Bolt Publishing Services. 2007. p. 214.

³⁷³ *Sydney Gazette* 16 September, 1826.

³⁷⁴ *Sydney Gazette* 20 December, 1826.

response was to say, in part, that he performed the duties of magistrate in the town of Parramatta, a place in the colony where crime was particularly rife.³⁷⁵

A difficult relationship – the Beginnings

Through the detailed examination of one sermon that gave rise to Macquarie's ire against Marsden, this chapter seeks to address what became a major controversy for Marsden, namely his relationship with Governor Macquarie. From the beginning of his ministry in New South Wales Marsden's constant refrain in his sermons was against the immorality of the colonists. His first sermon in the colony was about Sabbath breaking.³⁷⁶ His sermons have many denunciations against drunkenness and immorality. In Sermon 4:3 in the Moore College Collection Marsden states, 'many of us have lived in the open and avowed violation of his laws. In Sabbath breaking, in profanation of God's name, in theft, in adultery, in drunkenness and every vice'. And yet, as much as he inveighed against immorality, Marsden had very little success in persuading the colonists to turn from their wickedness and live the Christian life. Some may see Marsden's acceptance of a magistrate's position as an attempt to have a more direct influence over the people. While he desired to raise the standard of moral behaviour in the colony, Marsden's roles as preacher on the one hand and magistrate on the other had two distinct purposes. As a preacher he desired to see people fit for heaven and evidence of this would be seen in a moral life. It is

³⁷⁵ *Certain Calumnies*. p. 39. Marsden believed that Macquarie made the statement about him being the harshest magistrate in the colony at a time when Macquarie held 'the most unfriendly feelings' towards him arising from a false assumption that Marsden had been the author of an 'anonymous' letter written to the Secretary of State about the need for accommodation for women convicts. Nicholas Bayly had in fact been the author. See *Certain Calumnies* pp. 35-39.

³⁷⁶ J. B. Marsden. *Life and Work*. p.10.

noted above that he believed the use of corporal punishment to persuade people of the truth of the gospel was abhorrent.³⁷⁷

In 1807 Marsden went to England to recruit more teachers and clergy for the colony. On his return to the colony on 27 February 1810, and having had small success in his recruitment drive in England, Marsden found that the newly appointed Governor, Lachlan Macquarie, was already at work addressing the immorality Marsden had preached so vehemently against. As it turned out, Macquarie was equally horrified at the immorality in the colony and just under a month after his swearing in as Governor, Macquarie decreed, on 27 January 1810, that anyone breaking the laws on Sabbath keeping would be arrested.³⁷⁸ A further month on, on 24 February, and just three days before Marsden landed back in Port Jackson, Macquarie expressed his displeasure at ‘the scandalous and pernicious custom’ of those ‘living together unsanctioned by the legal ties of matrimony.’³⁷⁹ It is no surprise, therefore, that in June 1813 Marsden’s oldest daughter Ann described Macquarie as ‘a great friend of the gospel’ and praised his ‘great improvements in the Colony’.³⁸⁰ These decrees did not give Macquarie any greater success in improving the moral behaviour of the colonists than Marsden had. Neglect of the Sabbath was still rife. Simeon Lord, an emancipist and well regarded by Macquarie, did not regularise his living arrangements until 1814.

³⁷⁷ See Chapter Three: *Colonial Context*.

³⁷⁸ *HRNSW*, Vol. 7. pp. 280-1

³⁷⁹ *HRNSW*, Vol.7. p. 929

³⁸⁰ Ann Marsden to Mrs. Stokes, 18 June 1813. Mackaness. *Some Private Correspondence*. pp. 48-49.

However, Marsden and Macquarie found themselves in conflict on a number of issues, not least of which was the role of emancipists in the colony.³⁸¹ Marsden was not alone on this particular issue in opposing Macquarie but, surprisingly, Marsden's mentor, William Wilberforce held an opposite view and attempted mediation between Marsden and Macquarie. In March 1814 Wilberforce wrote to Macquarie saying, 'I am sorry Mr. Marsden differs from us on this subject. He is a very worthy man ... (but) he is liable to error ... I think his opinions erroneous in this instance'³⁸². And to Marsden a week later Wilberforce wrote that he had discussed the matter with several friends 'and the result is that we all, without a single exception are of the opinion that persons who came out as convicts, should *after giving sufficient proofs of their having amended their ways*, be admissible to office.'³⁸³ Even so, Ellis, Macquarie's biographer, informs us that Wilberforce in writing to Macquarie, "could not doubt 'that attention to the religious and moral state of the colony would in a few years produce improvement which men would scarcely anticipate,' and that the governor's encouragement of marriage and of domestic virtues would be of 'unspeakable benefit to everyone in the rising settlements'".³⁸⁴

Marsden identified the difficulties between himself and Macquarie as beginning very early in their relationship, in 1810, with his request to the Governor to be excused from serving

³⁸¹ A. T. Yarwood. 'Marsden, Samuel (1765 - 1838)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Volume 2. Melbourne University Press. 1967. pp 207-212. Note also the introduction to *Certain Calumnies* where Marsden focused his attention on the Governor's 'new theoretical system of policy' where, had he 'duly weighed this subject' (p.4), would have understood that a system to 'unite the free and the convict population in one body' (p. 2) would never succeed because it was against 'the inherent principles of mankind' (p.4).

³⁸² Yarwood. *A.D.B.*

³⁸³ M. H. Ellis. *Lachlan Macquarie*. Sydney: Angus & Robertson. 1952. p. 330. The problem with Lord was that he had not 'amended his ways' morally in that he was still living in a *de facto* relationship until 1814, some four years after Macquarie had appointed him, alongside Marsden and another emancipist, Andrew Thompson, as a Commissioner to a proposed toll road from Sydney to the Hawkesbury.

³⁸⁴ Ellis. *Macquarie*. p. 203.

as a commissioner of the turnpike road that Macquarie intended to build from Sydney to the Hawkesbury. Marsden only discovered through the *Sydney Gazette* that two emancipists, Andrew Thompson and Simeon Lord, had also been appointed. Marsden expressed his concern to Macquarie, pointing out to the Governor that while on the one hand he made public proclamations to encourage moral behaviour in the colony, he had now appointed two men who were living in open relationship with women to whom they were not married. In a letter of 2 April Marsden denied there was any personal animosity towards the Governor, but that he could not sit with two men of such immoral character in an official capacity. This letter indicates that Marsden's objections were not of an exclusivist nature but of a moral one. He did not state that he refused to sit as a Commissioner with these men because they had been convicts. His objection to their appointment was because they were living with women to whom they were not married.³⁸⁵ In his *Answer to Certain Calumnies* however, Marsden focuses solely on the issue of Lord and Thompson having been former convicts as the reason for his refusal to sit with them as a Commissioner.³⁸⁶ In consideration of his objections to sitting with Lord and Thompson, Macquarie told Marsden that he found his objection to be gross insubordination, informing the chaplain that if he had not had his commission changed from a military to a civil appointment on his recent trip back to England, he would be now facing a court martial.³⁸⁷

Both Thompson and Lord were later appointed magistrates to the bench in Sydney. In letters to the Archbishop of Canterbury on 2 May 1810 and to Wilberforce on 27 July 1810 Marsden wrote, 'It is not consistent with morality, religion, or sound policy, to nominate men

³⁸⁵ The letter of 2 April 1810 can be found in the appendix to the *Bigge report*, ML. Box 12. p. 347. This explanation highlights the misunderstandings and lack of communication between Marsden and Macquarie. Marsden's evidence: ML. Box 8. pp. 3373-3386.

³⁸⁶ *Certain Calumnies* pp. 4-6.

³⁸⁷ *Certain Calumnies*. pp. 5-6

magistrates, who have been convicts and who are still living openly in profligacy.³⁸⁸ In this correspondence, written shortly after his first altercation with Macquarie, Marsden states clearly that his objections were twofold, namely Thompson and Lord were emancipists and that they were living with women to whom they were not married. In his letters to Macquarie and to Marsden, Wilberforce seems to have ignored Marsden's second objection.

Despite the infamous incident involving Paddy Galvin, noted above, Marsden believed that his reputation as a severe magistrate arose, unjustly, from Macquarie.³⁸⁹ It is surprising, as Marsden points out in his letter to Wilberforce, that Macquarie who had made such clear statements against men and women living together without the sanction of marriage, should then appoint such men to public office. As Macquarie stood on his authority and demanded unquestioning obedience, there was never an explanation for this inconsistency. And yet Marsden, while also giving no inch in his obstinate stand on principle, and opposing the Governor, nevertheless preached that God enjoins upon his people 'a peaceable and quiet subjection to earthly governors as God's ministers'.³⁹⁰ Likewise, there is no explanation for this inconsistency in Marsden.

Death of Ellis Bent

In the hope of shedding more light on the relationship between Marsden and Macquarie this chapter looks primarily at the sermon preached by Marsden following the death of the Judge Advocate, Mr Ellis Bent, who died on 10 November, 1815. The sermon is held by the Mitchell Library, Sydney.³⁹¹ There were more incidents, beside those already noted, that led to tension

³⁸⁸ Marsden to Wilberforce, 27 July 1810. *Bonwick Transcripts* (Missionary) Box 49, p. 85. Cited by Yarwood. p. 130.

³⁸⁹ *Certain Calumnies*. pp. 4,6,37.

³⁹⁰ Sermon 27:1.

³⁹¹ *Marsden Papers*. Mitchell Library C244, pp. 17-40.

between Marsden and Macquarie. Marsden's refusal to read public proclamations from the pulpit and his use of the Goode Psalms³⁹² in public worship were cause for not inconsiderable tension. Macquarie's mistaken belief that Marsden was responsible for complaints made to the Home Office about his administration led to their final falling out on 8 January 1818. However, the sermon Marsden preached following the death of the Judge Advocate provided opportunity for Macquarie to give Marsden a public dressing down. Macquarie took the sermon as a personal insult, believing Marsden had used the opportunity to inveigh against him publicly.

At the outset it must be stated that in all of the sermons in various collections there is not one where Marsden directly addresses any of the controversial issues he faced. There are certainly allusions and a critical eye may read more into Marsden's words than he intended, but Marsden had never used the pulpit to justify himself directly against any particular criticism. When preaching on the role of magistrates, for example, which he does in sermons 23 and 56, Marsden does not seek to defend himself from accusations of harshness as a magistrate nor to attack his accusers. He confines his comments to the biblical text and its application. Likewise in sermon 76, in speaking on a Christian's proper use of wealth, and encouraging his congregation to give generously to the relief of the survivors of Sydney's first major shipping disaster in the wreck of the barque *Edward Lombe* on Middle Head on 25 August, 1834, Marsden does not defend or excuse himself for the wealth he had amassed. Neither does he use the opportunity to attack those who had declared his mercantile and farming interests to be in conflict with his calling as a minister of the gospel.

³⁹² In 1811 The Rev William Goode published his first edition of "An Entire New Version of the Book of Psalms". Goode was a founding member of the CMS and according to Yarwood it was in the study of his Rectory at Blackfriars that the proposal by Marsden of the establishment of a mission to New Zealand was first agreed to by the CMS committee. See *Great Survivor* p. 115.

It is therefore difficult to surmise that in his sermon following the death of the Judge Advocate in 1815, Marsden set out to attack Macquarie and his administration. If he had done so it would have been contrary to the nature of all his preaching over a period of some twenty years or more. Macquarie did, however, take great exception to what Marsden said in this sermon about Bent and it is my purpose to examine what so angered the Governor and to make some assessment of the justification of this reaction.

Rev. Walter Lawry

Before a detailed consideration of the sermon Marsden preached following the death of Ellis Bent, however, the words of the Rev. Walter Lawry continue to ring in our ears. As noted in Chapter Two, Lawry said of Marsden's sermons that he relied too heavily on Simeon's outlines and put very little of his own work in them. Yarwood believes the inspiration for Marsden's sermon on Bent came from the Rev. Peter Peckard, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, at the time Marsden was a student there.³⁹³ This is certainly not the case. As noted in Chapter Two, the evangelical face of Magdalene at the time derived from the influence of its President, Samuel Hey, rather than Peckard who was not regarded as an evangelical.³⁹⁴ It is clear that the sermon Marsden preached following Bent's death relied on Simeon's outline for the passage, 2 Chronicles 29:10-11 rather than on anything Marsden may have gleaned from Peckard. In the sermon Marsden preached he has copied the first nine lines of Simeon's outline word for word except for two minor changes. In the seventh line of his sermon Marsden has added the word 'governors' and has replaced the word 'it' with 'that authority', so that Marsden's sentence reads:

³⁹³ Yarwood. *Great Survivor*. p.16. Peckard published a sermon titled, "National Crimes The Cause Of National Punishments. A Discourse Deliver'd In The Cathedral Church Of Peterborough, On The Fast-Day, Feb: 25th, 1795." Simeon's outline, on which Marsden has clearly relied, was published three years later than this in response to a Royal Proclamation of January 1798.

³⁹⁴ Cunich et. al. *A History of Magdalene College*. p.185.

But all who are possest of authority parents masters, magistrates governors & kings should use that authority for the promoting of virtue & religion.

It can be surmised that by the addition of the word, ‘governors’, Marsden either has a point to make with Macquarie or is, perhaps, simply contextualising Simeon’s outline to his own situation in the colony of New South Wales, where adding the word, ‘governors’ to Simeon’s list of those who possess authority, would be an appropriate and natural contextualisation.

In the sermons where Marsden has used one of Simeon’s outlines, more often than not, in the first few paragraphs he has simply copied out Simeon’s words with very minor changes, and it is evident that the ‘Bent’ sermon is no exception. In most sermons Marsden is very reliant on Simeon’s structure. Invariably, Simeon’s outlines consisted of two major points or sometimes three, each with a varying number of sub-points. Marsden almost always uses Simeon’s two points and where Simeon has three points Marsden does not always get around to the third. As noted in Chapter Two, while Marsden begins most of his sermons simply copying out Simeon’s outline with very minor variations, the more Marsden gets into his sermon the more he departs from Simeon’s outline so that in most sermons at least the last half of Marsden’s sermon is entirely his own work. The most reliant on Simeon I have found Marsden to be, is a sermon where, by a simple word count, one third of the sermon is directly from Simeon and two thirds is Marsden’s own words. At the other end of the spectrum there are one or two sermons in the Moore College collection where Marsden has clearly relied on Simeon’s outline but there are only half a dozen or so consecutive words that are copied from Simeon. Marsden has used Simeon’s structure but, other than these few words, has created his own wording.³⁹⁵

³⁹⁵ See, for example, sermons 63 and 82 in the Moore College Collection.

Whether we can agree with Lawry's assessment of how Marsden used Simeon's outlines is another matter. What is important for our current purposes is that Marsden has used Simeon's outline on the biblical text, 2 Chronicles 29.10-11, in his sermon following the death of the Judge Advocate, Ellis Bent. It is also clear that he has followed the intent of the outline faithfully. These facts make it difficult to believe that the main thrust of this sermon was even a veiled attack upon the Governor.

Knowing Marsden's habit of using Simeon's outlines in his sermon preparation it should come as no surprise then that in his sermon to which Governor Macquarie took such exception Marsden also used one of Simeon's outlines. It is outline number 421 with a title of 'The use of covenanting with God'³⁹⁶ and is based on the text of 2 Chronicles 29:10-11. A note in the text of Simeon's outline indicates it was written in response to a Royal Decree calling for a Fast Day in March 1798.

A Public Dressing Down

Much has been made of Macquarie's public dressing down of Marsden following this sermon, to the extent that history has left us with the impression that the sermon in its entirety was a panegyric of Bent. One of Bent's biographer's, C. H. Currey, for example, declares, 'The judge-advocate's death not only "excited universal regret", but gave Samuel Marsden an opportunity to inveigh, in scarcely veiled terms, against Macquarie's administration in the course of the panegyric he delivered on the deceased at the ensuing memorial service.'³⁹⁷ Likewise Yarwood

³⁹⁶ Simeon. *Horae Homileticae*. Vol. 4. pp. 181-185.

³⁹⁷ C. H. Currey 'Bent, Ellis (1783 - 1815)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Volume 1. Melbourne University Press. 1966. pp 87-92.

states, ‘Marsden ... was censured by Macquarie ... for having committed blasphemy by eulogising his dead friend, Ellis Bent, in terms too high for any man.’³⁹⁸

In these accounts from Currey and Yarwood we face one of the dilemmas over the details of this event. Currey believes that what Marsden did was to use the opportunity to speak against Macquarie’s administration while Yarwood thinks that Marsden was reprimanded by Macquarie for having spoken with too high a regard for Bent and thereby was blaspheming. These differing accusations are considered later in this chapter. Contrary to Currey, however, the sermon was not a panegyric at a memorial service. In its major thrust, following Simeon’s outline, the sermon was not about Bent. It appears to be a sermon preached in the ordinary round of Sunday sermons by Marsden, and his reference to Bent is only one illustration of several calamities Marsden named that he saw as indicative of God’s anger against the colony for the people’s neglect of Him and his standards.

A third commentator on this sermon following the death of Ellis Bent is Macquarie’s biographer, M. H. Ellis. It is unfortunate that he uses such emotive language as he does in describing Marsden’s sermon.³⁹⁹ He has also mistaken the occasion declaring it to be the ‘funeral sermon’. Ellis has made allusions and parallels from the biblical text, beyond what Marsden had said in the sermon. Ellis has done this with no reference to the sermon itself, citing actual persons in the colony he believes Marsden had referred to and he has Marsden ‘thundering’ from the pulpit that ‘God had taken from the Israelites an upright judge’.⁴⁰⁰ How Ellis can hear down over a century of time a ‘thundering’ voice has more to do with his own imaginings and clear

³⁹⁸ Yarwood, *Great Survivor*, p. 185. Yarwood has gained this understanding from a note with the sermon written some decades after its delivery.

³⁹⁹ Ellis, *Lachlan Macquarie*, pp. 383-384.

⁴⁰⁰ Ellis, *Lachlan Macquarie*, p.384.

prejudice against Marsden than any reality. It can equally be imagined that the words were delivered in a soft, even melancholy voice as Marsden was speaking about his friend who had died. Marsden's actual words were, 'God in his anger often removed from the Israelites an upright Judge or King.'⁴⁰¹ To be consistent, Ellis should have drawn a parallel not only with the Judge but also the King, but that not only does not suit his purpose, there is no parallel to be had. In fact Ellis misunderstands the nature of Judges in the Old Testament who are rulers rather than judges in our modern sense of the word. Certainly Marsden's reference to Bent is a reasonably long one in the overall sermon. The reference occupies one eighth of the sermon, 541 words of a total of 4,170. But in the context of the sermon as a whole, Marsden was calling upon his congregation to consider a number of current events he declared were indicative of God's anger against the sinfulness of the people of the colony and he called upon them to repent of any sins that may have been causing the anger of God to 'wax hot' against them. It is also strange that Currey believes that Marsden used the sermon to, 'inveigh, in scarcely veiled terms, against Macquarie's administration'. Other than the addition of the word 'governors' as mentioned earlier, the sermon makes no reference to Macquarie or his administration. Whether or not one can discern a 'veiled' reference will be considered shortly, but before then it is important to make reference to two particular comments by others on this sermon.

Accusations of Blasphemy

The first of these comments is written on the page preceding the sermon in the Mitchell Library collection, written in a hand other than Marsden's. It states in part that the governor:

gave Mr Marsden a severe lecture in the presence of the Rev William Cowper & Major Antill about a week or ten days after its delivery stating that it was blasphemous to speak so highly of any man.

⁴⁰¹ Bent Sermon p. 10.

Whose hand this is, is unknown and how accurate the author's recall, is also unknown. The reliability of this hand, though, must be seriously called into question. It has been noted above that Bent died 10 November 1815, but the page in the unknown hand continues, 'Mr. Ellis Bent Esq. Judge Advocate died 19 Nov 1815' and attributes this information to the 'Australian Almanac 1834'. The inaccurate date of Bent's death must give us pause to question the extent of the knowledge of the person who has written these comments. The source of this knowledge, namely the Almanac of 1834, also means that this hand written note about Macquarie's complaint was added after 1834, some 19 years after the event. This must give rise to speculation as to its accuracy. If we are to accept the unknown hand's statement that Macquarie called Marsden to account for the sin of blasphemy and thereby saw this as an attack on his administration, we are to believe, with those who put the complaint of 'blasphemy' on the lips of the Governor, that he appears to be in a state of unreasonable paranoia. The question needs to be asked that if the Governor thought speaking too highly of any man, which he declared to be blasphemous, was an attack on his own administration, why then did he not make this point directly to Marsden? By claiming that Marsden's reference to Bent was blasphemous those making this claim are presenting Macquarie as entering into theological debate, transgressing into the realm of the chaplain's expertise, and seeking to defend God rather than himself or his administration.

It is well known that Macquarie did not get along with either Marsden or Bent,⁴⁰² and if he thought that speaking too highly of the deceased Judge Advocate was a criticism of himself or his administration it is reasonable to expect that he would have said something like, 'by

⁴⁰² On Bent's relationship with Macquarie see, N. D. McLachlan, 'Macquarie, Lachlan (1762 - 1824)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Volume 2. Melbourne University Press. 1967. pp 187-195 and C. H. Currey. 'Bent, Ellis (1783 - 1815)'. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Volume 1. Melbourne University Press. 1966. pp 87-92.

speaking too highly of the Judge Advocate, who was an opponent of mine, you have attacked me and my administration'. Instead, Macquarie's complaint, as reported, is one where he sought to defend God rather than himself. If the Governor saw it as his position to defend God, then it is the Governor who was seeking to attack the chaplain and his ministry by entering into an area of Marsden's expertise and openly criticising his preaching. It seems that Currey and Yarwood have followed this unknown hand, mistakenly believing that the call of 'blasphemy' was the issue that concerned the Governor.

The Sins of the People

The second comment is from Commissioner Bigge's report based on what Macquarie said to him about the incident and shows that blasphemy was not the Governor's concern. In a letter to Marsden Bigge reported:

The Governor reproached Mr Marsden [not]⁴⁰³ for eulogising the Character of Mr Ellis Bent but for having declared in his Sermon preached at Parramatta 'that no greater calamity could befall a Country than the loss of an Upright Judge, and that no doubt the Sins of this Colony had been the cause of Mr Bent's death as a Chastisement from the Almighty for the Sins of the People.'⁴⁰⁴

This account clearly states that Macquarie's complaint was not that Marsden had eulogized Bent too highly, contrary to the unknown hand and those who have followed it, but that Marsden had attributed the judge's death to a 'Chastisement from the Almighty for the Sins of the People'. Even though Bigge came to criticise Macquarie in his report, by quoting Macquarie's own words Commissioner Bigge gives a more reliable account of Macquarie's complaint. In this scenario Macquarie was defending the people rather than either himself or God, but in making this criticism Macquarie has shown that he had misunderstood the thrust and intent of the sermon.

⁴⁰³ 'not' is missing in this reference but the context demands it.

⁴⁰⁴ J.T. Bigge to S. Marsden, 20 Jan 1821. Marsden Papers. p.50 at ML: C244.

It is clear from the sermon context that Marsden did not have the Governor specifically in view in speaking about the death of the Judge Advocate but rather, he was calling upon all the people of the colony to consider certain calamities that had recently befallen them and to examine their lives to see how they might repent of sinful behaviour. In doing this Marsden was faithfully following the intent of the Simeon outline he was reliant upon and was consistent with a genre of ‘Fast Days Sermons’ where the Sovereign or Chief Minister called on the people to observe a Fast Day to call upon God that he might forgive the people of any sin and give them relief from their current suffering. While there is no record of Macquarie having called a Fast Day at this time, and there is therefore no Decree acting as a catalyst for this sermon, the fact of the drought of late 1815 causing crop failure and the death of cattle was sufficient cause for the preacher to call on his congregation to examine themselves and to call upon God for mercy.⁴⁰⁵

The real thrust

Simeon’s outline, which Marsden used for the basis of his sermon following Bent’s death, shows that the inspiration for writing the outline was a royal proclamation for the observance of a Fast-day in March 1798.⁴⁰⁶ In the outline it is stated that the King had called the Fast Day in ‘consideration of the just and necessary war in which we are engaged ... putting our trust in Almighty God that He will graciously bless our arms’. Simeon then states, ‘Surely the displeasure of God can scarcely ever be more strongly displayed, than it is in the calamities under which we now groan.’⁴⁰⁷ Following Simeon’s outline Marsden called on his congregation to

⁴⁰⁵ Fast Days were not unknown in the colony. As noted in Chapter Three, Governor Gipps called a Fast Day for Friday 2 November, 1838 to which several preachers responded.

⁴⁰⁶ See King’s Proclamation for a General Fast dated 24 January, 1798. The day set aside for the Fast was Wednesday, 7 March, 1798.

⁴⁰⁷ Simeon. *Horae Homileticae*. Vol. 4. p.183.

observe a number of calamities that had befallen them recently and to examine their own consciences to see whether there may be any sins of which God wants them to repent. To understand Marsden's intent, the point of the sermon as Simeon had meant it in his outline must be understood. It can then be determined if Marsden has accurately followed this intent.

In his 'skeleton' on this text of scripture Simeon made three points of outline, each with sub points:⁴⁰⁸

1. When we have reason to apprehend that God's anger is waxed hot against us.
 - a. When our sins are multiplied against him
 - b. When his judgements are multiplied upon us
2. How it is to be averted.
 - a. Repentance towards God and faith in Christ are the means prescribed by God. ... we should devote ourselves to God in a perpetual covenant.
 - b. Such covenants ... have often been made by ... eminent saints.
 - c. Nor can we doubt of their acceptableness to God.
3. Urge upon you the adoption of them.
 - a. There is no time for delay.
 - b. If we neglect this duty we cannot hope to escape the wrath of God.
 - c. If we heartily engage in this duty we have nothing to fear.

As mentioned above Simeon's incentive for this outline was a royal proclamation of a Fast-day in March 1798, to call upon God for deliverance from the calamities of war facing the nation at the time. Simeon focused on the sin of the people, declaring, 'there is not one amongst us that does not deserve to be made a monument of his wrath' and then says, 'it is by temporal judgements

⁴⁰⁸ Note that some of Simeon's sub points are headings without numbering.

chiefly that he punishes nations. ... And are not these multiplied upon our land at this time?’

Simeon then turns to the subject of how God’s wrath may be averted and declares that, ‘Repentance towards God and faith in Christ are the means prescribed by God.’ He encourages the people to covenant with God, being assured that such is acceptable to God. He then finishes the outline with an indication of the urgency of repentance because, if the people neglect such repentance, they cannot hope to escape the wrath of God and if they do heartily engage in repentance they have nothing to fear. In summary, Simeon’s outline calls upon the people to repent and make a covenant with God because the calamities that have come upon them are indicative of God’s wrath against them. Without repentance they cannot hope to escape. With repentance there is nothing to fear. In following Simeon’s outline Marsden has listed events he believed were signs of God’s anger ‘waxed hot against’ the people of the colony. In his sermon Marsden says on page 14:

we have reason to apprehend that God is angry with us for our sins, from the rains being withheld, the earth not bringing forth its increase, our cattle dying with famine, and ourselves threatened with the same calamity which is God’s usual method of punishing nations for their iniquities (and from God taking from us a just and upright judge.)⁴⁰⁹

He had earlier stated on page nine that these calamities were the evidence of God’s anger against them:

These things are certain tokens that God’s anger is waxed hot against us for our sins and none of us can tell what the end will be. We can expect no favour if we continue still to do wickedly.

⁴⁰⁹ The words in parentheses are added above the line. This may indicate that Marsden had written this sermon in preparation for Sunday before Bent had died. He has then considered Bent’s death as yet another calamity and so has added it as a further illustration.

Marsden lamented the depravity that pervaded the colony and on page three listed the sins and wickedness so prevalent:

There is no sin however serious which is not practised without remorse amongst us. Lying & perjury & theft, and whoredom, and blasphemy, and drunkenness, are daily committed amongst us.

He has left no-one out of his chastisement for ingratitude towards God and for obvious sin and reiterates that God has shown his displeasure with the behaviour of the people of the Colony by visiting upon them certain calamities. On page three Marsden says, 'What ingratitude have we all shewn for mercies received.' And on page nine:

our sins are so public and so great. We declare our sins as Sodom. We hide them not. Surely the displeasure of God can scarcely ever be more ~~displade~~ strongly displayed than it is under the public calamities under which we now groan.

Marsden, following Simeon's outline, called upon the people of the colony to turn from their sin and rededicate themselves to God, being assured of eternal bliss if they so turn. 'What should not we affect if we were all to turn unto God with sincerity? God would soon relieve our wants' (Page 15). He then invited his congregation directly to repent, 'we now invite you to turn unto the Lord your God with weeping and with mourning' (Page 18) and on page twenty warns them of the consequences of not repenting with an assurance on page twenty-two that with true repentance God will give relief:

With respect to us as a body of people, who can tell how soon the cloud that now hangs over us may burst. We have had loud warnings to repent, and of long continuance, and we may expect that God will increase our public calamities if we continue to increase our iniquities, and in the end cause us to feel all the evils of famine and general distress.

Let us make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel. If we heartily engage in this duty we have nothing to fear. Were such a covenant general amongst us God would soon remove his judgement. He would give us the early and the latter rain in their season.

Of those who turn to seek God, Marsden promised on page twenty three that they will know God as their refuge even if the calamities continue:

Tho they may be involved in the general calamity they shall be comforted with the divine presence. Many are the afflictions of the righteous that the Lord delivereth them out of them all. They will always find him a present help in time of need. They need not then be agitated with fear on their own account with God's displeasure with the world, for tho the earth should be removed our God would still be their refuge, a very present help in time of need.

The thrust of this sermon shows that Marsden has been faithful to the intent of Simeon's outline and that he has addressed some very pressing issues within the colony, encouraging his congregation to think seriously about the spiritual implications involved for them of the current drought and its attendant calamities. His phrasing throughout has been inclusive, giving evidence of his pastoral concern for his people.

The Significance of the Death of Ellis Bent

The mention of the death of the Judge Advocate in this sermon is understandable, particularly as it was more than likely Marsden's first address to his congregation after the funeral of Mr Bent. What would not be understandable would have been a total neglect of any mention of Bent and his recent passing. The fact that Marsden has added mention of Bent in the sermon by writing words above the line (as noted above) indicates that Marsden may well have written this sermon initially before Bent died but has then added the mention of his death as yet another calamity that has befallen the colony. Marsden was impressed with Bent's Christian commitment and understanding and held these out to his congregation as an example of godly living:

With respect to the doctrines of the Christian religion I had many conversations with him, both before and during his last sickness (upon him). He searched the scriptures daily like the Boreans, to see whether these things were so. He was very anxious to know the way to glory. The Psalms of David afforded him much consolation, and also the Esiples (*sic*) of St. Paul. We had much conversation on these doctrines contained in

these epistles a few days before his death. The word of God appeared to be very precious to him. (Pages 12-13)

The death of a man of Christian commitment and of high ranking in the colony at an early age⁴¹⁰ would have been the subject of some talk and maybe speculation about God's action. In the context of this sermon, therefore, it is not inappropriate that Marsden had included Bent's recent death as another calamity that had befallen the people of the colony. Marsden's words were:

I beg also to mention another (recent event) ~~circumstance~~ which I consider as a most serious calamity to the inhabitants of this Colony, and an awful token of the divine displeasure, viz. the death of our Judge Advocate. (Page 10)

Marsden has listed a number of calamities as being indicators of the displeasure of God with the behaviour within the colony and that the death of such a one as Bent, despite his falling out with the Governor, should be seen as one of those calamities is a natural inference. Unfortunately Macquarie has turned Marsden's words from, 'a most serious calamity to the inhabitants of this Colony' to, 'no doubt the Sins of this Colony had been the cause of Mr Bent's death'.⁴¹¹ In his pastoral care for the people Marsden was, however, careful in his choice of words. He did not say the sins of the colony had caused Bent's death. He said that Bent's death was a, 'most serious calamity to the inhabitants of this Colony' (Page 10). Rather than blaming the people for Bent's death, as Macquarie heard Marsden saying, Marsden has said that the people have suffered because of the death of Mr. Bent. Whereas Macquarie accused Marsden of saying that the inhabitants of the colony were the cause of Mr Bent's death, Marsden has actually said that Bent's death is one of those calamities that the inhabitants of the colony have suffered. In his pastoral concern he has been careful not to make that direct link that Macquarie has made.

⁴¹⁰ Bent was only 32 when he died.

⁴¹¹ *Marsden Papers*. ML. C 244. p. 50

Marsden has said that the Judge Advocate's death was, 'an awful token of the divine displeasure,' focussing on what God has done, not what the people of the colony have done.

Macquarie's complaint was simply that he thought Marsden had said that the death of Ellis Bent was caused by the sins of the people of the colony. In his own mind, and in those of his biographers and other historians, Macquarie may well have seen this as a criticism of himself, but to be consistent he should have also mentioned that he thought Marsden was saying that the sins of drunkenness, whoring and Sabbath breaking (sins which are a refrain in Marsden's sermons) were the cause of the calamities of drought, famine and crop failure, which Marsden had listed alongside the calamity of the death of an upright judge. As he did not do this the inevitable conclusion is that the Governor has allowed his ill feelings towards both Marsden and Bent to cloud his understanding and judgement and he has therefore made a wrongful accusation against the chaplain.

It is to be regretted that Macquarie's relationship with both Bent and Marsden had deteriorated to the extent that the Governor focussed on one point of the sermon, transgressed into the realm of the expertise of the preacher and missed the whole thrust of the sermon. Macquarie's complaint was that Marsden attributed Bent's death to the sins of the colony. That Macquarie has missed the point must lead us to also reject any assertion that Marsden inveighed 'in scarcely veiled terms against Macquarie and his administration'. As the thrust of Marsden's sermon was the same as Simeon's outline, namely that God had visited certain calamities upon the people because of their sin, those who see a veiled attack on Macquarie in Marsden's sermon must also see a veiled attack on the King in Simeon's outline. As there is clearly no such treasonable intent in Simeon's outline it must lead us to the conclusion that those who attribute mal-intent to Marsden's words have, like the Governor, missed the thrust of the sermon and the careful wording Marsden has used.

Marsden and Authority

To round out our understanding of the relationship between Marsden and Macquarie, Sermon 23 in the Moore College collection is of particular interest. This sermon gives some understanding of Marsden's attitude to authority. The sermon is catalogued by Middleton under the heading of 'governors' and also under 'magistrates'. The sermon is undated and incomplete, consisting of just four pages of Marsden's handwriting. Nevertheless it has great value in that, in a short space, it gives Marsden's views on the roles of minister, magistrates and governors. It takes for its text Romans 13.1 in which the Apostle Paul encourages the believer to: 'be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.' As usual, Marsden has used Simeon's outline for this sermon and it follows what might be expected of the evangelical preaching on this subject, namely that God has placed the governing authorities for the benefit of the people who should therefore obey those authorities under God. What is of particular interest in this sermon is that Marsden has claimed that it is not only the proper role of the minister of the gospel to proclaim Christ:

but whilst they preach the doctrines of the gospel, they must not overlook its duties: nor in stating its duties, must they pass by those, which pertain to us as members of civil communion (23:1)

While these words are essentially an exact copy of the wording in Simeon's outline,⁴¹² with very minor differences, it is reasonable to believe that Marsden would not have copied them if he disagreed with them. Indeed he regularly changed a few words while copying directly from Simeon in order to better express his own position, indicating that if he had not agreed with these words he would have changed them or not used them at all. The duties of the gospel for Marsden were the responsibilities of the Christian person to refrain from all wicked and ungodly living such as whoredom, drunkenness and Sabbath breaking which are regular themes throughout his

⁴¹² Simeon. *Horae Homileticae*. Vol. XV. p.504.

preaching. When Marsden has spoken of the duties ‘that pertain to us as members of civil communion’, in the context of this sermon he has in mind submission to the authority of magistrates and governors. Magistrates are ‘to do all in their power for the suppression of iniquity’ while governors are both to understand that ‘the supreme power was God’s’ and that ‘governors are also benefactors from God’.

It is a shame this sermon cannot be dated. If it was preached before 1810, that is before Macquarie arrived in the colony, it can be said to be an innocent statement of Marsden’s unaffected theological position. If it was preached during or after his difficulties with Macquarie these statements take on more significance. While it is not a certainty that any of the sermons in all the collections of Marsden’s sermons do not predate it, the earliest dated sermon is one held in the Moore College Collection which is dated 13 December, 1812. The latest date of any sermon that has certainty about it is also one in Moore College which is the one following the wreck of the *Edward Lombe*. This sermon was probably preached on Sunday, 31 August 1834, the first Sunday after the wreck. With these dates, it does seem that the bulk of the sermons we have available today were preached during and after Macquarie’s governorship and so it is reasonable to assume that Sermon 23 was preached after a time when Marsden had been affected by his difficulties with Macquarie. It can therefore be safely assumed that in speaking of the duties of magistrates ‘to do all in their power to for the suppression of iniquity’, Marsden is quite likely offering some justification for his own actions on the bench as a magistrate and no doubt he saw this as some biblical or divine justification. When he says in this sermon that governors are to understand that their authority is held only under the supreme power of God, it is reasonable to assume he has in mind that Governor Macquarie should understand that he too is answerable to a higher power. Likewise when he states that governors are benefactors from God it is possible that he wanted the Governor to understand that he held his position only by the grace of God.

Marsden understood that ministers had their responsibilities and governors and magistrates had their different responsibilities. These responsibilities might sometimes overlap and seem to be trying to achieve the same ends such as the reduction of immoral behaviour. Yet, as Marsden saw it, the minister's ultimate goal was to prepare people for heaven. The magistrate's or the governor's role was to maintain order in this world. There is, however, another level and responsibility unique to the minister as Marsden saw it. In Sermon 91:17 he has said:

This subject speaks also powerfully to those who are messengers of God to a guilty world. It is at the peril of a minister's own soul if throw (*sic*) cowardice or sloth he neglect to warn men of their danger. They must like Elijah put themselves in the way of sinners and bear testimony for God against them. There is a duty laid upon them that is not imposed upon any other men in the world

Marsden believed that he had a unique authority from God. It is a duty 'laid upon' ministers by God. They must stand in front of sinners and declare God's testimony against their sin. Marsden would have believed this authority to be greater authority than that of the Governor because it was from God and it had eternal consequences. He has stated that the minister will shrink from this responsibility at the peril of his own soul. Such belief, both in the authority he had from God and the danger to his own eternal salvation, would have given Marsden an unwavering determination that when he spoke about the things of God even the Governor was subject to his authority. Even if he had been personally upset by Macquarie's public dressing down he would not have doubted for one moment that what he had said in his sermon after Ellis Bent's death was anything but the truth, a truth that even Macquarie must submit to.

It is interesting to note Marsden's confident assertions before Macquarie when he first confronted the Governor about his appointment to sit with Thompson and Lord as Commissioners on the turnpike road. In *Certain Calumnies*, while expressing respect for the

office of governor, Marsden can be seen to have a cheeky certainty and confidence. Is this because he believed that by wanting to create a system of equality between former convicts and free settlers Macquarie was going against a natural order determined by God? Did Marsden therefore believe that, as the messenger of God, he was bringing news to Macquarie to which he must submit?⁴¹³ This is speculation but a possible scenario.

Conclusions

It is the contention of this chapter that Marsden has been misunderstood and unfairly dealt with both by Governor Macquarie and later commentators for his sermon following the death of the Judge Advocate, Mr Ellis Bent. It is, however, a real possibility that Marsden was not averse to justifying himself and putting his opponents in their place in his sermons even though in his sermons he does not make any direct references to any particular controversy. It is also a real possibility that Marsden was simply being faithful to the tradition of evangelical preaching he had learned from his close friend and mentor, Charles Simeon. Part of this tradition gave Marsden a very high view of the role of the preacher who must ‘bear testimony for God against’ every sinner no matter their rank in society.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹³ In *Certain Calumnies* Marsden has said, ‘it was not my wish to interfere in any system of policy the Governor might think proper’, but then that he ‘informed’ Macquarie that he could not ‘accept such an appointment’ which required him to sit on the bench with emancipists. Macquarie required Marsden to put his objections in writing. After doing so, Macquarie then asked Marsden if he ‘had reconsidered his order’. Marsden continues, ‘I answered in the affirmative; and respectfully told him, that I sincerely regretted that I could not bring my mind to comply with his wishes.’ pp. 4-6. Marsden’s tone here indicates a confidence in his own position if not a real challenge to Macquarie. He has told Macquarie that he has ‘reconsidered’ his position but that in reconsidering it he has not changed his mind. The challenge seems to be thrown at Macquarie, ‘So what are going to do about it?’

⁴¹⁴ See Sermon 91:17.

While Marsden's overall use of Simeon's outlines can justifiably be termed 'slavish' it is that very slavish following of the outlines that mark Marsden as an evangelical preacher. Simeon published his sermon outlines in order that young evangelical clergy would learn to be faithful preachers of the word of God. In the Moore College collection of Marsden's sermons, fully two thirds of them use a Simeon outline to a greater or lesser degree. In those sermons where Marsden has not used one of the outlines, his style and structure give evidence that he has been greatly influenced by Simeon. This influence came not only from Simeon's outlines but, as noted earlier, by personal friendship and mutual respect as well. Simeon's influence on Marsden's ministry in the colony therefore loomed large. Combined with his credentials as an Elland Scholar in the hotbed of evangelicalism in Cambridge at the time, Magdalene College, and his association with Wilberforce and the Rev John Newton, it can be safely said that Marsden faithfully represented true Evangelical Anglicanism of the time.

It has been argued above that fault lies with Macquarie and later historians for misunderstanding the thrust of Marsden's message. However, while Marsden was a faithful evangelical preacher, Macquarie's reaction following 'the Bent sermon' is an example of the failure of the evangelical preacher to engage his audience. With a better understanding of how Macquarie might have reacted to the things he said in his sermon, Marsden should have been able to better express his thoughts so that the theological understanding of the calamities he presented were better understood by those who heard. In the sermon following Ellis Bent's death Marsden dealt in very high thinking with a particular theological understanding of contemporary events. In the sermon he said that the calamities that had come upon the colony were indicative of God's wrath against the people, but did not say that the sin of the people had been the cause of the calamities. While he chose his words carefully there was at least one hearer of his message who misunderstood the thrust of what he was saying. In this sense then we must conclude that

Marsden has failed in his preaching at least with this one hearer. While he may have been faithful to the form and structure of accepted evangelical preaching of the time, and while he may have been an intimate of the evangelical leaders of his day, we may conclude that he needed to work a little harder to make sure he communicated his evangelical message.

Into this mix must be placed the possibility that Macquarie was not even present when Marsden delivered this sermon and that his dressing down of Marsden was based only on second hand reports. The hand written note on the page preceding the sermon held by the Mitchell Library indicates that it was 'about a week later' that Macquarie spoke to Marsden. If this report is accurate it gives support to the idea that Macquarie did not hear the sermon himself. If he had, and had taken exception to what Marsden said, we might reasonably expect him to have said something to Marsden on that day. If Macquarie has based his criticism on hearsay it is not surprising he has misunderstood the thrust and intent of the sermon. Having said that, these thoughts must be balanced with the observation that at the time this sermon was preached Marsden's relationship with Macquarie had already reached a low ebb. Macquarie was not predisposed to hang on the words Marsden spoke from his pulpit and it is therefore not surprising he missed the point even if he was present during its delivery. It would be interesting to note others' reactions to this sermon and compare them with Macquarie's, but to date none has come to light.

It is noted that the *Sydney Gazette* reported in the month following Marsden's delivery of this sermon that the drought, which he had declared to be one indication of God's wrath against the people, had broken. It may well be that some folk had understood the intent of the sermon and repented of their sins and God had therefore relaxed his anger. This is speculation, but it is the outcome Marsden was seeking in preaching this sermon and would indicate that the sermon has had a powerful and intended effect on at least some of its hearers.

Epilogue

The Rev Samuel Marsden has always polarised opinions. In the colonial context at the same time at which Governor King wrote that church services at St. John's Parramatta were 'very numerous attended'⁴¹⁵ W. P. Crook also declared that Marsden had 'very few hearers' for his Sabbath Day sermons.⁴¹⁶ Marsden's grandson, James Hassall wrote of Marsden that he was 'the only one' in the colony who rebuked immorality and called people to godly living so that it was 'no wonder he was hated, maligned and misrepresented' and yet 'no one was more beloved and esteemed by the upright'.⁴¹⁷ In the modern context, while Richard Quinn may describe Marsden as 'evil and corrupt',⁴¹⁸ Simon Manchester believes that, 'We have good reason to thank God for Samuel Marsden.'⁴¹⁹ It has been argued throughout this thesis that the complexities of the colonial context and the complexities of the man himself make these polarisations too simplistic. It is time to recognise that Samuel Marsden, like any human being, made mistakes but also made a valuable contribution to his time.

It has been argued in Chapter Five that Marsden was a visionary when it came to strategizing for mission, but that he was also blinkered in his mission strategy, not being able to think how to reach the local Aboriginal people who did not respond to his well-tried strategies. One of his purposes in returning to England in 1807 was to recruit men and women to begin a mission to New Zealand, having been convinced from his encounters with New Zealanders as they visited the colony, that New Zealand was ripe for the gospel. It took another seven years to see that mission begin. Yet at the same time Marsden could not see

⁴¹⁵ *HRNSW* vol.5 p.324

⁴¹⁶ *HRNSW* vol.5 p. 314. Johnstone, *Pioneer*. pp. 49-52, makes a convincing case of Crook's negative bias against Marsden.

⁴¹⁷ James S. Hassall, *In Old Australia: Records and Reminiscences from 1794*. p. 157.

⁴¹⁸ Quinn. *Altar Ego*. p. 184

⁴¹⁹ Simon Manchester, 'How long can we flog this parson?' *The Briefing* Matthias Media, Sydney. 29 July, 2014.

how to reach the Aboriginal people of Australia with the gospel despite having learnt something of the local language and making some, ultimately misguided, attempts to reach them by ‘adopting’ an Aboriginal child.

New Zealand Mission

On 18 September, 1814 Marsden wrote that he considered the mission to New Zealand was more important than any other work.⁴²⁰ This mission and the events surrounding it form a focus around which so many issues about Marsden come together and give a deeper insight into what motivated him and explain many events and activities about which he has received harsh criticism. I have attempted some explanation about Marsden’s attitudes to the Aboriginal people of New South Wales in Chapter Five which details the New Zealand Mission because his attitudes to Aboriginal people cannot be understood in isolation but in the wider context of Marsden’s strategic understanding of mission. In this context it is useless to criticise Marsden’s hidebound adherence to understanding foreign cultures (Aboriginal and Māori) from his own cultural perspective. We may question with Richard Hill why more efforts were not made towards the Aboriginal people of New South Wales⁴²¹ and perhaps wish that Marsden had the insights a modern course in missiology may have given him, but such anachronisms blind us to Marsden’s own strategic approach to mission. The way in which Marsden went about the mission to New Zealand also gives some insight into his attitudes towards wealth. He expended a large amount of his own money in preparing for the mission and continued an attempt to use his ship to provide ongoing financial support for the mission. Following the *Boyd* incident we have seen Marsden’s years of effort to come to a clear understanding of the issues surrounding it and then his very risky campaign to bring reconciliation to the warring tribes, despite warnings from his New Zealand friend, Ruatara.

⁴²⁰ Letter to Josiah Pratt. HL. MS-0054, item 47

⁴²¹ Letter from Hill to Coates 25 March, 1835. HL. MS-7, item 233. In this letter Hill asks the question, ‘Why are our poor Aborigines so reluctantly assisted, while New Zealand is so liberally supported?’

The beginnings of the New Zealand mission have also highlighted Marsden's mission strategy. Whereas he has been quoted as saying that civilization must come before evangelisation,⁴²² Marsden's behaviour as the New Zealand Mission began shows very clearly that in practice he did not hold to such a sharp distinction. Having taken artisans with him to help bring the blessings of Western civilisation to the New Zealanders, Marsden actually began the Mission with a clear proclamation of the Christian message. The content of this message has previously been unavailable to us. In his journal of the occasion Marsden recorded the biblical text which was the basis of his sermon, but we had been left with no indication of what he actually said. Research in the sermons held in the Moore College Collection has revealed that there are three sermons on the same passage that Marsden preached on in Oihi. Study of these sermons has discovered that there are eight points in common. It has been reasonable therefore to assume that if Marsden spoke on these same eight points three times when he preached on Luke 2:10, then he is likely to have mentioned these same eight points in his sermon as he began the Mission to New Zealand, thus giving some insight into what Marsden may have actually said to the people gathered at Oihi on Christmas Day, 1814. Some modern scholarship has suggested that Marsden did not communicate anything in that sermon because the Māori did not understand what he said. Contrary to this belief I have made the case in Chapter Five that Marsden preached in the Māori language and that the Māori people welcomed his message.

Exclusives and Egalitarianism

Marsden certainly picked the wrong side, so to speak, when it came to how he thought colonial society should develop. His belief in a God-ordained hierarchy in heaven and on earth placed him in the halls of 'The Exclusives' at a time when, supported by Governor Macquarie, the emancipist camp was winning the right to equality, and a more egalitarian

⁴²² See Yarwood *Great Survivor* p. 85 for a clear statement of this belief about Marsden's mission strategy.

society was beginning to define the Australian consciousness. The articulate criticisms of the colonial born William Charles Wentworth, whose mother was an emancipist and whose father, Dr. Darcy Wentworth, was slighted by the 'Exclusives', have helped shape an enduring legacy of Marsden as a man out of step with the visionary developments of Macquarie and Macarthur.

Colonial Life

As a previously untapped body of primary documentation, Marsden's sermons have given some further insight into colonial life. Comments in his sermons, about the loss of innocent life by execution because of perjury, highlight the brutality of the times and confirm the description of the late 1820s to the mid-1830s as the heyday of capital punishment. Despite these apparent failings of the legal system Marsden declared that such injustices could not happen under the British system of justice. This inconsistency indicates that Marsden's ideals were not always disturbed by his observations.

Marsden has been criticised for his attitude towards women and particularly women living in *de facto* relationships who he described as 'concubines'. His efforts from the pulpit to encourage marriage, particularly because of the ill effects adulterous and bigamous relationships were having on children, do not seem to have resulted in much changed behaviour amongst the people of the colony. In one sense Marsden was not too disturbed by this lack of results. He believed that his duty was simply to preach; to tell the people what he believed God's word was calling them to be or do. The results were the responsibility of the Holy Spirit who would move the hearts of men and women as He chose. This attitude is seen across all areas of concern in Marsden's preaching. Marsden believed his duty was to preach. The conversion of souls or the changed behaviour of individuals he believed to be, at one level, the responsibility of God, and at another level, the responsibility of the hearer. We have noted in Chapter Four that in Sermon 68:19 Marsden said to his congregation that, having done his duty and preached with warnings and exhortations, he was free from further

responsibility. The responsibility for their response now lay with them. With such an understanding of the role of preaching we may conclude that Marsden believed he had faithfully carried out his commission as chaplain.

Of interest in colonial religious life is the subject of hymnody. As noted in Chapter One, Marsden has quoted from a number of hymns. There may be more in Marsden's sermons than I have observed. Further study for someone so inclined could perhaps find more hymns in Marsden's sermons and thereby begin a fuller study of the hymnody of New South Wales' colonial times.

Magistracy, Civilisation and Mission

We must also come to the ultimate conclusion that Marsden's decision to accept a position as a magistrate was flawed in so much as it has entirely sullied his reputation in New South Wales. He may not have earned the title 'Flogging Parson' had his judgements been perceived as fair and compassionate. However, the mistakes in his judgements on Galvin and Rumsby⁴²³ and statements from his nemesis, Macquarie, about his harshness as a magistrate have set an enduring perception that Marsden's character was not of the quality expected in a clergyman. It has been noted in Chapter Four that an understanding of Marsden's theological position leads to the conclusion that his acceptance of an appointment to the magistracy was also inconsistent with that position. Despite statements in his own preaching about the nature of

⁴²³ The case of Paddy Galvin has been noted in Chapter Six. Ann Rumsby was a convict woman serving her time in domestic service. She was brought as a witness in a case against Dr. Henry Gratton Douglass, accused of certain immoral behaviour. The unfortunate girl, with no legal representation, but with a promise of complete immunity if she told the truth, was questioned by the magistrates of Parramatta, including Marsden, for some five hours. After this lengthy questioning and with no other witnesses called, nor any evidence produced in the case against Dr. Douglass, the magistrates decided that Rumsby was guilty of perjury and sentenced her to banishment to the penal colony of Port Macquarie to serve out the remainder of her sentence.

the role of magistrates as ministers appointed by God for the good ordering of society,⁴²⁴

Marsden has not been able to convince anyone that he was the sort of magistrate who exercised that responsibility in a manner with which God would be pleased.

It was often the way of the evangelicals in reaching out to those in need to create a ‘safe place’ and within that safe place to proclaim the gospel. Marsden appears to have had this approach in a very general sense when he expressed the belief that civilisation would pave the way for the gospel. In accepting the position of a magistrate Marsden is seen in this same mode. He wanted to create a safe place, namely a society free of vice and criminal conduct. In this place he could then preach the gospel. If, as has been argued in this dissertation, Marsden thought that by exercising the duties of a magistrate he could help to create a society that would be that ‘safe place’ in which the gospel could be preached, then we must conclude that he failed in this endeavour and ultimately his efforts as a magistrate have proved to be counterproductive to his desire to see men and women converted to Christ.

In practice though, it was not one before the other. Marsden did not wait until civilisation was established before he preached the gospel. In practice the gospel and civilisation went hand in hand in Marsden’s mission strategy. He did not wait until the safe place of civilisation was created first before he proclaimed the gospel and the duties of men and women under God. Evidence of this is clearly seen in the mission to New Zealand. Marsden employed artisan missionaries, taught the New Zealanders the arts of agriculture and blacksmithing at Parramatta, but then the very first thing he did on New Zealand soil at Whangaroa was to ensure reconciliation between warring tribes and then at Oihi to preach a sermon about the God become Man. He had put much preparation into the mission by making sure that the ‘benefits’ of a Western civilisation would be present but his first activity in New

⁴²⁴ See Sermons 23:1-2, 4; 27:1; 56:4-5; 63:3-4; 89:4

Zealand was to proclaim the gospel message of reconciliation between man and man and between man and God.

Complexity and Varying Expectations

People arrived in the colony of New South Wales with varying expectations. The chaplains and their backers believed the establishment of the colony was God's providential provision to open opportunities for the gospel to be proclaimed throughout the South Seas.⁴²⁵ Official government expectations of the chaplains were that they would confine themselves to preaching on moral subjects for the improvement of the convicts. Marsden chose to become a farmer and a magistrate thereby adding layers of complexity to what he saw as his primary task of preaching the 'everlasting gospel'. Presumably in another time or another place he would not have created this complexity, but confined himself to the task of preaching.⁴²⁶ The critics of Marsden, and many of his supporters as well, have failed to understand this complexity. The critics have taken things even his supporters find difficult and tarred his whole reputation with negativity. At the same time Marsden's supporters have also made significant errors in understanding the man, his background and motivations because they have not sufficiently engaged with his preaching.

Johnson and Marsden were not alone in having different expectations about their ministry than the governing officials. In his Ph.D. dissertation Michael Gladwin has

⁴²⁵ Note the hymn that the Rev John Newton wrote for Richard Johnson as he left with the First Fleet to begin his ministry in Botany Bay. The second verse of this hymn declares:

Go, bear the Saviour's name to lands unknown;
Tell to the Southern world His wondrous grace,
An energy Divine thy words shall own.
And draw their untaught hearts to seek His face.

⁴²⁶ See correspondence to the Elland Society where Marsden says, 'I should have been ready to relinquish my farm if my conduct had been disapproved of by the Society.' From the Manuscript Journals of the Elland Society. Letter written at Parramatta 16 September, 1796. Cited in Elder *Letters & Journals* p.30.

concluded that Anglican clergy ‘who served in Australia before 1850 were far more than just agents of the colonial and imperial state.’ Gladwin declares that:

The findings of this dissertation further demonstrate the utter inadequacy of longstanding historical and popular caricatures of the Anglican clergy as flogging parsons, lackeys of government, or uncritical members of the ruling elite promoting social control and subordination.⁴²⁷

This study of Marsden’s sermons concurs with the conclusions of Gladwin’s prosopographical study of Anglican clergy in Australia up to 1850.

The focus of this dissertation has been Marsden’s sermons. Working through his 135 sermons extant today, a better understanding of the man has been developed than has previously been available to us. By studying these sermons the mistakes of Marsden’s detractors and supporters alike have been brought into relief. Without reference to what he said in his preaching many mistakes have been made in assessments of Marsden’s motivations and practices. Study of the sermons has thrown light on some issues and has given a better understanding of the character of the man. This study has shown Marsden to be a man of vision and strategy as evidenced by his mission to New Zealand. And yet when his vision was limited or blinkered he was unable to develop new strategies as evidenced in his dealings with the Aboriginal people of New South Wales.

This study of his preaching has given a better understanding of the interactions of Marsden with his community. In Chapter Four we have gained some insight into what was Marsden’s thinking behind his self-identification with The Exclusives. His attitudes to emancipists and free settlers were less about human status than a belief in how God has ordered the world. Also in Chapter Four we have seen that as Marsden addressed any number of issues in the colony his primary purpose was to call people to repentance and faith. It

⁴²⁷ Gladwin. *Anglican Clergy*. p. 396

should not surprise us that his goal as a preacher was a spiritual one. The spiritual and compassionate nature of his call to moral living is evidenced in his pastoral approach as, in his sermons, he identifies with his flock by the use of the first person plural in such sentences as ‘Contempt of God, ingratitude to him & forgetfulness of him have marked every step we have taken thro life.’ (4:5). ‘We have no strength against the power of sin.’ (24:18). ‘We should meditate upon the great uncertainty of life in order that we may be prepared to meet death in whatever shape it may come upon us.’ (35:2). ‘We cannot know our real situation, we cannot believe that we are so poor & miserable & blind & naked till the Spirit convince us of sin and we feel how we have ruined ourselves by our iniquities.’ (41:8). This image of the pastor with his flock has gone unnoticed except perhaps in the minds of hagiographers. Study of Marsden’s sermons has given some substance and more objectivity to the portrait the hagiographers have painted. Through study of his sermons we have a more dispassionate view that Marsden was a man who faithfully preached with compassion to see people enjoying eternal life. This compassion is evident despite the fact that Marsden sometimes ended his sermons on a fairly harsh note. This study has given the lie to the idea that Marsden used the magisterial lash because he failed as a preacher to beat people into moral submission. It is more likely that Marsden, as an evangelical, attempted to use his position as a magistrate to shape society with a view to creating a ‘safe place’ in which to preach the gospel.

Close examination of his sermons has shown the truth of Walter Lawry’s criticism that Marsden was too dependent on Charles Simeon’s outlines of sermons. However, acknowledging his slavish following of Simeon marks Marsden as an evangelical preacher. Others may have labelled him as too ‘Methodistical’,⁴²⁸ but this style of evangelical preaching

⁴²⁸ A. T. Yarwood, 'Marsden, Samuel (1765–1838)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/marsden-samuel-2433/text3237>, published in hardcopy 1967, accessed online 7 November 2014. Yarwood identifies ‘a number of critics’ who have made this declaration without naming any.

became an identifiable form in colonial sermons as we have seen in a comparison with contemporary preachers in Chapter Three.

If Marsden saw himself as the harbinger of the everlasting gospel to the South Seas, then a study of the question, ‘How clearly did he communicate this evangelical message?’ might be a study paying great dividends. Macquarie’s reaction to Marsden’s preaching, as noted particularly in Chapter Six, shows that Marsden was not clear in communicating this message, or at least that some did not understand his message. An analysis of the effectiveness of Marsden’s sermons is a lesson for all preachers. Further investigation could enquire into what miscommunications Marsden made and what he could have done otherwise to persuade Macquarie of the truth of what he was saying. Other areas of further research could be on the effects of Marsden’s preaching in transforming society, inspiring mission or the developing role of preaching in the Australian context as the most prominent form of public speech making.

The sermons show that, whatever else he was, Marsden was a man of compassion and pastoral empathy, a man who had a clear appreciation of the roles of magistrates, governors and clergy, a man who had a strong understanding of how he believed God had ordered society. The inadequacy of the caricatures is in the prejudices of those who have drawn them, ignoring the complexities of character and personality readily observed in the words Marsden preached as he spoke to his flock of the things of God and their eternal destiny.

Blinkered Visionary

Study of the sermons of Samuel Marsden has revealed that he may be described as a ‘Blinkered Visionary’. He thought and worked strategically for the mission to New Zealand, but could not see a way forward with the Aboriginal people of New South Wales. As discussed in Chapters Three and Five he did not understand the Aboriginal people. He tried to

reach them by offering the ‘trinkets’ of English society but was then lost as to how to proceed when they did not respond to these.

Marsden saw the need to engage in farming in the infant colony for the sake of survival, but did not initially perceive the impact his increasing wealth would have on the attitude of others with regard to performing his duties as a clergyman. As discussed in Chapter Three Marsden believed that whatever temporal interest a person had, these were not a barrier to spiritual interests as well. His belief was that God gave a person sufficient time for all necessary tasks. The fact that his wealth grew, his empire expanded and that he traded with the islanders of the South Seas, led his contemporaries to believe, and to publicly comment, that he must have been neglecting the duties of his first calling.

As a pioneer agriculturalist, in his development of fine wool and in his involvement in the Agricultural Society of New South Wales, Marsden was a visionary. These farming endeavours led to great wealth and great criticism. The sermons, however, do not reveal sufficient evidence for us to determine whether or not Marsden was blinkered to the adverse reputation this wealth gave him in terms of the public criticism that these activities kept him from his pastoral duties. There is a sufficient number of sermons still in existence to indicate that Marsden regularly engaged in what he believed his primary calling to be; that is, ‘to preach the everlasting gospel’. Even though he has made excessive use of Simeon’s outlines there is enough evidence in each sermon to show that Marsden put time, effort and thought into preparing his sermons. As the criticism of his wealth and the neglect of his duties was public, Marsden would have been aware of the reputation he had gained because of his involvement in many activities outside the orbit of his role as chaplain. It is therefore likely that because of his belief that God gave a person all the time needed for temporal as well as spiritual activities he believed he did not neglect his primary calling. Rather than being blinkered to the adverse effects his wealth and agricultural pursuits were

having on his reputation as a minister of the Church of England, Marsden is most likely to have simply ignored them, believing he was being faithful to God in all areas of his life.

He believed his role as a magistrate would help to maintain law and order in the colony. His vision may well have been that law and order administered by the magistrate would create a 'safe place' in which to preach the gospel. However, he failed to see how negatively his harshness and poor decisions from the bench would impact the cause of the gospel he so passionately supported. As discussed in Chapter Four Marsden believed that the role of magistrate was an appointment of God, even calling magistrates, 'ministers of God'. Yet he did not mean magistrates had the same role as ordained clergy. He was very clear in his understanding of the different, yet complementary, roles of magistrate and chaplain. His critics, however, did not share the nuances of this understanding and found it difficult to comprehend how Marsden could sentence people one day, preach to them the next and flog them the next. He was blinkered about the negative impact his role as magistrate had.

Modern historians and writers have accepted uncritically the negative reputation so that it is perpetuated. It has been noted in the Introduction of this work how strange it is that people have been so polarised in their opinions of Marsden, seeing him only at one extreme or the other, not allowing for nuances in between let alone understanding of the complexity of his character and the context in which he ministered. Yarwood's impatience with these black and white extremes 'unrelieved by shades of grey'⁴²⁹ has also been noted in the Introduction. Yet these are not the first expressions of frustration at these polarisations. In a work first published in 1889 Charles White expressed his opinion:

It will be a sufficient explanation of these widely-ranging estimates on Mr. Marsden's character to state that he was regarded in the colony as the representative of one section of the community, the dominating class, afterwards contemptuously called the 'pure merinos'. The more

⁴²⁹ Yarwood. *The Great Survivor*. p. xii.

the virtues of such a man were trumpeted by his friends, the more they held him up to reverence and admiration, the more he became a mark for the arrows of his opponents; and it is fair to conclude that he was neither such a saint as his friends painted him, nor such a sinner as his enemies professed to believe.⁴³⁰

My preliminary analysis by way of comparison of Marsden with Simeon shows that Marsden, while showing something of his pastoral concern for his people by use of inclusive language, is nevertheless more often than not, more harsh than Simeon. While many of Marsden's sermons end with a promise of grace to the sinner who repents, some end with decidedly ungracious comments such as:

If we continue in sin, he will by and by, call us to a very strict account, and convince us of his power and wrath. We shall find the awful threatening in our text executed to its fullest extent & that the wicked shall be turned into hell.⁴³¹

The angels sinned and are now reserved in chains of darkness to the great day. You are in danger of falling into the same condemnation. Stand then in awe & sin not least (*sic*) God be angry with you & ye perish from the righteous.⁴³²

And I now do warn you in the face of this congregation and in the face of the Son, and call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you shall surely die if you do not speedily repent, and perish everlastingly and that without remedy. For if the righteous are scarcely saved where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear.⁴³³

These harsh endings tend to leave the hearer with an awful prospect of punishment and no hope. When speaking against sinful behaviour, Marsden has often left out Simeon's more balanced message of grace. In Sermon 91:17 for example Marsden has said, 'This subject speaks also powerfully to those who are messengers of God to a guilty world.' He has left out

⁴³⁰ Charles White. *Convict Life in New South Wales and van Diemen's Land*. London: The Story of the Ten Governors, and the Story of the Convicts. Free Press, Bathurst. 1889. Reproduced by Forgotten Books, 2013. pp. 216-7

⁴³¹ Sermon 4:12

⁴³² Sermon 30:32

⁴³³ Sermon 68:19-20

Simeon's second sub-heading in his outline, 'To those who have repented of their sin'. Under this sub-heading Simeon delivers a message of grace which Marsden has left out of his sermon based on this outline. Simeon has said, 'Your sins purged away by the precious blood of Christ will be sought for but not found. God has blotted them out ...'⁴³⁴ Unlike those sermons noted above that end with harsh words, Sermon 91 despite leaving out Simeon's sub-heading on grace, does end with gracious and compassionate words, 'May God in his infinite mercy impress these solemn truths upon your hearts that you may lead a new life and have a lively faith in God's mercy and be saved in the great day of the Lord.'⁴³⁵ These differences point to Marsden, while having a vision of the peoples of the South Seas being converted to Christ by the preaching of the everlasting gospel, being blinkered to the negative effect the harsh endings of his sermons generally would have had on his hearers.

Having noted the difficulties of dating Marsden's sermons, further study to determine more precise dating would pay great dividends. More precise dating of the sermons would give better insight into what issues Marsden may have been addressing at the time. With more accurate dating it may be easier to determine where Marsden has made autobiographical statements in his preaching. For example, as noted in Chapter Four where in Sermon 88:22 Marsden has spoken about 'reviling one another', precise dating of this sermon may make it clearer whether or not he was in fact referring to slander and injury of his own reputation.

Whatever can be said about Samuel Marsden and the early colony of New South Wales it is clear that he will not go away and his legacy, for good or ill, remains with us. It seems though that, according to some, his presence amongst us is more than a legacy. Modern newspaper reports offer us more to contemplate:

⁴³⁴ Simeon *Horae Homileticae* Discourse 352.

⁴³⁵ Sermon 91:22-23

Well known Windsor businessman, Mr. Alex Hendrikson, had the shock of his life on Wednesday evening ... he claims he saw a ghost.

Mr. Hendrikson claims he saw the ghost sometime between 9 p.m. and 9.30 p.m. on Wednesday near the St. Matthews Church rectory in Moses St., Windsor.

"I was confronted by what I believe to be an apparition or a figure of Samuel Marsden", a frightened Mr. Hendrikson said. "It looked like a figure dressed in dark robes. He had a very round face with what appeared to be a cruel look in his eyes."⁴³⁶

The experience of poltergeists highlights again the uncritical thinking and acceptance of stereotypes when it comes to Marsden. Even claiming to have a knowledge of the events around Marsden does not make a person immune to unthinking and ill-informed opinions as is made clear as the report of Hendrikson's night-time vision goes on:

Mr. Hendrikson said he based the apparition on being Samuel Marsden because of his background in history. "I know a fair bit about St. Matthews Church and the rectory and the different things Samuel Marsden did." "They called him the flogging parson in the early days and I understand from the pictures I have seen of him he had a cruel look about him."

As noted earlier in Chapter Two, the epithet 'Flogging Parson' is a more modern invention and not, as Hendrikson is reported as saying, from 'the early days'. But Marsden will just not go away. Almost a year after Hendrikson's frightening experience it happened all over again, this time with witnesses:

As Mr. Hendrikson describes it, the flogging parson made a brief reappearance last Sunday in Thompson Square when he and Mr. Steve Pye, his driver, were sitting in their tourist horse coach late in the afternoon. Some passengers were also present.

The tired horses began to fidget in the gloom. Then suddenly, said Mr. Hendrikson, something appeared out of the shadows of the wind-

⁴³⁶ *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* 6th July, 1984.

tossed trees. The apparition was "*black and man-like, dressed in a black cape and bishops hat.*"⁴³⁷

It seems that skewed history and apparitions breed skewed history and further legend not based on fact. Following Hendrikson's first experience another person was emboldened to report:

Given heart by the courage of Alex Hendrikson in admitting to his confrontation with the ghost of Samuel Marsden, I have decided that it is time for me to share a similar experience.

My close encounter of a ghostly kind occurred also in Windsor, on a Thursday night in April, about 10 p.m. ...

But this whitish "shadow" certainly didn't resemble the Flogging Parson.⁴³⁸

It could be argued that these reports from Hendrikson are not as exaggerated as some of the ideas many people who write about colonial times have about Samuel Marsden. What they do have in common is that they are either not based on fact or they sit very loosely with the facts as we know them. In some cases the authors have allowed the facts to be skewed by their own prejudices. In other cases writers have simply accepted unthinkingly such prejudiced views. In still more instances historians have simply not interacted with a significant body of primary documentation. Those who have written about Samuel Marsden have made mistakes because they have not substantially interacted with his sermons. The problem raised by such storytelling is that others are encouraged to throw in their experiences also, based even less upon facts. All this leads to the build-up of a legend that has little historical basis and perpetuates false ideas.

This study of Samuel Marsden has concentrated on primary documentation not previously consulted. This study of his sermons has suggested corrections to the

⁴³⁷ *Hawkesbury Gazette*. 22nd May, 1985

⁴³⁸ *Hawkesbury Gazette* 13th July, 1984

historiographical record and has shown that further studies must engage with the things Marsden said in his preaching if they are to give an accurate picture of his character and circumstances. In this study Marsden has been seen as a man of compassion and vision and yet at times that vision has been blinkered. The circumstances in which he preached the gospel were complex. Within that complexity Marsden made mistakes. At the same time he achieved great things as a 'Gardener a Farmer a Magistrate & Minister' as well as a missionary and a preacher.

Appendix One

An illustration of Marsden's copying of Simeon

Sermon 03. Marsden's Sermons: Moore College Collection

This sermon has used Simeon's Expository Outlines. Marsden has copied directly from Simeon's outline. To distinguish between Marsden and Simeon, Marsden's words are underlined. Marsden has a total of 2,129 words of his own. The sermon is 3,326 words in total. It is included here in Appendix One as an example of the extent to which Marsden has simply copied out Simeon's outline.

Psalm 118 vs 27-28. God is the Lord etc.

However plainly this Psalm refers to David we are sure that a greater than David is here. The words as applied to David convey an exceedingly grand ⁴³⁹ meaning. He had met with many obstacles in his advancement to the throne of Israel. Saul was his bitter enemy and sought his life. ⁴⁴⁰ David was sensible of this when he said I shall one day perish etc. After Saul died ⁴⁴¹ there were many formidable conspiracies made against his life. No sooner was he crowned king over Israel than the Philistines sought and that repeatedly to ~~take away his life~~ destroy him, and it was only thru the special intervention of God that he was enabled ⁴⁴² to prevail against them. It appears that many other of the surrounding nations also conspired against him but thru the same almighty power he was able ⁴⁴³ to subdue them.

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At last after more than seven years opposition from all the tribes of Israel he was firmly fixed upon the throne and the stone which the builders had so long rejected ⁴⁴⁴ was made the head of the corner. This event reflected great light upon all the purpose of God respecting him. Great darkness had hung over him for a long period. He endured many and severe trials and afflictions, the clouds began now to break ⁴⁴⁵ and he saw clearly these two important truths that God's counsel by whomsoever opposed shall stand, and that they who trust in the Lord however tried they may be shall never be confounded but as we have already said a greater than David ~~was~~ (is) here. It was generally acknowledged amongst the Jews themselves that David was a type of the Messiah and that this Psalm had a special ⁴⁴⁶ reference to him who

⁴³⁹ Simeon includes the words "and important".

⁴⁴⁰ Simeon reads, "Oftentimes had his life been sought by Saul."

⁴⁴¹ Simeon reads, "and since the death of Saul."

⁴⁴² Simeon has used the word "able".

⁴⁴³ Simeon has used "enabled".

⁴⁴⁴ Simeon reads, "had so long been rejected of the builders".

⁴⁴⁵ Simeon reads, "but it was now dispelled."

⁴⁴⁶ Simeon reads, "an especial".

was⁴⁴⁷ to sit upon the throne of David. Hence the exclamations of the people at the insaltation (sic) of David⁴⁴⁸ were

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we (sic) used by the Jews in reference to Christ. St. Matthew tells us that as Jesus went up to Jerusalem, the multitudes that went before, and that followed after, cryed (sic) saying Hosanna to the Son of David blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest – and he vindicated their conduct in this particular – when the Pharisees said unto Jesus, when the children praised him in the temple, hearest thou what these say etc. He afterwards appealed to this very Psalm in confirmation of his predictions respecting their rejection of him.⁴⁴⁹ Did you never read says he to them in the scriptures that the stone which etc. They understood well what he meant and were so indignant that they immediately took stones for to stone him. In like manner after the death and resurrection of Christ St. Peter when he was filled with the Holy Ghost expressly applied to Christ this very passage and affirmed in the presence of all the rulers and elders of Israel that what⁴⁵⁰ was accomplished in (the exaltation of) that Jesus whom

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they had crucified. Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost said unto them, ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we be examined this day of the good deed (done) to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole, be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even does this man stand (here) before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

Now in this event the exaltation of Christ to the throne of glory God has indeed shewn us light, and it will be a profitable subject for our meditation at this time if we consider 1. the light which God hath shewn us, 2. the returns which he calls for at our hands.⁴⁵¹

1. Previous to the resurrection of Christ all was darkness. By it life & immortality were brought to light. Tho he had repeatedly told his disciples that he would be crucified, and that the third day he would

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rise from the dead. Yet after he was actually crucified they⁴⁵² doubted whether they had not been deceived⁴⁵³ respecting him, for as yet they understood not the scriptures, but from that

⁴⁴⁷ Simeon includes “in due time”.

⁴⁴⁸ Simeon has, “acclamations which were used by the people on the occasion of David’s installation”.

⁴⁴⁹ Simeon has, “his rejection by them, and his subsequent elevation to the throne of David.”

⁴⁵⁰ Simeon has “it”.

⁴⁵¹ This second heading comes later in Simeon.

wonderful event, of his resurrection, and his consequent ascension (*sic*) to the right hand of God, we learn infallibly of the efficacy of his atonement. Had he not risen from the dead and ascended up to the glory in the presence of many faithful witnesses, we might have conceived of him only as a great prophet in deed, but as nothing more than a prophet, who like a multitudes who preceded him, sealed their⁴⁵⁴ doctrines with their own blood. But he had spoken of his death as a ransom to be paid for the souls of men and how could we have know (*sic*) that that ransom was accepted if his resurrection which he taught his disciples to look forward to as the proof and evidence of his acceptance, had not been effected.

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But when we see that he did rise from the dead, and did ascend up into heaven in the presence of his disciples, and did send down the Holy Ghost according to his word of promise to bear testimony concerning him, there is no room left for doubt, but that he actually did give his life a ransom for sinners, and we are perfectly assured that his offering was accepted of the Father, and that by his obedience unto death he hath wrought out eternal redemption for⁴⁵⁵ all that believe in his name. Hence St. Paul boldly asks who shall condemn us? etc

From the light which God hath given us, we learn not only the efficacy of his atonement but also the sufficiency of his grace. Even when our blessed Lord was upon earth, the whole creation, animate and inanimate, terrestrial (*sic*) and infernal were obedient to his will. How much more⁴⁵⁶ now that he is exalted to the right hand

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of the majesty on high and has all fulness treasured up in him for the benefit of his people must⁴⁵⁷ be able to (do) all things that we call upon him for. If he say unto us⁴⁵⁸ my grace is sufficient for thee we may safely adopt Paul's language and say I can do all things thru Christ strengthening me. He is now head over all principalities and powers and he must reign until he hath put⁴⁵⁹ all enemies under his feet. They shall also most assuredly be put under ours⁴⁶⁰ in due time. He has promised to bruise Satan under our feet, which (who) is our greatest adversary.⁴⁶¹ From the light which God ~~God~~ has given us we may also learn the excellency of his salvation. Behold what has taken place with respect to him. He was once here a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. A mourner amongs (*sic*)

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- 452 Simeon includes, "the disciples themselves".
453 Simeon includes, "in their expectations".
454 Here and at the following "their" Simeon reads, "his".
455 Simeon has, "us".
456 Simeon has included "therefore".
457 Simeon includes, "he".
458 Simeon includes, "as he did to St. Paul".
459 Simeon includes, "If".
460 Simeon includes, "also".
461 Simeon has, "even "Satan shall be bruised under our feet shortly.""

the sons of man. He once hung upon the cross in agony and blood, and cried my God my God why etc. He once laid in death's cold embrace. Death had the dominion over him for a short period, till he burst the bonds of death asunder and triumphed over this last enemy. He is now exalted to the throne of God and posset (sic) of all the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.⁴⁶² The same glory he is now reserving for his people also.⁴⁶³ Father I will said the blessed Jesus that those etc. (Who those) that⁴⁶⁴ now love the Saviour that now believe on him, shall most assuredly enter into that glory and enjoy it for ever and ever. The saints shall participate in that very throne of glory, on which he is now seated, for thus the gracious promise runs, To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne.

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⁴⁶⁵Believer contemplate all the glory and felicity of your exalted head and then see what is prepared for all his members. You shall then awake up after his likeness, for he will fashion your vile body that it may be like etc. You shall then see him as he is and be forever with him O glorious state. O blessed abode may the Christian say. Your inheritance will be incorruptible and undefiled and will never fade away. This is that rest that remaineth for the people of God. This is that glory which eye hath not seen nor ear heard. This is that fullness of joy, that pleasure for evermore at God's right hand. What a glorious sight is this from which we learn the efficacy of Christ's atonement, the sufficiency of his grace and the excellency of his salvation.⁴⁶⁶

Let us contemplate in the 2nd place the returns which it calls for at our hands. Surely such discoveries as are here made

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to us should call forth our devoutest affections. They should lead us to surrender ourselves entirely to God. The sacrifices which David & Solomon offered to God were almost without number. But ~~the~~ the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit or of a devout and grateful heart outweighs them all. We must all confess that we are prone at all times to backslide from God and to turn to our own way.⁴⁶⁷ But we should labour⁴⁶⁸ to say with David O God my heart is fixed I will sing and give praise.

The example of Abraham may assist us in this particular the offering of his son was a dark dispensation. His only son Isaac in whom all the promises of the messiah rested. Abraham

⁴⁶² Simeon has, "before the worlds were made."

⁴⁶³ Simeon has, "The same glory is reserved for us also, and a participation of that very throne which his Father has given to him."

⁴⁶⁴ The preceding is not clear.

⁴⁶⁵ A figure that may be the number 4 is inserted at this point.

⁴⁶⁶ Marsden has deviated significantly from Simeon's text at this point but the sentiment is the same.

⁴⁶⁷ This sentence is a paraphrase of Simeon.

⁴⁶⁸ Simeon includes, "incessantly".

walked by faith and not by sight when he hastened to obey the divine mandate. It was a great trial to him. God did tempt Abraham but he was strong in faith giving glory to God. Abraham we are told took his son Isaac and

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and bound him and laid him upon the altar to slay him. When God arrested his arm and forbad him to inflict the fatal wound, a light beamed in upon his soul. He beheld a risen saviour presented unto him under the image of his restored son. Abraham saw my day and was glad said our Lord. Abraham turned and instantly saw a ram caught in a thicket, and immediately offered him up for a burnt offering instead of his son.⁴⁶⁹ Let then the light of a risen and exalted saviour operate in like manner upon us. Let us take the offering which we all⁴⁷⁰ have at hand, and which we know will be pleasing unto the Lord, even the offering of a free heart and let us present ourselves, our bodies and souls, as⁴⁷¹ a willing⁴⁷² sacrifice to God which is our reasonable and ought to be our delightful service.

The command

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clear and express offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows to the most high. Thou desirest not sacrifice says the Psalmist, else I would give it. Thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are etc. This is the offering we should bring, and the sacrifice we should make. We should not only surrender ourselves entirely to God, but also glory in him as our portion.⁴⁷³ Like Paul we may say of Christ he hath loved me, and given himself for me. Indeed without this appropriation of God & his blessings to our⁴⁷⁴ souls we can never attain to a joyful and thankful spirit, we can never sing with the Spirit⁴⁷⁵ and the understanding saying O Lord I will praise thee etc. This was the joyful song of the prophet Isaiah and the believer at the present day joys in God thru our Lord Jesus Christ thru whom he has received

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the atonement. Hence he can⁴⁷⁶ say of Christ he is my friend, he is my beloved, he is my redeemer, my Lord, my God and my all. This is the language which God approves.⁴⁷⁷ He

⁴⁶⁹ The wording of this sentence differs slightly from Simeon.

⁴⁷⁰ Simeon inserts, "of us".

⁴⁷¹ Simeon has, "it".

⁴⁷² Simeon has, "living".

⁴⁷³ Simeon's second heading under, "II The returns it calls for under our hands", is, "To rejoice and glory in God as our portion for ever."

⁴⁷⁴ Simeon inserts, "own".

⁴⁷⁵ The word appears to be an abbreviated form of "Spirit".

⁴⁷⁶ Simeon has, "but it is the privilege of every believer to".

⁴⁷⁷ Simeon has, "God approves of this language, by whomsoever used, provided only it be used in sincerity and truth."

would have his people to rejoice evermore etc. Thou art my God says the psalmist and I will praise thee, thou art my God and I will exalt thee. This language is only used by the real Christian. The ungodly never form this pious resolution, but the righteous do. They are determined to do this from the joyful sense which they have of God love to them. They love him because he ~~but~~ first loved them. Hence when meditating upon the divine goodness, the pious Christian is wont to say bless the Lord O my soul etc. He see cause enough to bless the great Jehovah. I will bless the Lord at all times his praise shall be constantly in my mouth.

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The pious soul is sometimes so everwelmed (sic) with a sense of the divine love, that he is not satisfied with praising God alone but he invites others to join him in this delightful employ. O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together and again come unto me all ye that fear God etc. He is not only ready to impart his joy with those that love and fear God, but even to the ungodly, to tell to sinners round, what a dear Saviour he has found. To point to the redeemer's blood and say behold the way to God. This was David's resolution when he prayed, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

We have now considered the light which God hath shewn unto us in his divine revelation from whence we learn the efficacy of ~~the~~ (Christ's) atonement the sufficiency of his grace and the excellency of his salvation

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and also the returns which it calls for from us the surrender of ourselves entirely to God to rejoice and glory in him. and shall now conclude with an address 1. to those who are in darkness. Many are the afflictions of the righteous. It was a very dark and trying time for Noah while he was building the ark. He saw the storm of divine wrath for 120 years hanging over a guilty world before it burst, and overwhelmed (sic) the universe in one general destruction. What anxiety must his righteous soul have endured during that long and dark period, yet in the event the Lord took care of him and his, and rewarded his faith and patience. Abraham had many seasons of darkness and trial during his pilgrimage. He was often afraid of being killed amongst the Egyptians, the Philistines and others

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amongst whom he sojourned. Isaac also had many severe family trials, and was often brought into deep distress. Jacobs was a life of toil and labor and sorrow when he was brought before Pharaoh King of Egypt, the king said unto him how old art thou, and Jacob said unto Pharaoh the days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years, few & evil have the days of the years of my life been. He had many dark and trying lessons to pass thru and had long been waiting for God's salvation ~~long~~ before he yielded up the ghost and was gathered up unto his fathers. In short all the Old Testament saints had their day of trouble darkness and

sorrow.⁴⁷⁸ Dark also were the dispensations of our blessed Lord while he was here on earth amongst the sons of men until (in) his resurrection

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and ascension (*sic*) they were⁴⁷⁹ made to shine. These wonderful events removed the veil which from the beginning had obscured the sacred writings. Even our Lord's own disciples and followers did not understand the scriptures until he was risen from the dead, and then the light of divine revelation shone upon them in its brightest lusture (*sic*). In these great events, the ~~myster~~ies mysteries of which had been hid from ages and generations were now made known to the church of God, to the great and unspeakable joy of all that believe on the Redeemer. Let not any of us then who are seeking after God's salvation indulge desponding fears, but let us know assuredly that the counsel of God shall stand, that he will not violate his promise, and that all who trust in him shall never be confounded. We may be in darkness for a time

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our soul may be consumed because of spiritual (trouble) sorrow for our sins and we may be lead to think that the Lord hath forgotten to be gracious, that his mercy is clean gone for ever more; but he never said to any of the house of Israel seek ye my face in vain. Let such fearful doubting desponding souls hope still in God for they shall yet praise him; they shall hear him say arise shine for thy light is come etc.⁴⁸⁰

Then you will say in the words of our text thou are my God and I will praise thee thou art my God and I will exalt (*sic*) thee.

Lastly I would address a few words to those who have been brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light. Happy, happy ye who behold a risen and exalted saviour and see the blessings⁴⁸¹ye have in him.⁴⁸² Ye know that he came into the world, not only to teach you the mind and will of God, but to redeem and save you. You know that he has made

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a full and sufficient sacrifice and atonement for all your sins. You believe he ever liveth as your advocate with the Father. You can now come boldly to the Lord. All your hopes are built upon him, and your fellowship is now with him, and with the Father. You believe that all power is committed unto him, and that he must reign as supreme until he hath subdued all his own and his peoples' enemies. He is now precious to your souls and you know in whom you have believed and are assured that he is the very Christ the saviour of the world and while you

⁴⁷⁸ In this section Simeon speaks about David & Saul, referring to the darkness David was in until God "shewed him light."

⁴⁷⁹ Simeon has, "the true light was".

⁴⁸⁰ Marsden has deviated at length here from Simeon.

⁴⁸¹ Simeon has, "fullness which".

⁴⁸² At this point Marsden writes his own ending deviating from Simeon significantly.

view him by faith as your redeemer and saviour you believe with St. Paul that he is God over all etc. This is the rock against which the gates of Hell shall never prevail.

Rejoice then in the Lord v. ye etc. Hold fast the proposition of your faith without wavering and give not up your confidence in him which hath great recompense of reward, but labour to grow in grace and etc.

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Live above the world. Let your light shine before men. Convince the world around you that you are seeking after a better country etc. and cultivate that blessed disposition which our Lord exemplified so strongly, both in life and death, viz. love your enemies etc. When you are enabled to fulfil this heavenly command your peace will flow like a river and your souls will be like a tree planted by the water side etc. You will then walk in the light as Christ your Lord and master is in the light.

Whatever trials you may be called to endure they will all be sanctified to your souls and will only tend to make your faith more precious than gold. You have not long to suffer. Your journey shortens every day, nay ever (*sic*) moment. Then you will join your kindred and your friends who are gone before you to glory, in that world where there is no more sorrow and crying. No doubt but Abraham rejoice[ed] when Isaac, & Isaac when Jacob arrived in glory. So will all our pious friends however long since they (may) have rested from their labours, when we enter the celestial city.

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Appendix Two

Christmas Day 1814 – The Sermon

On Christmas Day 1814 in Rangihoua at the northern end of the Bay of Islands in New Zealand the Reverend Samuel Marsden preached what is regarded as the first Christian sermon in New Zealand. He spoke on the words of the angel announcing the birth of the Christ from Luke 2:10, “behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy”. In a paper delivered at a history conference in New Zealand on 28 November 2012⁴⁸³, I argue that Marsden made some attempt at delivering his message in the Māori language which he had learnt from his friend Ruatara who aided him in the delivery of the sermon by explaining to his people those parts of the sermon they couldn’t understand.

While there are 135 of Marsden’s sermons in various collections around the world there does not appear to be a copy of this first New Zealand sermon in any of them. There are, however, three sermons that deal specifically with this passage in the Moore College collection in Sydney. In my paper I have suggested there are eight points common to each of these sermons and have assumed that if Marsden said the same things in these sermons each time he preached from Luke 2:10 then it is probably safe to say that he included these points in his New Zealand sermon.

The eight common points in three sermons are:

1. The birth of Christ is the most important event the world has ever seen.
2. It is good tidings of great joy for all people.
3. This event has been long and anxiously expected by the faithful.
4. Those who are awaiting a temporal messiah will be disappointed because this Messiah brings spiritual blessings.

⁴⁸³ David Pettett. *Samuel Marsden – Christmas Day 1814. What did he say? The Content of New Zealand’s first Christian Sermon*. IWI – CHRISTIANITY – TAUIWI. Hei Kohikohinga Kōreromō te Hāhi Karaitiana ki Aotearoa. Re-evaluating Christianity’s Influence in Shaping Aotearoa New Zealand c.1800 to c.1860. Conference 27-29 November 2012. An extended version of this paper has now been published along with a number of other papers from the Conference. See: Allan Davidson, Stuart Lange, Peter Lineham, Adrienne Puckey (Eds) *Te Rongopai 1814 ‘Takoto te pai!’ Bicentenary reflections on Christian beginnings and developments in Aotearoa New Zealand*. General Synod Office. Auckland. 2014

5. This event has been announced with great rejoicing by the angels of heaven who have declared a Saviour for mankind.
6. This Messiah was not born in a palace, but a stable, making him accessible to all people.
7. This is the superior Saviour because he defeats the Evil One and saves from Hell.
8. Now is the time to follow this Saviour because you may not be alive next Christmas season.

Using techniques New Testament scholars would be familiar with where attempts have been made to reconstruct an underlying source document common to the three synoptic gospels, I have taken the eight points common to all three of Marsden's sermons on Luke 2:10 and reconstructed what he may have said on Christmas Day 1814. What follows is that sermon. These are Marsden's words taken from the three sermons. I have made very little editorial changes or additions to them.

The Sermon

Luke Chap. 2 V^s. 10. 11. And the Angel said unto them fear not etc,⁴⁸⁴

If ever there was an event since the creation of the world worthy of being commemorated by mankind, the birth of Christ surely claims the priority. In it the happiness of all the human race was involved. Tho all will not obtain salvation thru him, but only those who believe, and serve him. God had promised before this event took place that he would send mankind a saviour and the faithful in every age looked anxiously for his coming.

The long looked for, the long expected Messiah at length made his appearance below. His advent had been ardently wished for by people of all languages on account of that general expectation which had been universally excited. Before he made his appearance upon earth he was styled the desire of all nations.

A general expectation prevailed amongst both the Jews and Gentiles that a great king was soon to be born. By prophecy, by tradition, and by the Jews being dispersed into different nations, who had the living oracles of God, mankind were universally prepared for the coming of the Messiah tho few with proper and suitable ideas of his heavenly character and mission.

⁴⁸⁴ Luke 2:10-11 "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

This saviour did by no means answer that expectation which mankind in general had previously conceived of him. They looked for and expected a temporal king & deliverer who should redeem them from human calamities and oppressions. But Christ's kingdom was not of this world and the deliverance which he was to work out was not to be temporal but spiritual deliverance.

As the fullness of time drew near, God made a fuller revelation to the faithful and prepared their mind for receiving the Messiah.

We find good old Simeon when, on the very verge of the grave, receiving a divine intimation that he should not taste death until he had seen the saviour of the world. He had in a very special manner been promised to the Jewish nation, and they were anxiously looking for his appearance as an earthly king and ruler. But God's thoughts are not as their thoughts. No doubt many of them expected him to appear in a very different manner from what he did. They expected that his advent would be distinguished by some outward significance, power and majesty. The eastern magi expected to find him in Herod's palace when they saw his star and hastened to Jerusalem to pay their homage to him. On their arrival they said where is he etc.⁴⁸⁵ But as his kingdom was not of this world he was not to enter into it an earthly prince. Tho his birth was to be proclaimed by harbingers from heaven, they were not sent to publish this wonder to kings nor to the chief priest or rulers nor to any of the noble of the Jewish nation, but to the humble shepherds who were keeping watch over their flocks by night.

We may here observe that access to the Saviour has at all times been open and free. There was not a person in the city of Bethlehem but what might have visited him in the stable if they wished. The poorest peasant could there see him that was born King of the Jews, and present him with such gifts as he had, the sacrifice of a grateful heart. The meanness of his parentage opened a door of access for all.

Many saviours had been sent to Israel in former times. Moses delivered them from the bondage of Egypt. Samuel afterwards saved them out of the hands of their enemies, and many others of their kings and prophets. But here was one born infinitely superior to them all. One who came not only to deliver one people, but a whole world not from temporal bondage and misery, but from sin, Satan, death and hell, and to save them with an everlasting salvation. For this purpose he came into the world, to redeem man from all evil.

He appeared to give the knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins, to give light to them that sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. Jews and Gentiles were to be benefited and saved by his coming. Before the rising of this Day Star, the grossest idolatry, and total corruption of manners had fatally overspread the whole world. The Jews themselves were given up to the most abominable idolatry: and the most brutish and scandalous lies prevailed amongst them and the Gentile world was totally buried in darkness, superstition and error, but he came to be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of his people Israel. By his doctrines, his precepts and his example much real good was effected amidst all the

⁴⁸⁵ Matthew 2:2 "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

contention, reproach and contempt which was cast upon his person and his doctrines. Many confessed that he spoke as never man spake, and felt the saving power of his word. By his life and humble ministry he laid the foundation of that Church against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. He saw before his death the Spirit of true religion revived and well knew the glorious effects that would follow upon him being preached unto the Gentiles by his apostle. He came to bring life and immortality to light by the gospel. To clear up all the prophecies concerning him – to bring mankind to the clear knowledge of the only true God, and of himself as mediator between God and man, to point out the true path of virtue, and also to fix the specific nature of virtue concerning which the wisest philosophers were involved in the greatest ignorance, and the most vain disputes. He came to give us rational and worthy notions of that Being we are obliged to adore, & is most properly adopted to raise our natures to the greatest improvement they are capable of. For by seeing the glorious attributes which the Deity possess, such as are imitable we are excited to imitate – Such as holiness, love, joy etc.⁴⁸⁶ These have a natural tendency to improve our natures and to render us meet to be partakers with the saints in light.

He came to teach us poverty of Spirit, to do unto others as we would they should do unto us, to love our enemies and to pray for them that persecute us, and despitefully use us. These virtues were neither known nor thought of either by Jew or Gentile before they were revealed by the Messiah. The best heathen authors never inculcated upon the minds of their disciples to love their enemies. So far from this, they thought it virtue to be revenged on an enemy. He exhorts us to the practice of these virtues in order that we may be the children of our Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and unjust. He came to teach us also to be content with poverty, to condemn the world and all its greatness, and in order to convince us of the necessity of this he made himself of no reputation, was contented to be esteemed one of the worst of men: a magician, an impostor, a friend and companion of publicans and sinners and a seducer of the people.

Herein he has left us an example and commanded us to follow his steps. God sending us such a prophet as this; such an heavenly guide, one who was not merely to atone for our sins, but also to rectify all our false notions of religious worship, and all our carnal expectations of finding happiness in the creature, and to set us a true and real pattern of godliness, was surely the greatest gift he would bestow upon us – well then might the angels sing glory to God in the highest on earth peace good will towards men. He came to bring about an immediate reconciliation between God and humans, and to teach us how to be happy here below in the fullest assurance of a blessed immortality.

The glad tidings mentioned in our text ought to be tidings of unusual joy to all who are sinners before God.

They are equally interesting to Jews and Gentiles, to those of the apostolic age, and to us who live at such a distance both of time and place. Nor is there one single individual upon earth amongst the children of men who have not equal cause to value the Saviour that is here

⁴⁸⁶ See Galatians 5:22-23 “²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³ meekness, temperance.”

announced to us. Who is there that does not need the merit of his atonement and the efficacy of his grace? Who is there that have not sinned and come short of the glory of God? Who is there that to whom these glad tidings are not published freely? Who is there amongst you that is not invited to come to Jesus for pardon of sin? There is not one upon earth, rich or poor ignorant or learned that can be saved without him. Nor is there one however abandoned, who may not by a believing application to the Saviour, be admitted to his pardoning grace and mercy. Since all may obtain the blessings which these glad tidings proclaim they may well be called glad tidings to all people since they are so to all nations, kindred tongues and people, and some of all nations under heaven will at last be found amongst that great multitude which St John saw.

Thousands and tens of thousands who had been and were at that very time worshipping idols of wood and stone, were, in consequence of the birth of Christ, to have their minds divinely illuminated and were to be turned from the worship of dumb idols to serve the true and living God.

This fruit of Jesus Christ's entrance into the world was not to be partial, confined to any one single nation or people, but universal. He was for salvation to the ends of the earth.

All mankind ought to rejoice at Christ's advent as every individual is equally interested in what he came into the world to do. The eternal happiness of every soul of man depended upon the birth of a saviour and its blessed consequences. Will not all then rejoice at his birth, will not the tidings of it be tidings of great joy to all? I answer no. Both scripture and observation prove the contrary. None who are in love with sin and the world will rejoice at it. They will hear of this subject with the greatest indifference and be as unaffected with the condescension and humility of the Son of God as if they were not at all interested in what he hath done and suffered.

So blinding, and so stupefying is sin & unbelief, which prevail more or less over the heart and conscience of every man. We can hear our own wretchedness and misery described and what the Almighty hath done to redeem us from that state of misery, without any emotions of fear or joy. So long as we continue in this situation the tidings of a saviour's birth will never be good tidings of great joy to us.

Go you then, we say, go to Bethlehem, or rather go to the Bible and see whether these things be not as they have been represented. What would you have thought of the shepherds, after what they had seen and heard, if when they had an opportunity of obtaining satisfaction on the point, they had neglected it, and had laid themselves down to sleep without making any further enquiry about the new born Saviour? O, let me entreat you to enquire after him. O, arise then and enquire into these important truths with all the humility, care and attention they require. Your eternal happiness wholly depends upon knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. Again when you are convinced that the Saviour was born in Bethlehem yourselves, and that all the prophets have said of him relative to his incarnation, and for what purpose he came into the world, namely to redeem us from all our iniquity, communicate these things to others with all diligence and care. The shepherds would not hide within their own bosoms the things they had heard and seen, but immediately published them abroad for the information of others.

Should you be silent then when you have so much clearer instruction to convey? Should you not impart it gladly to those around you? And for the comfort of your own souls should you not ponder all these things in your hearts?

Let not the love of the world nor the things of the world draw your affections away from him. It is my duty to tell you what will be the final consequences of your sins. Remember this day you have been warned, therefore your blood will be found upon your own head. Before the return of another Christmas, you may be removed from this world and have no further chance to see him but as your judge.

My brethren it was for such as you the Saviour was born. It was for such as you he preached the gospel, and for such as you he died and rose again, and hath gone into heaven to prepare mansions for them who believe, having obtained eternal redemption for them. You then who love the Saviour rejoice and glorify God with the shepherds. They saw him in the manger but him whom you have not seen ye love etc.⁴⁸⁷ Keep continually in mind the exceeding great love of your Lord & only Saviour that he was rich yet etc.⁴⁸⁸ Make your solemn covenants with him at this period. Dedicate yourselves to him.

⁴⁸⁷ 1 Peter 1:7-9 “⁷ that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: ⁸ whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: ⁹ receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.”

⁴⁸⁸ 2 Corinthians 8:9 “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

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