

CHAPTER 2

“A HEART UNCOMMONLY DEVOTED TO GOD”: THE LIFE OF JERUSHA EDWARDS

On February 21, 1748, Jonathan Edwards preached what was surely his most difficult funeral sermon, namely, that for his nearly-eighteen-year-old daughter Jerusha (b.1730). Not surprisingly, it is a very personal sermon, opening to his hearers a window into his heart. Jerusha’s death was the first in his immediate family, and Edwards’ sermon would be the only funeral sermon he preached for any of his immediate family, thus making it unique among his body of funeral messages. We begin with a brief reconstruction of Jerusha’s life, after which a detailed treatment of Edwards’ funeral sermon is offered.

In his family Bible, Jonathan Edwards inscribed, “My daughter Jerusha was born on a Sabbath day, towards the conclusion of the afternoon exercise, April 26, 1730.”¹ Jonathan was twenty-six years old and his wife Sarah (1710–1758) was twenty. They had not yet been married three years and Jerusha was their second daughter. She was named, most likely, after Jonathan’s younger sister who had died barely two months earlier. Edwards was especially close to his younger sibling, both brother and sister sharing many similar dispositions and habits of piety, and it seems that he was also especially fond of his second daughter.² Edwards described her as “the flower of the family.”³ Most of Jerusha’s biography comes from her father’s pen, although a few other men also help paint a portrait of a young woman of sincere piety and strong character.

Edwards wrote Benjamin Colman on March 9, 1741, and reported exciting news concerning his family’s spiritual state.

This winter has been a time of the most remarkable and visible blessing of heaven upon my family that ever was; all our children that are capable of religious reflections have been under remarkable impressions, and I can't but think that salvation is come into my house, in several instances. I hope that my four eldest children...have been savingly wrought upon, the eldest some years ago.⁴

These “remarkable impressions” seem to have begun during a remarkable weekend in mid-October the previous year, when the Edwardses had as their guest George Whitefield (1714–1770). Jonathan had written the evangelist in February 1740 and asked him to add Northampton to his itinerary during his summer visit to New England.⁵ On Friday, October 17, 1740, Whitefield arrived in Northampton and within three days had preached sermons that proved to be a catalyst to ignite a spiritual awakening among the townspeople. His schedule was full: he arrived in Northampton having preached in Hadley that morning, preached at Edwards’ church in the afternoon, and to a gathering in Edwards’ home that evening. On Saturday morning he rode five miles to Hatfield, where he met Edwards’ uncle, William Williams, and preached to the congregation in that town. He returned to Northampton and preached again at four o’clock that afternoon. On Sunday he led both the morning and afternoon exercises, leaving Edwards and his congregation greatly affected.⁶ Jerusha Edwards, then aged ten, was probably present for most, if not all, of the meetings in Northampton, and perhaps she was also affected by Whitefield’s preaching, but it seems that her father’s excitement and confidence that he expressed to Colman stemmed from a more personal encounter. Whitefield recorded the event in his journal: “Saturday, October 18. At Mr. Edwards’ request, I spoke to his little children, who were much affected.”⁷ Edwards, in a letter sent to Whitefield just two months after his visit, expressed a similar assessment:

I have reason to think that a considerable number of our young people, some of them children, have already been savingly brought home to Christ. I hope salvation has come to this house since you was in it, with respect to one, if not more, of my children. The Spirit of God seems to be at work with others of the family. That blessed work seems now to be going on in this place, especially amongst those that are young.⁸

While Edwards did not say explicitly that Jerusha was converted at this time, his belief that his oldest daughter, Sarah (1728–1805) had been “savingly wrought upon...some years ago,” expressed in his letter to Colman mentioned above, seems to indicate that it was probably at least one of the other children “capable of religious reflections” that was affected.⁹ This scenario would leave Jerusha, Esther (1732–58), and Mary (1734–1807) as the most likely candidates. Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803) later noted that Esther “appeared to be the subject of divine impressions when seven or eight years old; and she made a public profession of religion when about fifteen.”¹⁰ When Hopkins arrived in Northampton in December, 1741, he “was an utter stranger” who wanted to “live with Mr. Edwards” to study theology.¹¹ Hopkins, who had graduated from Yale three months earlier before making the eighty-mile trip from his father’s home in Waterbury to Northampton, originally planned to study with the Presbyterian evangelist Gilbert Tennent (1703–1764). But when Hopkins heard Jonathan Edwards preach at Yale’s commencement ceremony in September 1741, he “altered [his] former determination with respect to Mr. Tennent” and traveled instead to Northampton.¹² The young would-be apprentice reported that he “was received with great kindness by Mrs. Edwards and the family.”¹³ Sarah Edwards agreed to board Hopkins on the condition that he “would teach her children to read and write.”¹⁴ The next day he began his duties:

Awoke this morning and began my employ of teaching the Children. Five I teach to read four Times in a Day; at night, I instruct three in Writing and two in Cyphering. They are as likely a company of Children I think as ever I saw; five of them are Girls and one is a Boy. The four oldest Girls are supposed to be converted; the youngest of which is but 8 years old.¹⁵

Thus Jerusha appears to have been converted in 1740 or 1741 as a result of Whitefield’s ministry.

For the next several months, Hopkins was a guest in the Edwards home. He spent most of the summer of 1742 in Northampton and returned in May 1743, for additional training and fellowship.¹⁶ During these visits, Hopkins studied with Edwards, but he also studied the pastor’s family, especially Edwards’ wife, Sarah. Hopkins later recorded his observations of Sarah and the children in *A Short Sketch of Mrs. Edwards’s Life and Character*.¹⁷ He admired her piety, industry, and dili-

gence in matters of the home, especially in the way she raised her children.¹⁸ It also seems that Hopkins took notice of Jerusha Edwards in particular.

In a diary entry for July 23, 1743, Hopkins noted, “Am kindly received by Mr. Edwards and his family. Made Miss Jerusha a present of a Bible.”¹⁹ When Hopkins had first visited in late 1741, Jerusha was eleven. Now she was thirteen, and whatever else this gift might indicate, it is reasonable to infer from Hopkins’ choice of a gift that she was growing in piety.²⁰

David Brainerd’s arrival in Northampton in May 1747 provides one more window through which to observe Jerusha Edwards’ piety and character. Brainerd was converted in 1739 and soon afterwards attended Yale to prepare for ministry and was present at Yale’s 1741 commencement when Jonathan Edwards defended the growing spiritual awakening that was taking place in New Haven.²¹ During the winter of 1741/1742, Brainerd was expelled from Yale for a combination of reasons, including his comment that his tutor, Chauncey Whittelsey (1717–1787), had “no more grace than a chair.”²² Later, in the summer of 1742, Brainerd preached for several months in Connecticut, and in the spring of 1743 he became a missionary to the Indians on the Massachusetts frontier.²³ Brainerd returned to New Haven in September 1743, where he met Jonathan Edwards for the first time, but even Edwards’ pleading could not help Brainerd get reinstated in Yale to graduate with his class.²⁴ Between 1744 and 1746, Brainerd traveled to Delaware and ministered among the Indians, but became quite ill and returned to New England late in 1746 and spent the winter recovering in New Jersey.²⁵

David Brainerd was well enough to travel by late May 1747, but still quite ill, when he came to stay with the Edwardses. They welcomed him into their home and, as was their custom, cared for Brainerd as one of the family.²⁶ On June 9, after only a couple of weeks in Northampton, Brainerd left for Boston on the advice of the town’s doctors, with the hope that the horseback ride would help him recover. Jerusha Edwards accompanied Brainerd on this trip to “be helpful to him in his weak and low state.”²⁷ Jonathan Edwards mentioned the trip in a June 11 letter to Joseph Bellamy (1719–1790), one of his protégés and a Congregationalist pastor in Bethlehem, Connecticut:

Mr. [David] Brainerd has lately been at my house...[and] is now

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gone to Boston with my daughter Jerusha. She intends to stay in Boston about a fortnight while Mr. Brainerd goes to the eastward, and then he is to return with her hither again.²⁸

On the same day that Edwards wrote Bellamy, Brainerd and Jerusha lodged with family friend and Congregationalist pastor Ebenezer Parkman (1703–1782) in Westborough, Massachusetts.²⁹ One day later the travelers arrived in Boston, but by Thursday, June 18, Brainerd’s health began to decline quickly.³⁰ On June 23, 1747, Jerusha wrote her father to tell him of Brainerd’s condition. She described his high and low moments from Thursday, June 18 through Tuesday, June 23, and her account indicates that she was among those caring for Brainerd during what must have been a difficult weekend.³¹ A second letter from Jerusha to Jonathan Edwards, written on June 29, shows that Brainerd’s condition changed frequently from bad to worse:

Mr. Brainerd has not so much pain or fever since I last wrote, as before: Yet he is extremely weak and low, and very faint, expecting every day will be his last... Since I began to write, he is not so well; having had a faint turn again: yet patient and resigned, having no distressing fears.³²

Jerusha Edwards remained with David Brainerd in Boston until July 20, when the pair, along with Brainerd’s younger brother, Israel (1725–1748) left to return to Northampton. The three lodged with Ebenezer Parkman on July 21, before arriving in Northampton on Saturday, July 25.³³ By September Brainerd’s health was worsening. According to Edwards, Brainerd “never rose from his bed” after September 29.³⁴ On October 4, Brainerd told Jerusha of his willingness to part with her and others whom he held dear, but expressed confidence that the two of them would “spend an happy eternity together!”³⁵ On October 9, David Brainerd died. Jerusha Edwards had cared for him since he arrived in May of that year. Before Brainerd died, he told Jonathan Edwards that Jerusha was a model of Christian piety.

Mr. David Brainerd, who had much intimate acquaintance with [Jerusha], she having constantly been with him as his nurse, nineteen weeks before his death, expressed great satisfaction concerning the state of her soul, and that he looked on her not only as a

saint, but as a very eminent saint.³⁶

The close relationship that Brainerd and Jerusha shared has been a topic of much speculation, especially among later writers. Some have even declared that David and Jerusha were betrothed.³⁷ But while an engagement between David Brainerd and Jerusha Edwards might make for a romantic narrative, there is no evidence that the two were planning to marry.³⁸ Rather, Jerusha's concern for David Brainerd demonstrates her willingness to serve someone in need, and to sacrifice her own comfort and health in doing so. Jerusha Edwards' care for Brainerd is a powerful testimony to her character and piety and needs no embellishment.

The most complete account of Jerusha Edwards' life and character came from her father. In the application of his eulogy for Jerusha, Edwards included several statements that show her faith and piety, and allow for a reconstruction of the events of her final days.³⁹ According to Edwards, Jerusha had prepared for death early.⁴⁰ She was not given to “vain conversation,” as was common to others of her age, but rather “manifested...a great delight in the society of the saints.”⁴¹ While some of the Northampton youth tended to take great sexual liberties, the Edwardses were comforted by Jerusha's chastity.⁴² Jonathan and Sarah were also able to bear their daughter's passing because she had listened to their lifelong counsel.

[Jerusha] was a remarkable instance of honor, respect and duty to [her] parents; not only maintaining a most strict and conscientious regard to their counsels, but disposed to ask their counsels in all important affairs studiously, and with great care and concern, to please them, and to avoid anything that might be grievous to them; seeming ever deeply concerned for their comfort and ready to her utmost to exert [herself] to that end.⁴³

Jerusha was also one who set her affections on heavenly things: “[She] declared in words, showed in deeds, [that she was] ever more ready to deny herself, earnestly inquiring in every affair which way she could most glorify God.”⁴⁴ As she lay dying, Jerusha told her parents that “she had not seen one minute in several years that, for matter of any other good she saw in the world besides an opportunity to serve and glorify God in it.”⁴⁵ But the greater comfort to her parents came not in these

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death-bed professions, but in the fact that these attitudes and affections “seemed to be the steady, habitual, reigning disposition and bent of her mind, governing her in her whole conduct.”⁴⁶

Jerusha died “about 5 o’clock in the morning” on Sunday, February 14, 1748.⁴⁷ She had only been ill for “about five days,” and as Edwards reminded his congregation, she had been among them just two weeks earlier.⁴⁸ When she fell ill, likely a Tuesday or Wednesday, her parents quickly sought the advice of multiple doctors, who were consulted daily, and the agreed-upon remedies “speedily used.”⁴⁹ Jerusha’s illness consisted of an acute fever, and she suffered greatly during her short battle.⁵⁰ She was apparently conscious during at least parts of her infirmity, as Edwards recalled her death-bed declarations in his eulogy.⁵¹ Although some have suggested that Jerusha contracted tuberculosis from Brainerd, such diagnoses are only speculation.⁵² One can only imagine the desperation of the Edwardses as their daughter’s fever persisted, as they watched day and night as she suffered, as remedy after remedy failed, as they offered prayers for her comfort and recovery, and as the realization that she might not recover began to take hold in their minds, and finally as she breathed her final breath and the “flower” of the Edwards family fell. Her death affected not only the Edwards household, but the community at large.⁵³ It is clear from Edwards’ correspondence in the months following his daughter’s death that he and the family were challenged greatly by her absence.

Within two weeks of Jerusha’s funeral, Edwards wrote Ebenezer Parkman, in Westborough, to tell him of her passing. Edwards’ letter, although damaged, reveals a father struggling with his daughter’s death.

[It has pleased] a holy God of late sorely to t[ry our] family, by taking away by death [our] daughter, Jerusha... This [letter] is [to ask your] prayers for us under our great [affliction], that it may be sanctified to us [that God] would fill up the melancholy vacancy [made] by death in this family...[beg]ing your sympathy and prayers and [that] you would remember our youngest [who] is under threatening circumstances.⁵⁴

And one month after he wrote to Parkman, Edwards penned a letter to Joseph Bellamy, telling his former student of Jerusha’s death:

You have probably before now heard of our sore affliction in the

death of our daughter, Jerusha... I have great satisfaction concerning her state, from what I know of her in life, and what appeared at her death... I desire your prayers for us that God would make up our great loss in spiritual blessings.⁵⁵

This letter to Bellamy is somewhat less “raw” than his letter to Parkman, as Edwards mixed his sadness with hope as to his daughter’s eternal state, but his request for God’s help in the family’s loss shows that Jerusha was sorely missed.

Near the end of August, more than six months after Jerusha’s death, Edwards’ mixture of hope and sadness was still present, but somewhat more subdued, as is seen in his letter to John Erskine (1721–1803), one of his key Scottish correspondents and minister of Kirkintilloch in Scotland.

It has pleased God, since I wrote my last [letter] to you, sorely to afflict this family by taking away by death...my second daughter in the eighteenth year of her age, a very pleasant and useful member of this family... Herein we have a great loss; but the remembrance of the remarkable appearances of piety in her, from her childhood, in life, and also at her death, are very comfortable to us, and give us great reason to mingle thanksgiving with our mourning. I desire your prayers, dear Sir, that God would make up our great loss to us in himself.⁵⁶

One other letter from the first half of 1748 that is often cited to demonstrate the pivotal role that Sarah Edwards played in the management of the household might also be seen in a different light given the circumstances of Jerusha’s death. Edwards wrote his “most affectionate companion” in June, 1748, while she was away in Boston, to inform her of their daughter Elizabeth’s (1747–1762) recovery from a recent illness, and to tell her that “your two eldest daughters,” Sarah and Esther, went to bed sick and woke up “beat out” and were still sleeping at the time Edwards wrote. Was Edwards’ most famous sentence in this letter, “We have been without you almost as long as we know how to be,” more than a plea for his wife’s quick return because he was overwhelmed with responsibility? For nearly eighteen years the “two eldest daughters” had always meant Sarah and Jerusha, and surely writing this line would have reminded Edwards of the empty seat at the family table and one less

child with which to pray. But did the signs of sickness, headache, and exhaustion among his children make Edwards all the more nervous? After all, Jerusha’s illness had come without warning; could Sarah or Esther be next? While such a reading is admittedly speculative, it is not impossible.⁵⁷

Youth is Like a Flower contains the clearest display of personal emotion of any of Edwards’ funeral sermons. Ola Winslow’s description of the sermon as an “intimate eulogy” is not overstated.⁵⁸ In this sermon the people of Northampton heard Jonathan Edwards as both father and pastor. As he spoke, his own affections and emotions were abundantly transparent. Edwards described Jerusha as “my own dear child,” and while he took comfort in her pure character before her death, he could “now be sensible what a bitterness it would be to me if [her moral character] had been contrariwise.”⁵⁹ Her death was “very heavy and sorrowful” to her father.⁶⁰ Edwards spoke to the young people as pastor, but with perhaps a new *pathos*:

O that this instance of death...might be a means of awakening the young people! If it might be so...and so be the beginning of a general awakening and reformation among *you*, the young people of *my flock*—it would abundantly add to the comforts I have in the circumstances of this providence, in itself so bitter and afflictive to me.⁶¹

It is clear, however, that the pulpit was not Edwards’ primary outlet for his emotions following Jerusha’s death. His letters, especially the note to Ebenezer Parkman, show that Edwards and his family were still learning to live without Jerusha. The letters mention the “sore affliction” in her death and contain requests for prayers on the family’s behalf for God to make up their great loss spiritually.

ENDNOTES

1 George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), Appendix C.

2 Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, p.128. See also Kenneth Pieter Minkema, “The Edwardses: A Ministerial Family in Eighteenth-Century New England” (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Connecticut, 1988), pp.155–156. Minkema examines Jerusha’s piety and her deathbed testimonies.

3 Letter to John Erskine, August 31, 1748, in *Letters and Personal Writings*, ed. George S. Claghorn (*The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 16; New Haven: Yale

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University Press, 1998), p.249.

4 Letter to Benjamin Colman, March 9, 1741, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:88).

5 Letter to George Whitefield, February 12, 1740, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:80–81).

6 Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, pp.206–207. See also *George Whitefield's Journals* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1960), pp.475–477.

7 *Journals*, p.476.

8 Letter to George Whitefield, December 14, 1740, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:87).

9 Edwards, Letter to Benjamin Colman, March 9, 1741, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:88).

10 *Memoirs of the Life, Experience and Character of the Late Reverend Mr. Jonathan Edwards, A. M. President of the College at Prince-Town, in New-Jersey in The Works of President Edwards*, vol. 1 (Repr. New York: Burt Franklin, 1968), p.99.

11 Samuel Hopkins, “Autobiography” in Edwards A. Park, *Memoir of the Life and Character of Samuel Hopkins, D. D.*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Doctrinal Tract and Book Society, 1854), pp.18–19.

12 Hopkins, “Autobiography” (Park, *Memoir*, p.18).

13 Hopkins, “Autobiography” (Park, *Memoir*, p.19). Jonathan was “abroad on a preaching tour” when Hopkins arrived.

14 Samuel Hopkins, *A Journal of Samuel Hopkins*, trans., annotated, and ed. Donald W Schulster (St. Davids: Eastern College, 1992), p.10. Entry for Monday, December 21, 1741.

15 Hopkins, *Journal*, trans., annotated and ed. Schulster, p.10. Entry for Tuesday, December 22, 1741.

16 Hopkins, “Autobiography” (Park, *Memoir*, p.23).

17 *Memoirs*, pp.93–97.

18 *Memoirs*, p.96.

19 “Autobiography” (Park, *Memoirs*, p.49).

20 Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, pp.251–52, hints at the possibility of a romantic interest between Samuel Hopkins and Jerusha Edwards. On page 555, n. 31, Marsden cites William Patten, *Reminiscences of the Late Rev. Samuel Hopkins, D.D.* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1843), p.31, and states: “In December 1743 Hopkins had settled as minister in a tiny frontier church at Housatonock (Great Barrington), near Stockbridge. Some time after that, we are told, he was courting a Northampton young woman who was ‘rather a belle of the place.’ She broke off their engagement when a former suitor returned.” Similarly, Park, *Memoir*, 55, states: “Mr. Hopkins preached more than four years at Great Barrington, previously to his marriage. A matrimonial engagement, which he had formed at Northampton, was broken off in a way honorable, but afflictive to himself. Another [matrimonial engagement], which he formed at Great Barrington, was equally inauspicious.” Park quoted William Patten, *Reminiscences*, pp.31–32, stating: “‘He paid his addresses,’ says Dr. Patten, ‘to a young woman interesting in her appearance and manners, and of a bright intellect, who was also rather a belle of the place.’” Park listed *two* engagements for Hopkins prior to his eventual marriage to Joanna Ingersol on

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January 13, 1748, the first to a young lady in Northampton and the second to a young woman in Great Barrington. Marsden seems to combine these two accounts into a single engagement in Northampton. However, William Patten did not mention an engagement in Northampton, only in Great Barrington, which was to an unnamed young woman who was “also rather a belle in the place,” but their engagement was later broken off when a “former lover” returned and renewed the relationship with Hopkins’ young fiancée. This young lady and her suitor were later married, after which “Mr. Hopkins considered her with regard to himself, as dead,” and subsequently married Joanna Ingersol. Since Jerusha Edwards never married, it seems unlikely that Marsden’s account can be considered accurate.

21 Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, p.324. See also Norman Pettit, “Editor’s Introduction” in *The Life of David Brainerd*, ed. Norman Pettit (*The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 7; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), p.42.

22 Pettit, “Editor’s Introduction” (*Works*, 7:42).

23 Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, p.324.

24 Pettit, “Editor’s Introduction” (*Works*, 7:43). Brainerd was “never awarded a degree.

25 Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*,” p.325.

26 See Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, pp.320–323, regarding the Edwardses’ hospitality.

27 Jonathan Edwards, *An Account of the Life of the Reverend Mr. David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:447).

28 Letter to Joseph Bellamy, June 11, 1747, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:223).

29 Ebenezer Parkman, *The Diary of Ebenezer Parkman, 1703–1782*, ed. Francis G. Walett (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1974), p.156. Entry for June 11, 1747.

30 Edwards, *Life of the Reverend Mr. David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:448).

31 Edwards, *Life of the Reverend Mr. David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:453).

32 Jerusha Edwards, Letter to Jonathan Edwards, June 29, 1747, as excerpted by Edwards, *Life of the Reverend Mr. David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:454). The two letters from Jerusha to Jonathan Edwards in June 1747 are the only surviving correspondence between father and daughter. A letter that Jerusha wrote to Esther Stoddard Edwards around June, 1747, was reused by Jonathan Edwards for a page in a November, 1747 sermon from Zechariah 4:12–14, and is located in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. See Appendix 1 for a transcription of this letter.

33 Parkman, *Diary*, ed. Walett, p.158. Entry for July 21, 1747. See also Edwards, *Life of the Reverend Mr. David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:457).

34 *Life of the Reverend Mr. David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:473).

35 Edwards, *Life of the Reverend Mr. David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:474).

36 Jonathan Edwards, Letter to Joseph Bellamy, April 4, 1748, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:246).

37 Winslow, *Jonathan Edwards*, p.236.

38 See the discussion by Murray, *Jonathan Edwards*, pp.309–310; Michael A. G. Haykin, *A Sweet Flame: Piety in the Letters of Jonathan Edwards* (Grand Rapids:

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Reformation Heritage Books, 2007), pp.98–99; Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, p.329; and Pettit, “Editor’s Introduction” (*Works*, 7:68–71). Pettit demonstrates that there is no manuscript evidence from Brainerd or Edwards to suggest that David and Jerusha were ever betrothed, but then creates a scenario in which Jerusha *might* have accompanied her father to New Haven in 1743, met Brainerd, and the two could have *possibly* begun a relationship. Pettit’s story, while plausible, is only speculation.

39 Edwards was aware that some members of the church might discount his recollections of Jerusha’s piety as the mere “fondness of a parent and tender affections toward a deceased child,” so he precluded this assessment by stating, “So far as I know my heart, what I have said and shall say of her at this time, is not that I so much seek her honor and my own, as your profit.” See Jonathan Edwards, *Youth Is Like a Flower That Is Cut Down in Sermons and Discourses, 1739–1742*, ed. Harry S. Stout, Nathan O. Hatch, and Kyle P. Farley (*The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 22; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), pp.336–37.

40 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:331).

41 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:332).

42 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:335).

43 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:336).

44 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:337).

45 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:337).

46 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:337).

47 Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, Appendix C.

48 Edwards, *Life of the Reverend Mr. David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:474); Edwards, *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:330).

49 Edwards, *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:330).

50 Writing to her sister Mary ten years after Jerusha’s death, Sarah Edwards Parsons, Jonathan’s oldest daughter, noted the similarities between the fever that struck Jerusha and the manner in which their sister Esther Edwards Burr died. See Sarah Parsons, Letter to Mary Dwight, April 18, 1758, in *The Journal of Esther Edwards Burr 1754–1757*, ed. Carol F. Karlsen and Laurie Crumpacker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp.302–303. Regarding Jerusha’s physical suffering, see Edwards, *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:331).

51 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:337).

52 See *The Life of David Brainerd*, ed. Pettit (*Works*, 7:70–71), where Pettit seems quite sure that Brainerd infected Jerusha, and while that scenario is certainly plausible, a sure diagnosis simply isn’t possible. Given the number of viruses or infections that could produce the same symptoms that Jerusha experienced and given that none of her family members who commented on her death, including her father who was noted for his keen abilities in observation, ever connected her symptoms or death to Brainerd, it seems best to avoid assigning a definite cause for her illness.

53 Certainly Edwards had not planned to preach a funeral sermon as the

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month of February began. At the conclusion of *Youth Is Like a Flower*, Edwards wrote a reminder to announce an upcoming quarterly lecture, which appears to be Sermon 891 on Ephesians 6:4, “That parents should bring up their children in Christianity.” Was this lecture text and topic planned in advance, or suggested by Edwards’ experience in losing Jerusha? Edwards acknowledged the sympathy that the town had showed them following Jerusha’s death. See *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:337).

54 Jonathan Edwards, Letter to Ebenezer Parkman, March 4, 1748, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:245). Parkman was the first settled minister in Westborough and remained as the pastor until his death in 1782. The Edwardses and their companions would often stay with Parkman during their trips to and from Boston. See *The Diary of Ebenezer Parkman*, ed. Wallett, pp.ix–xv.

55 Jonathan Edwards, Letter to Joseph Bellamy, April 4, 1748, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:246).

56 Jonathan Edwards, Letter to John Erskine, August 31, 1748, ed. Claghorn (*Works*, 16:250).

57 Added to the stresses of household management and sick children was the fact that Edwards’ primary supporter, closest political ally, and uncle, John Stoddard, died just three days before Jonathan wrote his wife. Edwards was likely writing Stoddard’s funeral sermon in the midst of the chaos and possibly wondering about his future in Northampton without his uncle’s strong personality to support him.

58 *Jonathan Edwards, 1703–1758: A Biography* (New York: Macmillan, 1940), p.236.

59 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:335).

60 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:335).

61 *Youth Is Like a Flower*, ed. Stout, Hatch, and Farley (*Works*, 22:338) (emphasis added).