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The Minister, the Millenarian, and the Madman: The Puritan Lives of William Sedgwick, ca. 1609–1664

Richard Thomas Bell

ABSTRACT William Sedgwick (ca. 1609–1664) is variously remembered as a godly clergyman, millenarian prophet, or ranting radical. By showing the continuities as well as divergences between these three "lives," Richard Thomas Bell explores the relationship between mainstream and radical puritanism. He builds on recent arguments about the fissiparous nature of the puritan community, demonstrating how an individual could move through seemingly conflicting positions, and how this experience of puritanism—although not preconditioning Sedgwick's politics—underwrote varied and often unexpected responses to political crisis. He argues that, although contemporaries perceived and upheld distinctions between mainstream and radical puritanism, these boundaries were not absolute, revealing consistencies, interactions, and distinctions between the two. **KEYWORDS:** John Saltmarsh; John Reeve; William Erbery; Abiezer Coppe; the Ranters

❧ **REFLECTING ON HIS CAREER** from retirement in 1661, William Sedgwick conceded that he had "gone as far in the way of separation . . . as most men; and prosecuted it as heartily." By his own admission, his religious convictions took him from the piety of puritan ministry to the heights of sectarianism, before he returned to "embrace the Church of *England*" in his early fifties. It proved hard to shake the reputation garnered by such a changeable religious life. "You think I am turned Courtier," he told the depleted forces of sectarian puritanism, while "the Court thinks I am still a Fanatick."[1] In a similar vein, historians have variously employed Sedgwick as an example of a godly clergyman, zealous millenarian, or religious radical.[2] Because of

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1. William Sedgwick, *Animadversions upon a Book Entituled Inquisition for the Blood of Our Late Soveraign* (London, 1661), 290–91, 49 (Wing S.2382).
2. For example, Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement, c. 1620–1643* (Cambridge, 1997), 55; B. S. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men: A Study*

his relative obscurity, we lack a comprehensive view of his life and career or of the religious outlook of a man engaged in such varied expressions of belief. Yet in such discrepancies, his life is revealing. If Sedgwick straddled both radical and moderate facets of puritanism, then he is an ideal candidate to tell us more of their connections as well as distinctions. Throughout his career, he adapted and engaged with radically altered forms of a nonetheless recognizably puritan culture, revealing strands of self-conscious consistency during a vacillating religious career.

Historians have sought to understand puritanism as a "dynamic religious culture" that could contain these divisions and extremes.[3] Nicholas McDowell, for instance, has explored the "dialogue" of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, including the use of parody to subvert orthodox texts and language.[4] Likewise, Nigel Smith has shown how even extreme forms of radical imagination and rhetorical style—influenced by Continental mysticism and straining at the limits of language—exhibited developments from, and continuities with, more orthodox puritanism.[5] Others have explored internal mechanisms of exchange, debate, and conflict management within puritanism, understanding it as less monolithic and more malleable, tending toward faction as much as unity.[6] Notably, David Como has located the origins of civil war radical puritanism within these mechanisms, seeing it develop as a reaction to, and evolution from, the core of the godly community, rather than separately from it.[7] These approaches have placed radical puritanism within a broader religious and political context of language, networks, and dispute. In this telling, radicalism was not essential but rather contextual and situational.[8] It was defined against the mainstream not

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in Seventeenth-Century English Millenarianism (London, 1972), 37–38, 44; and Christopher Hill, *The Experience of Defeat: Milton and Some Contemporaries* (New York, 1984), 97–117.

3. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, "Introduction: The Puritan Ethos, 1560–1700," in *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560–1700,* ed. Durston and Eales (Basingstoke, U.K., 1996), 9.

4. Nicholas McDowell, *The English Radical Imagination: Culture, Religion, and Revolution, 1630–1660* (Oxford, 2003), 9–10 and chap. 4.

5. Nigel Smith, *Perfection Proclaimed: Language and Literature in English Radical Religion, 1640–1660* (Oxford, 1989), 16–18, 345–47.

6. Peter Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: "Orthodoxy," "Heterodoxy," and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London* (Stanford, Calif., 2001), 8, 253–54, 395–96, 406; Peter Lake and David Como, "'Orthodoxy' and Its Discontents: Dispute Settlement and the Production of 'Consensus' in the London (Puritan) 'Underground,'" *Journal of British Studies* 39 (2000): 34–70; Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (Oxford, 2004).

7. David Como, *Blown by the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergence of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil-War England* (Stanford, Calif., 2004), 28.

8. Ariel Hessayon and David Finnegan, "Introduction: Reappraising Early Modern Radicals and Radicalisms," in *Varieties of Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century English Radicalism in Context*, ed. Hessayon and Finnegan (Farnham, U.K., 2011), 11–13; Jason Peacey, "Radicalism Relocated: Royalist Politics and Pamphleteering of the Late 1640s," in *Radicalism in Context*, ed. Hessayon and Finnegan, 51–54; Glenn Burgess, "Radicalism and the English Revolution," in *English Radicalism, 1550–1850,* ed. Glenn Burgess and Matthew Festenstein (Cambridge, 2007), 62–86. These debates were, of course, precipitated by Marxist accounts that

simply in terms of differentiation but also by interaction, contestation, and affect. In this sense, religious radicalism is a moving target. After 1640, the landscape of puritanism—and thus what constituted its radical fringes—shifted with the break-down of censorship and ecclesiastical discipline, the particular intellectual ferment of the army, the overlapping ascendancies of Presbyterianism and Independency, and the proliferation of formerly more controversial strands of puritanism.[9] Thus, the boundary between radical and mainstream was rarely clearly defined, redrawn as individuals moved across it during this period of religious experimentation. Perhaps more important than a strict and identifiable point of division between radical and mainstream, then, was their mutually constitutive relationship.

This was certainly the case with Sedgwick. He was a radical puritan in the sense that his heterodoxy—extreme even by the standards of the late 1640s—emerged from, and was informed by, mainstream puritanism. Even at his most intensely mystical and antiformalist, echoes of his earlier emphasis on scripture, providentialism, voluntary religious community, and divinely ordained church reform are clearly discernible. Likewise, Sedgwick's return to the mainstream was shaped by his radical experiences. Although he was aware that he had moved back and forth across certain boundaries, there was rarely a decisive moment of change, and he seldom felt the need to wholly reject his former life. It was this capacity to travel to extremes and back while conceiving of continuity in his own religiosity and spiritual community, and the responses to political crisis that this capacity underwrote, that makes Sedgwick so interesting. Maybe, as Mark Kishlansky claimed of Gerard Winstanley, Sedgwick was unremarkable but for "a mid-life crisis of epic proportions."[10] Yet even if so, he can reveal how drastic variations of belief could be contained within a recognizably puritan culture. By tracing its furthest boundaries, we can better understand puritanism as a distinctive—if broad and often controversial—phenomenon.

Of course, Sedgwick's path was hardly common or straightforward, and in that sense this study forgoes any claims to typicality. Nonetheless, I hope to show both that Sedgwick's journey did have features in common with other narratives of religious radicalism and that these heterodox paths can only be fully understood in the context of their origins in and connections to the puritan mainstream. Sedgwick was certainly an outlier, yet the very fact that a career like his was possible within

located sectarian religion within long-term radical traditions and subsequent revisionist skepticism regarding the scope and significance of radical sects and even, in some cases, their very existence. See, in particular, Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* (New York, 1972), chap. 3; Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (London, 1964); and J. C. Davis, *Fear, Myth, and History: The Ranters and the Historians* (Cambridge, 1986), 124–25, 135–37.

9. For a helpful summary of this dynamic, see David Como, "Radical Puritanism, c.1558–1660," in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge, 2008), 241–58.

10. Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603–1714* (London, 1996), 196.

puritanism is revealing of how seemingly competing ideas, attitudes, and doctrines interacted with and informed one another. Thus, rather than focusing on disputation management and debate within the godly community, I seek to offer a complementary view of a single path through these ideas that bolsters recent claims that such controversies were not simply the stuff of rhetoric or polemic but of lived puritan experience too.[11] To this end, I will sketch three portraits of Sedgwick's life—of a godly minister, an apocalyptic prophet, and a radical sectarian—before concluding with a discussion of his return to the Church of England. The divisions between these puritan "lives" are, of course, arbitrary, and this structure places emphasis on Sedgwick's radical years and their aftermath. But by tracing strands of consistency, development, and divergence between these passages of Sedgwick's life, I hope to understand better the ways in which being puritan could encompass a startling array of positions, experiences, and political allegiances, even within a single lifetime.

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Baptized in Woburn, Bedfordshire, on August 17, 1609, William Sedgwick grew up in a family of brewers based in Bedfordshire and London and prominent within the Brewers' Company.[12] His father William, brother John, and brother-in-law Robert Houghton each served as the king's brewer during the 1630s, while Houghton and Sedgwick's uncle Stephen served as master of the company in 1648 and 1650 respectively.[13] Perhaps due to this prominence within the company, the Sedgwicks were a wealthy family; William himself died a very affluent man, possessing a significant amount of land in Kent and Essex, and even such luxuries as a billiards table.[14] Furthermore, the Brewers' Company was notable for puritan sympathy within its ranks, and it seems that the Sedgwick family was no exception.[15] William's brother

11. For a robust iteration of this argument, see Peter Lake and Isaac Stephens, *Scandal and Religious Identity in Early Stuart England: A Northamptonshire Maid's Tragedy* (Woodbridge, U.K., 2015), 355–63.

12. "Woburn, 1558–1812," *Bedfordshire Parish Registers*, vol. 3, ed. F. G. Emmison (Bedford, U.K., 1931), 13. The Sedgwicks were based at least partially in Woburn until at least August 1627, when William's sister Elizabeth was baptized there. However, in March 1625, another of his sisters, Martha, was baptized in St. Bride's, Fleet Street, in London, and the family was resident in Southwark in 1634, shortly after his father's death: *Bedfordshire Parish Registers*, ed. Emmison, 12–19; London Metropolitan Archive (hereafter cited as LMA), P69/BRI/A/001/MS06536, unfoliated (March 17, 1625); LMA, CLA/002/04/335.

13. The National Archives (hereafter cited as TNA), SP 16/185, fol. 4r; *The Visitations of Bedfordshire: Annis Domini 1566, 1582, and 1634*, ed. F. A. Blaydes (London, 1884), 150; *The Journal of John Winthrop 1630–1649*, ed. Richard S. Dunn, James Savage, and Laetitia Yeandle (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 744; Mia Ball, *The Worshipful Company of Brewers: A Short History* (London, 1977), 128; *A Calendar of the Marriage Licence Allegations in the Registry of the Bishop of London*, vol. 1, ed. R. M. Glencross (London, 1937), 81.

14. TNA, PROB 11/313/277; TNA, PROB 4/22180. See also TNA, PROB 11/178/636.

15. Ball, *Worshipful Company of Brewers*, 77–78.

Robert was a godly merchant who immigrated in 1635 to New England, where he served as an artillery commander and eventually major-general of Massachusetts before becoming involved in Cromwell's Western Design, although he feared its violence might undermine the puritan cause among native peoples in America.[16] Their brother John also revealed puritan sympathies by bequeathing £40 to ten "poore godly Ministers of godes word" in his will.[17] Furthermore, Houghton, Sedgwick's brother-in-law, was one of three churchwardens who provoked rioting by taking down the altar rails in St. Olave's, Southwark, in June 1641, claiming that none in the parish were "so popishly affected" as to let them remain standing.[18]

Thus, although there is little evidence for the Sedgwicks' religious beliefs during William's childhood, puritanism was a common trend thereafter. Indeed, if any godly foundations were laid in his formative years, they were built upon during Sedgwick's time at Oxford. In 1625, he entered Pembroke College, marking a typical start to what was in some regards a typical godly career. Throughout the early Caroline era, Pembroke College fostered a body of emerging puritan talent. There, Sedgwick found a mentor in George Hughes, a godly preacher with whom he developed a long-lasting friendship.[19] Graduating in 1631, Sedgwick took up ministry at Farnham, Essex, in February 1634/5, probably as a gift from his uncle Stephen and brother John, who procured the parish advowson in 1632.[20]

During his time at Farnham, Sedgwick established a tight-knit godly community. Members included his old friend Hughes, who was ejected from his London living in 1636; John Wilson, curate at Elsenham; and Samuel Rogers, chaplain to Lady Denny's household in nearby Bishop's Stortford.[21] Sedgwick appears to have taken Rogers under his wing, attempting to help him find a more amenable

16. Louise A. Breen, *Transgressing the Bounds: Subversive Enterprises among the Puritan Elite in Massachusetts, 1630–1692* (Oxford, 2001), 4–5, 126–27; *Oxford DNB*, s.v. "Sedgwick, Robert (bap. 1613, d. 1656)," by Joyce Sampson, last modified January 2008, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/25019.

17. TNA, PROB 11/178/636.

18. Julie Spraggon, *Puritan Iconoclasm during the English Civil War* (Woodbridge, U.K., 2003), 138–39.

19. Douglas Macleane, *A History of Pembroke College, Oxford* (Oxford, 1897), 241–45; Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, vol. 3, ed. Philip Bliss (London, 1817), 894–96.

20. LMA, DL/A/A/004/MS09531/015, fols. 86v–87r; LMA, DL/A/B/042/MS09539A/001, fol. 56v; LMA, DL/A/B/042/MS09539A/002, fol. 17r; Essex Record Office, D/P 290/1/2, fols. 21r–23v; Essex Record Office, D/DTw/T27, unfoliated; "William Sedgwicke (CCEd Person ID 15348)," Clergy of the Church of England Database, accessed September 3, 2017, http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk.

21. *The Diary of Samuel Rogers, 1634–1638*, ed. Tom Webster and Kenneth Shipps (Woodbridge, U.K., 2004), xxxiv–xxxvii, 82, 89, 115, 117–18, 118n476. Suggestively, Rogers's family had fostered a devout godly community for two generations in Wethersfield, Essex, roughly twenty miles east of Farnham. See Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London, 1967), 381–82; *Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries*, ed. M. M. Knappen (Chicago, 1933), 23–25, 29; and *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, xv–xviii.

position by introducing him to the puritan MP for Bedford, Sir Samuel Luke, perhaps a family acquaintance from Sedgwick's Woburn days.[22] Rogers's journal-keeping offers a rewarding glimpse into the spiritual workings of this small puritan community in 1636 and 1637. It is impossible to tell precisely how many people were involved, but it seems that small numbers were mitigated by the zeal of those present. For Rogers, Farnham was a refuge from his less godly parish in Bishop's Stortford. It became a sanctuary of "comfort" where Rogers found himself "much revived," his spirit "quickned by talking with some saints."[23] He spent some Sabbaths "downe, at mr Sedgwicks," even receiving communion at Farnham, and on other occasions attended worship at the homes of Wilson and "G: Ingh:."[24]

Fast days were central to this communal experience. Although fasting was hardly unique to the godly, Tom Webster notes that it became a core facet of puritan practical divinity and sociability from the 1580s, continuing throughout the 1630s despite official condemnation from Laud.[25] Rogers attended a number of "semi-public" Farnham fasts, as Alec Ryrie aptly describes them; these were collective yet exclusive events, held in addition to broader national observances. Interestingly, Rogers's diary suggests that these fulfilled both the introspective function of private fasting and the communal prayerful response to national events of public fasting.[26] At one such event, Rogers described how "the Lord inlarges mr Sedgewick mightilye" and "thawes my heart sweetlye." Although the self-reflection involved could be painful enough to "[wring] out many tears," Rogers found himself rewarded with "sweet assurance of acceptance through [Chris]t" and renewed closeness with God.[27] Yet on other occasions, the Farnham community focused on the broader condition of the godly throughout England. Concluding his account of a fast on November 16, Rogers entreated God: "be not angry ag:[ainst] the prayers of thy dear ones . . . downe with the enimyes of thy truth, and Lord lift up, the heades of thy people."[28] Similarly, after the following week's fast, Rogers's thoughts lingered "upon Zion, oh thy church . . . in Eng:[land] Lord preserve it, turne away thyne angry countenance from the prayers of

22. *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, xxxvi–xxxviii, 115, 117–19. Webster and Shipps also speculate that Sedgwick may have known Luke from Oxford or via Hughes (115n462).

23. *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, 86, 89, 92, 119.

24. *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, 74, 82, 93, 94, 106, 110, 117; Webster and Shipps suggest that "G: Ingh:" may be a member of the Ingram family in Stortford parish (94n381).

25. Webster, *Godly Clergy*, 60–66, 70–71.

26. Alec Ryrie, "The Fall and Rise of Fasting in the British Reformations," in *Worship and the Parish Church in Early Modern Britain*, ed. Natalie Mears and Alec Ryrie (Farnham, U.K., 2013), 97–100. See also Webster, *Godly Clergy*, 66–67; and Paul Seaver, *Wallington's World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-Century London* (London, 1985), 169.

27. *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, 81, 82, 88.

28. *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, 81–82.

thy saints . . . and make us yet the joy of the earth."[29] As well as revealing the extent to which communal puritan worship hinged upon this self-image of a chosen people suffering under persecution, this also articulated a collective ambition for religious reform through the establishment of a godly New Jerusalem (the "joy of the whole earth" in Lamentations 2:15). The Farnham fasts thus fulfilled the dual purpose of encouraging spiritual recuperation and offering a sense of agency in the wider plight of puritanism.

These godly ambitions were placed in contrast to Laudian church government. In August 1636, Rogers recorded the providential judgments befalling the nation for its sins, especially noting how the "idolatrous, superstitious Arminians carye the ball before them," having "prevailed lamentablye within these 7. Yeares."[30] During the 1637 visitation, Sedgwick felt the tightening grip of Laudianism upon those neglecting church ceremonies and practices, facing reprimands over catechism and the altar.[31] As Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke argue, the altar was "a vital battleground" of belief and practice that found new vitality in the conflict between puritans and Laudians. By mid-1636, attempts to reorientate and rail off communion tables, as well as enforce standards of behavior before them, both gained impetus and provoked opposition.[32] Those who resisted often faced consequences: Hughes was ejected in 1636 partly for refusing to bow at the altar. In 1637, Sedgwick was "ordered to have [a] rayle about the com[munio]n table and to administer to none but such as" come up to the rail, suggesting he had thus far paid little heed to these requirements.[33] While such negligence was not proof of direct opposition to church authorities, both this reprimand and Sedgwick's godly ministry—not to mention Rogers's hostility toward Arminians and Hughes's recent ejection—suggest antipathy regarding Laudian government and ceremony. In turn, this led to an increasing entanglement in the dragnet policing Laudian innovations. By 1643, Sedgwick had overtly denied the episcopacy's authority to exercise a "negative voice" that could "command that we should injoy [church ordinances] in their manner or not at all." He called for the "weeding of [God's] garden" to remove anything not divinely ordained and condemned Laudian ornamentation, including "stately Priesthood, [and] Altars," as a "designe above

29. *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, 82–83.

30. *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, 66; Webster, *Godly Clergy*, 262. Webster attributes this phrase to Sedgwick, but it seems these were Rogers's own reflections on the spiritual state of the nation. Nonetheless, it is revealing that these sentiments were circulating among the Farnham group at this time.

31. LMA, DL/B/A/002/MS09537/015, fols. 38r–v, 41v. On this visitation in Essex and puritan responses, see Webster, *Godly Clergy*, chap. 12.

32. Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547–c. 1700* (Oxford, 2007), 1, 152–55, 218, 222.

33. *Oxford DNB*, s.v. "Hughes, George (1603/4–1667)," by Mary Wolffe, last modified 2004, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/14069; LMA, DL/B/A/002/MS09537/15, fol. 41v.

Gods."[34] Even if Sedgwick did not explicitly oppose Laudian altar policy in 1637, his antipathy toward ceremony clearly intensified in the following years.

Sedgwick's conflict with Laudianism was most intense regarding preaching. During the 1637 visitation, he was instructed "not to preach upon Sundays in the afternoone but only to catechise" and read the prayer book service, falling afoul of episcopal "hard-liners" against Sunday afternoon sermons, as identified by Ian Green.[35] As with the altar, Sedgwick was caught on the wrong side of Laudian developments, and again this experience was formative.[36] Although he seems to have avoided serious censure, these encounters may well have hardened his antipathy into opposition. In June 1642, he attacked the Laudian regime for stifling preaching: "Some complained of *Prometheus* for teaching the use of fire," he railed, "and many amongst us Preach against Preaching, But they that quarrell with the light, quarrell with Christ himselfe."[37] Clearly, he felt that Laudianism threatened godly ministry. With biblical teaching as the cornerstone of his faith, Sedgwick used his place at Farnham to attempt to mitigate this perceived damage. He hosted a frequent rotation of visiting preachers, including Hughes, "mr Bowles," and "Mr Simson" (perhaps, Webster and Shipps suggest, Sidrach Simpson), a common mechanism to provide venues for deprived ministers while attempting to avoid church discipline.[38] Rogers's record suggests a typically puritan focus on scripture, similar to the formula of biblical exegesis in Sedgwick's printed sermons.[39] Furthermore, Farnham provided not only for displaced preachers but also for disaffected congregants from other parishes (notably Rogers). Arnold Hunt suggests that sermon-gadding was contentious, even among puritans, as it threatened the formal roles of parish and pastor and perhaps represented one "faultline" along which Presbyterians and Independents would later

34. William Sedgwick, *Scripture, A Perfect Rule for Church-Government* (London, [1643]), 9, 25, 31 (Wing S.2388).

35. LMA, DL/B/A/002/MS09537/15, fol. 41v. Ian Green, *The Christian's ABC: Catechism and Catechizing in England, c. 1530–1740* (Oxford, 1996), 107–8. However, Green is keen to stress that this hard-line attitude was not reflective of Laud's official position.

36. On Laudian innovations and the capacity of church discipline to harden puritan opposition, see Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590–1640* (Oxford, 1990); David Como, "Predestination and Political Conflict in Laud's London," *Historical Journal* 46 (2003): 263–94; and Webster, *Godly Clergy*, chap. 5. For an exploration of how a "cautious and conformist" puritan could navigate, and was also constrained by, Laudianism, see Ann Hughes, "A Moderate Puritan Preacher Negotiates Religious Change," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 65 (2014): 761–79.

37. William Sedgwick, *Zions Deliverance and Her Friends Duty*, 2nd ed. (London, 1643), 33 (Wing S.2393).

38. *Diary of Samuel Rogers*, ed. Webster and Shipps, 75, 96, 96n389; Paul Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships: The Politics of Religious Dissent, 1560–1662* (Stanford, Calif., 1970), 6, 15.

39. See especially William Sedgwick, *Some Flashes of Lightnings of the Sonne of Man* (London, 1648) (Wing S.2390).

divide.[40] Whether or not such considerations were at play among the Farnham group is hard to say, but it is clear that Sedgwick used his position at Farnham to support a preaching ministry and godly devotion that, in the cases of Hughes and Rogers, struggled to find accommodation elsewhere.

Thus, Sedgwick's puritan ministry was fairly typical, if low-key: a pastoral provision of preaching, fasting, and puritan sociability against the tide of Laudian church reforms. As Webster has shown, a mixture of ineffective episcopal administration and evasive tactics allowed many Essex puritans—most notably Stephen Marshall—to survive the visitations of the 1630s.[41] Furthermore, unlike some more prominent godly ministers, Sedgwick also kept his head below the parapet, refraining from public religious debate. Yet this changed with the delivery of his fast sermon before the House of Commons on June 29, 1642, published as *Zions Deliverance.* Quite how a relatively low-profile Essex minister came to preach a fast sermon is unclear, although it may have owed something to his connection to the puritan MP Sir Samuel Luke. Whatever the circumstances, in the context of heightened political tension, Sedgwick took the opportunity to voice publicly his criticisms of Laud for the first time.

Preaching from Isaiah 62:7, Sedgwick evoked common fast-sermon themes, calling for the establishment and perfection of Zion in England, a "praise in the earth" in the form of a godly church. Furthermore, as in Revelation 21, this New Jerusalem was to be bride to the Lamb, giving the reformation of the church an eschatological significance that helped explain ongoing "Church-quakes, and Kingdome-quakes." In this context of intertwined political and religious conflict, he drew an implicit comparison between Laud and the enemies of Jerusalem in Ezra 4 who interfered with the reconstruction of the temple there: "some adversaries that offered their helpe being refused, seduce the king by their evill counsell; and then the Reformation is counted Rebellion, they are commanded to cease."[42] Invoking the image of evil counselors as the enemies of Jerusalem set on undermining the construction of the temple from within, Sedgwick offered scriptural justification of Parliament's rhetoric against the king's government.

Yet *Zions Deliverance* was also directed *at* Parliament, urging MPs to keep the well-being of the Church at the forefront of their minds. Sedgwick insisted on the ongoing need for reform, calling on MPs to be "active and publick spirits" in the task

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40. Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and Their Audiences* (Cambridge, 2010), 202–3.

41. Webster, *Godly Clergy*, 238–45.

42. Sedgwick, *Zions*, 4–7, 12, 16–17, 22. On Sedgwick's use of common themes, see John Wilson, *Pulpit in Parliament: Puritanism during the English Civil Wars 1640–1648* (Princeton, N.J., 1969), 175, 210. On the general trend of fast sermon comparisons between the godly and the Jews returning from Babylon as God's chosen nation, see Achsah Guibbory, *Christian Identity, Jews, and Israel in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford, 2010), 105–14.

of "zealously affecting the honour of God, and the good of his people."[43] Preaching shortly after Parliament issued the Nineteen Propositions—the latest intensification of the growing constitutional debate over the balance of executive power—Sedgwick insisted that there was "Church-worke, as well as Common-wealth-worke" to be done "to remove superstition as well as oppression." He thus attempted to shift Parliament's focus toward religious as well as constitutional issues, entreating MPs to "Labor for holy Lawes."[44] This is best understood not as a division of religion and politics but as a call for their ongoing coextension. Sedgwick simultaneously polemicized on behalf of Parliament's cause by expanding upon the biblical conception of England as an elect nation prevailing against enemies within (incorporating the political rhetoric of evil counselors), while also making his own exhortation to Parliament to push ahead with religious as well as constitutional reform.

This pursuit of religious reform and political settlement drove Sedgwick to argue for a new church government. In a sermon preached before an audience of MPs at St. Margaret's, Westminster, and printed in 1643, he attacked the Episcopalian administration for reaching beyond its role as dispenser and preserver of Christ's ordinances into one of lordliness, ornamentation, and legislation, even encroaching upon monarchical authority. Further demonstrating his vision for settlement through religious reform, he claimed that only a return to scripturally based apostolic church government could provide the spiritual well-being and discipline necessary for political stability, although he remained vague on the specifics of how centralized such government should be.[45] While acknowledging the debate over church membership and godly election, he sidestepped the issue by focusing on the need for structural reform of the corrupt "visible politicall Church whose government is

43. Sedgwick, *Zions*, 1–2, 8–10, 17. Historians continue to debate the relationship of religion and political concerns within fast sermons, and (more recently) their place within the broader context of worship and of sermons as events and interactions between preachers and audiences. See, for example, Hugh Trevor-Roper, "The Fast Sermons of the Long Parliament," in *Essays in British History Presented to Sir Keith Feiling*, ed. Trevor-Roper (London, 1964), 85–138; Wilson, *Pulpit in Parliament*; Christopher Hill, "Fast Sermons and Politics, 1640–1660," in *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution* (London, 1993), 79–108; Lucy Bates, "Nationwide Fast and Thanksgiving Days in England, 1640–1660" (PhD diss., University of Durham, 2012); and Ann Hughes, "Preachers and Hearers in Revolutionary London: Contextualising Parliamentary Fast Sermons," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 24 (2014): 57–77.

44. Sedgwick, *Zions*, 22, 34–35. On the Nineteen Propositions, see Michael Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (London, 2009), 192–93; and John Morrill, "The Religious Context of the English Civil War," in *The English Civil War*, ed. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (London, 1997), 168–71.

45. Sedgwick, *Scripture*, 23–25, 27, 31, 33–34. As J. F. Merritt notes, from 1614 St. Margaret's church hosted exclusive services for the House of Commons separate from its provision for parishioners, explaining how Sedgwick delivered the sermon "before sundry of the House of Commons": J. F. Merritt, *The Social World of Early Modern Westminster: Abbey, Court, and Community, 1525–1640* (Manchester, 2005) 340–41, 341n157. Although the sermon was printed in 1643, it is unclear when it was actually preached.

distinct from the invisible, instituted by Christ." He preached in favor of "a particular or congregationall Church, which is a similar part of the Catholique, and hath the nature of the whole." This involved a "ministeriall and evangelicall dispensation" designed for the collective glorification of God through "Prayer, Word, Sacraments, Discipline" facilitated by "Pastors, and Elders, and Deacons," which "offices and administrations must stand till we all come in the unity of the faith." While drawing upon the "particular or congregationall" model of the New England Way and practicing extraparochial ministry in Farnham, Sedgwick nonetheless called for a singular, overarching church that offered "communion in divine as civill things" by providing fellowship and discipline within a structure extending beyond Christians gathered "within the same walls." Although acknowledging that the "matter of this Church must be Saints," he was less concerned with policing the boundaries of godliness and salvation than with creating an evangelical national church that would encourage present stability while also leading toward true unity.[46] Thus, by 1643 Sedgwick was taking a cautiously Independent approach. He echoed certain arguments in favor of individual congregations made by the likes of Thomas Goodwin and Sidrach Simpson but retained some form of national church, albeit one seemingly more concerned with godly evangelism than discipline.[47]

Perhaps spurred on by his opposition to Laud's church government and his evil counsel to the king, by August 1642 Sedgwick had made the significant decision to sign up for Sir William Constable's regiment.[48] During this time, he gained a reputation as a godly chaplain. In March 1644, the House of Lords considered him alongside other prominent ministers for the role of chaplain to the two royal children in Parliament's care.[49] Soon, he was appointed minister of Ely Cathedral Church by the Earl of Manchester. He first received payment there in April 1644, the same time that he resigned his Farnham ministry, taking up permanent residence around January 1645. In the following March, Parliament ratified the appointment.[50] He continued as preacher to Ely Garrison into the beginning of 1648, while a draft of the survey of Ely

46. Sedgwick, *Scripture*, 4–8. On the visible and invisible church, see Edmund S. Morgan, *Visible Saints: The History of a Puritan Idea* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1965), 10–32; and Peter Lake, "Calvinism and the English Church 1570–1635," *Past and Present*, no. 214 (1987): 32–76 at 38–42.

47. For an account of the congregationalism of the "Dissenting Brethren" or "Apologists," see Hunter Powell, *The Crisis of British Protestantism: Church Power in the Puritan Revolution, 1638–44* (Manchester, 2015), chap. 4.

48. Anne Laurence, *Parliamentary Army Chaplains, 1642–1651* (Woodbridge, U.K., 1990), 172–73. He received payment for his service from as early as August 1642, and throughout 1643: TNA, SP 28/4, fol. 142r; TNA, SP 28/7, fol. 353r; TNA, SP 28/9, fol. 133r; TNA, SP 28/143, part 4, fols. 97v, 101r; TNA, SP 28/143, part 6, fol. 56v.

49. *Journal of the House of Lords*, 6:448.

50. TNA, SP 28/222, fols. 238r, 239r, 427r, 443r, 444r; LMA, DL/A/A/004/MS09531/015, fol. 114r; *Journal of the House of Commons*, 4:487.

Dean and Chapter and records from the sale of cathedral lands show that he was in residence at the Cathedral Church until September 1649.[51]

Sedgwick's evangelical work there was popular. He reportedly became known as "The Apostle of the isle of Ely" and even caught the attention of Oliver Cromwell, who approvingly petitioned the sequestrators of Ely on his behalf. Perhaps Cromwell anticipated that Sedgwick would play a role in his reputed goal to fill Ely with "godly and precious peopell" in order to "make it a place for God to dwell in."[52] It was thus in Ely and the army that Sedgwick rose to a new prominence. He perhaps benefitted from connections with Francis Russell, who was Cromwell's son-in-law, a parliamentarian colonel, and governor of the Isle of Ely from 1645 until at least mid-1647. Russell was possibly Sedgwick's commanding officer there, and he certainly became an acquaintance who offered connections to the Cromwell family as late as 1658, when he helped Sedgwick appeal to Henry Cromwell for a position in Ireland on behalf of a "kinsman."[53] Between this new relationship and the approval of Cromwell, the army provided Sedgwick with new sources of godly patronage.

Yet this period, for which details are unfortunately vague, also marked a shift away from the puritan mainstream. Sedgwick developed a significant friendship with William Erbery, a Welsh minister and army chaplain who had also served in Essex's infantry and whom Thomas Edwards identified as a Seeker and antinomian. Edwards claimed that Erbery made Ely his "ordinary residence" in spring 1645, not long after Sedgwick took up his post. From there he apparently traveled the country "venting his opinions," including a visit to Bury St. Edmunds in July. Although Edwards's testimony is circumspect, it is corroborated by the infamous radical Laurence Clarkson, who claimed that Sedgwick and Erbery visited him during his imprisonment in Bury St. Edmunds in 1645. Furthermore, Clarkson suggests a shared religious commitment between the two, claiming that they led him to reject his Baptist position and accept their shared Seeker belief that since "the death of the Apostles, there was . . . no true administrator" or church. Clarkson later attempted visiting them in Ely but apparently "found them not, onely their people . . . assembled," implying that Erbery and Sedgwick had fostered a Seeking community in Ely.[54]

51. TNA, SP 28/128, part 6, fols. 4r, 7r; Lambeth Palace Library, COMM XIIa/7, fols. 162r–177v; Cambridge University Library, EDC 8A/1/13, fols. 3r–v; TNA, AO 1/367/3.

52. Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 3:894–96; TNA, SP 16/539/3, fol. 7r; *The Quarrel between the Earl of Manchester and Oliver Cromwell*, ed. David Masson and John Bruce (London, 1875), 73; Ian Atherton, "The Dean and Chapter, Reformation to Restoration: 1541–1600," in *A History of Ely Cathedral*, ed. Peter Meadows and Nigel Ramsay (Woodbridge, U.K., 2003), 188–91.

53. *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642–1660*, ed. C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait (London, 1911), 744–45; TNA, SP 28/128, part 6, fols. 3v–4r; British Library, MS Lansdowne 823, fols. 149r–v.

54. Thomas Edwards, *Gangraena*, 2nd ed. (London, 1646), 77–78 (Wing E.228); Hughes, *Gangraena*, 190–94, 435; Laurence Claxton, *The Lost Sheep Found* (London, 1660), 19 (Wing C.4580); *A Collection of Ranter Writings*, ed. Nigel Smith (London, 2014), 10–11, 15–16.

Although hard to verify, Clarkson's account of Sedgwick and Erbery's Seekerism fits with what we know of their careers. As J. F. McGregor argues, the term *Seeker* did not signify a sect but a conviction that all postapostolic churches existed without a heavenly mandate and, consequently, that the visible church should be rejected.[55] Around the turn of 1646/47, Erbery talked of the decline of formal church and ministry "into a Wilderness," replaced with a personal and unmediated relationship with God as the Saints were "set in a seeking way."[56] Although little direct evidence exists of Sedgwick's beliefs between 1645 and 1647, in 1648 he likewise criticized all "outward, formall religion," claiming that unresponsiveness to God's vision had also caused a political "clogge of old formes and customs." He argued that Christ was the "*true* patterne of al[l] Ministry" and would establish a true church and New Jerusalem during the Second Coming. Furthermore, he insisted that any interim offices or dispensations were "*Antichristian and Babylonian*," a marked divergence from his belief in the necessity of an interim established church in 1643.[57] This was "antiformalism"—which J. C. Davis argues underpinned much political and religious anxiety in this period—taken to an extreme expression against all forms whatsoever.[58] Indeed, Sedgwick's primitivistic nostalgia for apostolic church government and his millennialist anticipation of the establishment of Zion, seen in his sermons printed in 1642 and 1643, now intensified into a typically Seeker rejection of all outward forms until the establishment of a New Jerusalem during the Second Coming. While details of Sedgwick's time in Ely are frustratingly vague, his relationship with Erbery and the apparent existence of a Seeker community goes some way to explaining the significant shifts in belief—especially a growing preoccupation with the millennium—that defined the rest of his career.

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This new passage in Sedgwick's life gained infamy when, according to a newsletter dated March 30, 1647, he arrived in London prophesying the world's end "within fourteene dayes, Christ then comeing to Judgment," based on a vision in his study

55. Claxton, *Lost Sheep*, 19; J. F. McGregor, "Seekers and Ranters," in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, ed. Barry Reay and J. F. McGregor (Oxford, 1984), 123–29.

56. William Erbery, *Nor Truth, nor Errour, nor Day, nor Night* ([London], 1647), 1–3 (Wing E.3234).

57. William Sedgwick, *Justice upon the Armie Remonstrance* (London, 1649), 13 (Wing S.2385); Sedgwick, *A Second View of the Army Remonstrance* (London, 1648), 16 (Wing S.2389); Sedgwick, *The Leaves of the Tree of Life* (London, 1648), 32 (Wing S.2386). For Sedgwick's primitivism, see Sedgwick, *Flashes*, 53, 190, 193–94.

58. J. C. Davis, "Against Formality: One Aspect of the English Revolution," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 6th ser., 3 (1993): 265–88. However, Davis describes these extreme formalists as "quantitatively insignificant" (286).

in Ely.[59] Anthony Wood later reported that Sedgwick interrupted a bowls game at Francis Russell's Chippenham home and warned that judgment was a week away, perhaps stopping between Ely and London to caution his acquaintance. Although by some accounts the gentlemen there mocked this outburst, Russell became tarred by association. He was described in 1658 as "a man (like *William Sedgwick*) high flown, but not serious or substantial in his principles." One newsletter reported how one "Coll——. hath set his house in order (upon [the prophecy])," possibly referring to Colonel Francis Russell.[60] Indeed, the prophecy quickly became infamous and, when the Second Coming did not occur, the Apostle of Ely found himself restyled "Doomsday Sedgwick."

Contemporaries struggled to make sense of Sedgwick's unexpected outburst. Those ministers who spoke to him immediately afterward were divided; some considered him "distempered in minde," but others argued that "for soe much as he discourses he talkes very sencibly."[61] The story soon appeared in newspapers. One reported serious talk in London about an apocalyptic prophecy, while another used it to expound upon the ominous mood of civil war.[62] Already "much talked of in London," this "strange newes" soon spread beyond the capital; Essex minister Ralph Josselin interpreted Sedgwick's "strange transport" as a providential warning against straying from God's will.[63] John Cleveland took the opportunity to deride the wider puritan community, joking that a "single sight" of Francis Cheynell's red nose "made *Sedgewick* dream of doomes-day."[64] Others perceived more of a threat. In 1651, Edmund Hall listed Sedgwick among the "tinkling cymballs and crackt trumpets" of false prophets and Fifth Monarchists.[65] Even after his death, Sedgwick served as a cautionary tale against apocalyptic prophecy and the spiritual excesses of the wars and interregnum. "*Doomsday Sedgwick*," wrote one polemicist in 1694, "is yet too fresh in Memory to be wholly forgotten."[66]

59. *The Clarke Papers: Selections from the Papers of William Clarke*, ed. C. H. Firth, 4 vols. (London, 1891–1901), 1:4.

60. Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 3:894–96; George Wharton, *A Second Narrative of the Late Parliament* ([London], 1658), 17 (Wing W.1556); *Perfect Occurrences of Every Dayes Journall in Parliament*, issue 13, March 26–April 2, 1647, [104] (Thomason E.383[13]).

61. *Clarke Papers*, ed. Firth, 1:4.

62. *Perfect Occurrences*, issue 13, March 26–April 2, 1647, [104]; *The Kingdomes Weekly Intelligencer*, issue 203, March 30–April 6, 1647, 477–78 (Thomason E.383[18]).

63. *Clarke Papers*, ed. Firth, 1:4; *The Diary of Ralph Josselin, 1616–1683*, ed. Alan Macfarlane (Oxford, 1991), 91.

64. John Cleveland, *Midsummer-Moone* ([London], 1648), 1 (Wing C.4680).

65. Edmund Hall, *Lingua Testium* ([London], 1651), 31 (Wing H.327).

66. *The Trial and Condemnation of the Two False Witnesses unto the late Midnight-Cry* (London, 1694), 5 (Wing T.2156). See also *Reflections upon the Catholick Ballad* (London, 1675) (Wing R.725); *Political Broadside Ballads of Seventeenth-Century England: A Critical Bibliography*, ed. Angela J. McShane (London, 2010), nos. 318, 328, 348, 483, 536; Samuel Butler, *Hudibras in Three Parts* (London, 1684), part 2, canto 3, lines 475–78 (Wing B.6319).

Although we lack the exact content of Sedgwick's prophecy, it is possible to piece together clues to the character of his eschatology based on secondhand reports and his earlier writing. He appears influenced by Joseph Mede, a millenarian thinker influential in puritan circles for whom the "day" of Judgment did not conclude the millennium but instead symbolized the entire process, beginning with Christ's return and commensurate with his "reigne of the thousand yeeres granted to new Jerusalem."[67] Judging by the newsletter report, Sedgwick echoed this belief. He anticipated Christ imminently "comeing to Judgment" as his reign began, rather than at its culmination.[68] Furthermore, Mede's belief in the construction of the New Jerusalem during this reign was compatible with Sedgwick's ongoing desire to rebuild a Zion on earth. Both interpreted this not as a physical city but "mystically, *Jerusalem* for the Church."[69] And like Mede, Sedgwick understood the conflagration of the earth as a refining rather than destructive process: playing John the Baptist's role, the fire would leave the earth "purified, and sanctified, and restored" for the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven.[70] Although it is unclear whether this influence was direct or resulted from the proliferation of Mede's thought within puritan circles, Sedgwick drew upon ideas that, according to Jeffrey Jue, enjoyed a resurgence in the early seventeenth century.[71] In this sense his millenarianism was not particularly unorthodox. Thus, although it marks a significant stage in Sedgwick's career, his initial foray into religious controversialism and perhaps the "radical" act for which he was best remembered actually involved fairly orthodox ideas—albeit expressed with eccentric urgency—demonstrating just how blurred the lines between these categories could be.

Indeed, while Sedgwick gained lingering infamy for his doomsday prediction, it was a relatively benign beginning to a string of increasingly controversial prophesies. Already numbered among the popular yet divisive Independent preachers within the army (alongside William Dell and John Saltmarsh) and reportedly drawing large crowds of soldiers when he preached,[72] Sedgwick now engaged in growing ministerial criticism of the army leadership following the Putney Debates.

67. Jeffrey K. Jue, *Heaven upon Earth: Joseph Mede (1586–1638) and the Legacy of Millenarianism* (Dordrecht, Netherlands, 2006), 131–32; Joseph Mede, *The Key of the Revelation* (London, 1643), 123 (Wing M.1600).

68. *Clarke Papers*, ed. Firth, 1:4.

69. Sedgwick, *Zions*, 3. Notably, Sedgwick developed an even more internalized view of a kingdom of God dwelling "within" the Saints: Sedgwick, *Zions*, 36; Sedgwick, *Flashes*, 57–58, 74.

70. Sedgwick, *Flashes*, 11, 27; Joseph Mede, *The Works of the Pious and Profoundly-Learned Joseph Mede* (London, 1672), 613–18 (Wing M.1588); Jue, *Heaven upon Earth*, 122–23.

71. Jue, *Heaven upon Earth*, 4–6, 143–44, 179–80.

72. C. H. Firth, *Cromwell's Army: A History of the English Soldier during the Civil Wars, the Commonwealth, and the Protectorate* (London, 1921), 318–22; *Perfect Occurrences of Every Dayes Journall in Parliament*, issue 22, May 22–29, 1646 (Thomason E.339[5]), May 25, 1646; Thomas Edwards, *The Third Part of Gangraena* (London, 1646), 242 (Wing E.237); Richard Baxter, *A Second Admonition to Mr. Edward Bagshaw* (London, 1671), 68 (Wing B.1400).

On December 6, 1647, Saltmarsh delivered a prophetic rebuke against the army for imprisoning several Levellers following the Ware mutiny, an intervention described by Ian Gentles as the "catalyst" for reconciliation within the army. Apparently Cromwell had already received a similar warning in writing from "Mr. S.," tentatively identified by Leo Solt as Sedgwick.[73] Indeed, Sedgwick later recalled preaching on the topic in Windsor, and John Lilburne described the "late thunders of Mr. *Sidgwick* and precious Mr. *Saltmarsh*" as vital rebukes against "these new Tyrants the Grandees."[74] A week later Henry Pinnell arrived at Windsor in his own spirit of admonishing prophesy, inspired by "the Voice cryed by Mr *Sedgwick* and Mr *Saltmarsh*."[75] Tellingly, Pinnell feared prophesying out of pride and the temptation of "getting a name, becoming famous, eminent and be taken notice of, as Mr. *Sedgwick*, Mr. *Saltmarsh* were."[76] Robert Bacon, resident in Windsor at the time, later identified this as a pivotal moment that "awakened the Spirit of God in *Sedgwick*, *Saltmarsh*, *Pinnell*, *Ingrave*, like the Angel of God that met *Balaam* riding beyond his Commission, openly and professedly to oppose" the grandees.[77] "Ingrave" was likely John Ingram, a member of Sir Thomas Fairfax's Lifeguard who spoke out in favor of the soldiers arrested at Ware. On December 21, Ingram wrote to Fairfax to remind him of God's disavowal of the army delivered by "messengers to your Excellency," presumably Sedgwick, Saltmarsh, and Pinnell, warning that he "heard many complaine of those messages."[78] Clearly these censures gained attention and, as Gentles suggests, seemingly encouraged resistance within the army that forced its leadership into political reversal.[79]

73. Ian Gentles, *The New Model Army in England, Ireland, and Scotland, 1645–1653* (Oxford, 1992), 228–29; John Saltmarsh, *Wonderfull Predictions Declared in a Message as from the Lord, to His Excellency Sr. Thomas Fairfax and the Councell of His Army* (London, 1648), 3–5 (Wing S.507); Leo F. Solt, *Saints in Arms: Puritanism and Democracy in Cromwell's Army* (Stanford, Calif., 1959), 21.

74. Sedgwick, *Justice*, sig. A2v; John Lilburne, *The Peoples Prerogative and Priviledges* (London, 1649), 58 (Wing L.2153).

75. Henry Pinnell, *A Word of Prophesy* ([London], 1649), 4–5 (Wing P.2280); Solt, *Saints in Arms*, 21–22. Later, Sedgwick recalled Saltmarsh's sermon ("*Depart from the tents of these unrighteous men*," referring to Moses's separation of the people following Korah's rebellion in Numbers 16:26) and Pinnell's "admonition" (Sedgwick, *Justice*, sig. A2v). Here he also referenced his own sermon "upon that Text. Overturne, overturne, overturne," suggesting he was preaching from Ezekiel 21:27 on the upending of worldly government. Nigel Smith suggests this was later consciously referenced by Coppe; *Perfection Proclaimed*, 333.

76. Pinnell, *A Word*, 5.

77. Robert Bacon, *The Labyrinth the Kingdom's In* (London, 1649), 18 (Wing B.369); Robert Bacon, *A Taste of the Spirit of God* (London, 1652), 34–35 (Wing B.371); Laurence, *Parliamentary Army Chaplains*, 94.

78. *Clarke Papers*, ed. Firth, 2:247–48; J. Mark Heumann, "Fairfax and the Lifeguard's Colors," *Albion* 26 (1994): 443–60 at 447–50; Austin Woolrych, *Soldiers and Statesmen: The General Council of the Army and Its Debates 1647–1648* (Oxford, 1987), 296–99.

79. Gentles, *New Model Army*, 228–29.

Sedgwick appeared emboldened, and his prophetic moment intensified throughout 1648. In August, with the king imprisoned and Parliament and the army grappling over the direction of political settlement, Sedgwick published *The Leaves of the Tree of Life*. Reading the civil wars through Revelation 22:2, Sedgwick intended to identify and remedy the nation's divisions, claiming they began with religious failings and mistrust of God's plans. Both sides shouldered the blame, stoking division and fear by pursuing their own interests. While participants followed the "particular Idols" of king *or* Parliament, Sedgwick argued, peace could only be achieved by king *and* Parliament. Enmity and accusation needed to give way to negotiations based on sympathy and forgiveness.[80] To this end, Sedgwick offered seven "Leaves of the Tree of Life": peace; political settlement; national (royal) honor; "beautifull Uniformity" in religion; liberty (albeit under authority as "children, not . . . slaves"); realignment of Crown and Parliament; and an Act of Oblivion and end of recrimination.[81] Practically speaking, these solutions were vague, but they centered upon reconciliation and restoration mediated by the unifying power of the Holy Spirit. Sedgwick proposed a "PERSONAL *TREATY*, wherein King and *Parliament* and all the people are together one person, one body, living in one Spirit." This vision of union peaked in the final chapter as Sedgwick echoed Paul's description of Christ's resurrection: all worldly and religious powers would draw into a "generall and near union" and reconciliation in God, who would become "*ALL IN ALL*."[82] So powerful was this message that, upon reading it, Ingram was supposedly "smotte dead by the power of GOD: and by the same power raised up againe."[83]

Underpinning this ideology of unity was a belief that the former hierarchy of king, Parliament, and people followed "the pattern of the highest and perfectest glory of God."[84] Indeed, thinking Charles I would welcome his message, Sedgwick reportedly traveled to the Isle of Wight to present the imprisoned king with the book and discuss "spiritual Concerns."[85] While the army's hostility toward monarchy grew, Sedgwick argued that, although civil war had purged corruption, it was part of a national process of death and resurrection that would restore purified hierarchy.[86] Despite supporting imprisoned Levellers and claiming to share their belief in popular sovereignty, Sedgwick criticized endeavors "to impose your *Democracy*, your *popular* Government upon the Kingdome." Instead, he argued that true equality was

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80. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 10–25, 29–30, 62–69. Thomason dates this as August 25 (Thomason E.460[40]).

81. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 108–13.

82. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 109–10, 120. Cf. 2 Cor. 15:28 (*AV*).

83. John Ingram, *A True Relation of the Powerfull Hand of God upon John Ingram* (London, 1648), sig. A2r (Wing S.2391A).

84. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 2–5.

85. Thomas Herbert, *Memoirs of the Two Last Years of the Reign of King Charles I* (London, 1813), 66–67.

86. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 6–9, 87–90.

found in "a perfect Levell: The People[,] the originall of the Parliament and King, by a free giving up themselves and . . . their estates to the Parliament and King, are in the King and Parliament, and fully pertake of the royalty and power of both, and are leveld with it."[87] Thus, his doctrine of godly unity elided debates over the monarchical or popular origins of sovereignty by implying that, if king and subject were "all in all," then sovereignty emerged not from one or the other but from their original unity and could thus be regained through reunion.[88]

The implications of this political theology peaked alongside tensions between army and Parliament toward the end of 1648, provoking a string of publications by Sedgwick in December.[89] In *Justice upon the Armie Remonstrance*, he reminded Fairfax of the warnings from God delivered by Saltmarsh, Pinnell, and himself in 1647. The *Army Remonstrance*, he claimed, demonstrated the grandees' ongoing disregard for God's declaration of "rich mercie to the King and his party" in *Leaves* and their vanity in "triumphing as the onely Princes in the earth . . . fit to sway the Scepter of *England*." Thus, Sedgwick came to "*powre contempt upon*" the army, criticizing its calls to abandon negotiation and try the king for treason. He denied that military defeat signaled God's providential intentions for political settlement at the king's expense. Instead, he outlined a pragmatic interpretation of providence in which God favored particular actors for particular purposes. Providential favor signaled fitness for a task rather than spiritual righteousness or superiority. Thus, the army's success in its destructive "worke" was not necessarily a mandate for its role in rebuilding.[90] In *Leaves*, Sedgwick had compared the army to Moses, leading the people from tyranny into the wilderness but unable to enter Canaan.[91] Now he went further, claiming that, by exceeding God's calling, the army had become worldly and self-serving: "*You eate up* King, Parliament and People, to satisfie your carnall love of safety," he insisted, leaving government a "headlesse monster" by abandoning former principles and conflating "your owne and the publique interest to be one." He called again for reconciliation through union in God and dissolution of the army, claiming a "birth-right" to live under a "great Monarch" and again arguing that peace would be achieved when God was "all in all," the king in people and the people in the king.[92]

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87. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 101.

88. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 45–47, 74.

89. These were, according to Thomason's notes, *Justice*, December 11 (Thomason E.475[34]); *The Spirituall Madman* ([London], 1648) (Wing S.2391), December 10 (Thomason E.477[9]); *Second View*, December 23 (Thomason E.477[20]); and *Mr. William Sedgwicks Letter to his Excellency Thomas Lord Fairfax* ([London], 1649) (Wing S.2387), December 28, 1648 (Thomason E.536[16]; 1649 is amended to 1648 on Thomason's copy). Sedgwick's *Spiritual Madman* is a truncated version of Sedgwick's *Leaves*, while the letter from Fairfax is extracted from Sedgwick's *Justice*.

90. Sedgwick, *Justice*, sigs. A2v–A3v, pp. 1–2, 18. On Sedgwick's attitudes toward the king, see Andrew Lacey, *The Cult of King Charles the Martyr* (Woodbridge, U.K., 2003), 45–47.

91. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 97–98.

92. Sedgwick, *Justice*, 5, 8–10, 17–18, 20–22, 44.

However, Sedgwick's intervention did not end there, and if his first foray was controversial, his *Second View of the Army Remonstrance* proved confounding. Less than a fortnight later, in a seeming volte-face, he spoke in favor of the army, offering a guide to justice and reform. Now echoing the army's position on providence, he argued that power had fallen from king and Parliament to the people and thus the army, which Sedgwick claimed was the perfect manifestation of popular sovereignty. Not "*representative*" or "*figurative*" like Parliament, it instead contained the "*substance*" of society. Thus, the army *was* the people, "not in a *grosse heape* . . . but in a *selected, choice way*." It was a cross section distilled by God into "one pure, excellent life," a vision of political unity at odds with Sedgwick's former emphasis on hierarchy. Now claiming that military rule was "*fittest for the present worke*," he called the army to secure power, not abandon it. Pride's Purge had been insufficient, he implied. It was not enough to "patch and bodge" Parliament; time had come to dissolve it altogether and for the army (and thus the people) to stand in "absolute . . . power."[93]

Sedgwick conceded that "I shall seem to contradict my selfe" yet argued that he examined the *Remonstrance*'s failings in order to illuminate its strengths and that he inflamed all sides to "highlight division." He claimed to adopt the role of the Old Testament prophets, especially Ezekiel, condemning and praising in the same breath as a means of purification.[94] Indeed, Sedgwick did not support the army unreservedly in *A Second View*. Although now more flattering, he maintained that former providential favor did not license the army's pursuit of self-interest but instead imparted responsibility for the public good. He suggested, as he had in *Leaves*, that the army was fixated on arrears rather than an apparently overwhelming debt to the people:

> we have given you life and being by our purses, prayers, persons,
> councels; tis our life, religion, estate, cause, bloud that runs in your
> veines, and therefore you owe to us your selves, life, strength, paines,
> labours . . . [in] repayment of the debt you owe to us.[95]

Furthermore, Sedgwick still saw military rule as transitional, guiding the kingdom "out of her distresse." Although religion "be laid waste," order and government "dissolved," and national honor and royalty "visibly lost," the army could "recover all these into light and health."[96] Despite proposing a different path, he still ultimately envisaged a reconstructed godly hierarchy rather than permanent representative government, and he continued to warn the army against pursuing its own ambition.

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93. Sedgwick, *Second View*, 4–13, 23.
94. Sedgwick, *Second View*, sig. [F2v].
95. Sedgwick, *Second View*, 16–18, 25. Cf. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 97–100.
96. Sedgwick, *Second View*, 24–25.

This all proved unsurprisingly controversial, placing him at odds with the army that he had formerly served. Responding to *Justice*, "Eleutherius Philodemius" rushed to justify resistance to the Crown, branding Sedgwick a "bitter and cruell enemy to the Army" and a "*false prophet*" to deluded followers.[97] Likewise, Thomas Collier, a fellow chaplain, insisted that temporal magistracy was subordinate to providence and that Sedgwick opposed God's work by vilifying those who fought against sin. Noting that a "great change appears in you," Collier accused Sedgwick of resembling a "Kings flatterer" angling for "the honour of a Bishoprick."[98] Perhaps Sedgwick's challenge felt particularly threatening because it came from within the army's ranks. For the army's opponents, on the other hand, Sedgwick proved a more ambiguous figure. In 1649, the author of *The Armies Remembrancer* framed their argument in contrast to Sedgwick's reputation. "I come not out against you," they assured the army, or "to pour contempt vpon you, as you know who, (*Sedg*) nor yet with Lilburnian language." Rather than a direct opponent, Sedgwick proved a useful rhetorical foil, simultaneously "*as sound in his judgement, as he was upon the day of Judgement*" and yet a "very *unlikely instrument*" of occasional wisdom against the army, thanks to his self-contradictory publications.[99]

However, not everyone responded negatively. *Justice* was quoted favorably alongside Lilburne in one 1649 broadside against the army, while in 1660, one "moderate Independent" suggested that Sedgwick's conciliatory stance "might have prevented those *woful confusions* and *revolutions*" yet to come.[100] Furthermore, Sedgwick was part of an active debate among religious radicals, noted by Mario Caricchio, over the significance of the army's ascendency to the plight of the New Jerusalem. Most, including William Erbery, Joshua Sprigge, and Robert Bacon, shared Sedgwick's concerns regarding the army's power, although there was some disparity in their visions for political settlement.[101] In a printed collection of radical letters connected to this community, one writer gratefully received "Mr. *Sedgewicks* book," adding: "I am not to tell you at present what I think of it; God will doe great things by

97. Eleutherius Philodemius, *The Armies Vindication* ([London], 1649), 1–2, 5 (Wing A.3718).

98. Thomas Collier, *Vindication of the Army Remonstrance* (London, 1649), sig. A2r–v, pp. 6–7, 10 (Wing C.5301).

99. Rr, *The Armies Remembrancer* (London, 1649), sig. A3r, pp. 4–5, 9 (Wing R.2166). Jason Peacey identifies this as part of the press "backlash" against the king's trial, enabled by Presbyterian licensers before they were ousted from office: Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda during the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Aldershot, U.K., 2004), 157–58.

100. *The Last Damnable Designe of Cromwell and Ireton* ([London, 1649]) (Wing L.480); Salem Philalathes, *The Moderate Independent Proposing a Word in Season to the Gathered Churches* (London, 1660), 15–17 (Wing M.2325).

101. Mario Caricchio, *Religione, politica e commercio di libri nella rivoluzione inglese: Gli autori di Giles Calvert 1645–1653* (Genoa, 2003), 135–42, 146; Caricchio, "*News from the New Jerusalem*: Giles Calvert and the Radical Experience," in *Radicalism in Context*, ed. Hessayon and Finnegan, 70–72. Tellingly, Bacon also argued for peace through unity; *Labyrinth*, 18.

himself: the Army and all that they settle, must be destroyed without hands."[102] Thus, Sedgwick's ideas were circulated and discussed within this radical network. Indeed, "Philodemius" hoped God would "open their eyes, whom you have bewitched," concerned that Sedgwick's arguments were gaining a following.[103]

This radical context is key to understanding Sedgwick's political prophecies in 1648. For all their vacillations, his arguments were underpinned by a doctrine of apocalyptic unity within God. In his *Second View*, Sedgwick continued to urge for a national "perfect union and communion" within an "*everlasting Kingdome for the Saints*."[104] Rather than trying to reconcile Sedgwick's disparate constitutional stances into a single political vision, we can better understand his self-contradictory arguments as part of a desire for peace and stability that was informed by his developing pantheist millenarianism, which had come a long way from his doomsday prophecy. For Sedgwick, the political was played out along the pathways of a spiritual journey, both personal and national. In *Justice*, he addressed the godly soldiery affectionately but with a new sense of separation from his old comrades. He was a fellow traveler who understood "the utmost of the religion you walke in, and have beene exercisd in it with as much exactnesse, faithfulnesse, power and comfort as any of you," but who had since come to a new understanding.[105] If his religious and political solutions emerged from an ongoing journey of revelation, then the key is to examine this spiritual path and the distance Sedgwick traveled.

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By 1649, Sedgwick was entrenched within the sectarian underbelly of puritanism. Even after his death, Robert Rich numbered him among "certain Friends to the Bridegroom," a dream team of midcentury radical puritans and their influences.[106] He also knew and financially supported the Muggletonian cofounder John Reeve, supplying him with a "quarterly necessity" from 1649 until at least 1654, despite doctrinal disagreements.[107] Furthermore, most of Sedgwick's works in 1648 and 1649, when he was most active in print, were printed by Giles Calvert, the infamous peddler of "soul-poysons" and nexus of London sectarian networks.[108] These ongoing connections developed from Sedgwick's Seekerism. Having rejected all outward ordinances while awaiting the apostolic revival of a true church, he gravitated toward voluntary

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102. S. P. D., *News from the New-Jerusalem* (London, 1649), 88–89 (Wing D.86). On this collection, see Caricchio, "*News from the New Jerusalem.*"

103. Philodemius, *Armies Vindication*, 5.

104. Sedgwick, *Second View*, 17, 33.

105. Sedgwick, *Justice*, 12.

106. Robert Rich, *Love without Dissimulation* ([London], [1667?]), 6–7 (Wing R.1361).

107. John Reeve, *Sacred Remains*, 3rd ed. (London, 1856), 5.

108. Richard Baxter, *The Worcester-Shire Petition to the Parliament for the Ministry of England Defended* (London, 1653), 39 (Wing B.1455); Claxton, *Lost Sheep*, 24–25; Caricchio, *Religione*; Caricchio, "*News from the New Jerusalem.*"

communal worship, much as he had at Farnham, although the communities them-selves were markedly different. This involvement in underground networks of radical puritanism likely began in Ely, and by the end of the 1640s, he was implicated in one group that included some of the period's most notorious religious figures.

Based on written correspondence—some of which survives from around 1649 and 1650 in Sir William Clarke's papers, thanks to apparent army surveillance—this group included familiar names like Abiezer Coppe, Joseph Salmon, and Andrew Wyke, as well as Edward Walford, William Rawlinson, "Haine" and "JH" (perhaps the same), "WC," "Brush," "Miller," and "Secke," and others yet unidentified.[109] Thomas Webbe, labeled as an early Ranter by Thomas Edwards, was also addressed in a very similar letter from Salmon printed by Edward Stokes.[110] Coppe appears at the group's heart. One letter is attributed to him, while another asked Rawlinson to go to "the rest [and] gather them uppe in one Bond of Love & lay them together with mee in Copp's bosome where is our true & p[er]fect Center."[111] Indeed, this network is almost certainly some iteration of "*My one flesh*," a group of supposed Ranters connected to Coppe of which Laurence Clarkson claimed membership around 1649–50. A number of names in Clarkson's account also occur in this correspondence, including Master Brush, who introduced him to the others.[112] While many individuals involved are familiar, only recently have historians begun to uncover their connections and rela-tionship to the sect formerly known as the Ranters. Notably, Ariel Hessayon has emphasized the importance of tracing such networks to understanding civil war radicalism, and he has begun to flesh out this group's connections both internally and to a wider radical community.[113] Furthermore, recent research shows that, like

109. Worcester College, Oxford [hereafter Worc. Coll.], MS Clarke 18, fols. 1r–56v. These letters seem to have been intercepted on two fronts: many are either to or from Walford, a messenger for the Long Parliament and resident in the gatehouse of Worcester House on the Strand, suggesting that he was either spying on the group or, perhaps more likely, under surveil-lance himself. Others were apparently intercepted by Captain Robert Beake, the governor of Coventry in 1650, who was involved in the detention of Coppe, Wyke, and Salmon. Accord-ing to Salmon, Beake showed him intercepted letters in his possession, and although what Beake did with them is unclear, he was in communication with Clarke about these prisoners and could conceivably have passed on their letters: *Journal of the House of Commons*, 4:707, 6:367–68; TNA, SP 46/80, fol. 260r–v; Joseph Salmon, *Heights in Depths and Depths in Heights* (London, 1651), sigs. [A5v–A6r] (Wing S.4150); HMC, *Leyborne-Popham*, 57. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Ariel Hessayon for pointing me in the direction of Clarke's papers in the earliest stages of this project.
110. *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 12–13, 199.
111. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 23v; *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 108.
112. Claxton, *Lost Sheep*, 24–25; Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 23v.
113. Hessayon, "Abiezer Coppe and the Ranters," in *The Oxford Handbook of Literature and the English Revolution*, ed. Laura Lunger Knoppers (Oxford, 2012), 346–74. See also Caric-chio, "*News from the New Jerusalem*," 80–81; *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 8–20. By tracing such networks, these historians offer a progression from the earlier debate over the Ranters' very existence. This debate was sparked by J. C. Davis's suggestion that historians—misled by sensa-tional and hostile printed accounts—had overemphasized the extent to which those individuals

Sedgwick, a number came to this community after progressing through Seeker, Anabaptist, and/or antinomian positions that spurned various church ordinances, suggesting that this was part of an ongoing rejection of the puritan mainstream.[114]

Ranter or not, this network formed a loosely defined sectarian grouping. The letters demonstrate regular interaction between individuals bound together by a set of common beliefs expressed in uniform language. Their most notable doctrine was an aggressive perfectionism based on a pantheistic belief in oneness with and in God, inculcating a sense of divine unity that had precedent in earlier antinomian and familist communities.[115] Writing to Haine, Walford declared that "wee were ascended or God come downe dwelling in our Flesh," while another claimed that "Heaven is come downe & lives in flesh."[116] This unity with God involved a radical version of the introspection common in puritan conversion narratives. Alluding to the effort involved, Walford introduced a metaphor of pregnancy and prolonged labor. Haine had completed this process, and Walford rejoiced that "whilest the Lord is a trevayling to be delivered in others hee is att rest in you." Elsewhere, Sedgwick used this to warn against the haste of "an untimely birth," emphasizing the importance of the process of conversion as much as the outcome.[117]

Extending this metaphor, birth was followed by inculcation through an intense father/son relationship and period of maturation. "Thou begottest this Letter by giving of mee my proper name, & calling of mee Father . . . soe I am," Walford told "WC," "& you are the first begotten." Integration into this network was voluntary, with the onus placed on the supplicant, while even the process of conversion could take place over distance in writing. The father guided the "begotten" through their development, with the ultimate promise of inheritance. "I will deliver uppe

typically identified as Ranters really cohered into a recognizable sect or movement. See Davis, *Fear, Myth and History*, 124–25, 135–37; Hill, *World Turned Upside Down*, chap. 3; A. L. Morton, *The World of the Ranters: Religious Radicalism in the English Revolution* (London, 1970); J. C. Davis, "Fear, Myth, and Furore: Reappraising the 'Ranters,' " *Past and Present*, no. 129 (1990): 79–103; J. F. McGregor, Bernard Capp, Nigel Smith, and B. J. Gibbons, "Fear, Myth, and Furore: Reappraising the 'Ranters,'" *Past and Present*, no. 140 (1993): 155–94; and J. C. Davis, "Fear, Myth, and Furore: Reappraising the 'Ranters': Reply," *Past and Present*, no. 140 (1993): 194–210.

114. On Coppe, Salmon, and Clarkson, see Ariel Hessayon, "The Making of Abiezer Coppe," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 62 (2011): 38–58; Hughes, *Gangraena*, 198–99; Claxton, *Lost Sheep*, 19–26; and *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 10–11. Likewise, Wyke was imprisoned for Anabaptism in 1645 (suggestively, under Walford's custody): British Library, Add. MS 15669, fol. 68v.

115. Como, *Blown by the Spirit*, 38–39, 303–5, 389; Christopher Marsh, *The Family of Love in English Society, 1550–1630* (Cambridge, 1994), 20, 252.

116. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fols. 14v, 33v. This doctrine of God's indwelling had precedent in Erbery's work: Erbery, *Nor Truth, nor Errour*, 4–5, 9–10.

117. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fols. 14v, 18r. On conversion narratives and election, see Seaver, *Wallington's World*, chap. 2; Kathleen Lynch, *Protestant Autobiography in the Seventeenth-Century Anglophone World* (Oxford, 2012), esp. chap. 3; and Smith, *Perfection Proclaimed*, chap. 1.

my Kingedome into your Hands," Walford continued, "and you shall bee Father."[118] Indeed, the supplicant's journey progressed from childhood into their own father-hood, a process spanning multiple generations of adherents. Walford's own father was William Sedgwick, suggesting that the latter was embedded enough in the group to have brought others into the fold; they in turn acted as spiritual fathers.

Fraught with violent imagery, two letters from Sedgwick to spiritual children (one to Walford, another unaddressed) illuminate this process of initiation, conver-sion, and maturation toward complete unity in God. In the first, Sedgwick invoked a metaphor of conquest: his son wished to "have the Kingdome by Force," placing "violent hands upon my heart." Not simply a struggle for supremacy, this was a neces-sary and even enjoyable stage of conversion. Sedgwick approved of the "unnaturall violent love" driving the son to "kill the Father" and inherit his Kingdom, even con-fessing, "I am guilty of the same for I must kill my Sonne that I may enjoy my Sonne." Although at odds with Walford's fatherly love to "WC," violence was one method of delivering God within a disciple. This spiritual violence extended to metaphors of consumption. For instance, Sedgwick offered a pantheistic interpretation of the sac-rament: "Thou hast lived upon my flesh and bloud all thy dayes feast & drinke freely upon it & give mee leave to tast[e] a litle of thine[,] by this wee incorporate & become one Flesh & bloud." Violence offered spiritual nourishment and unity through com-munion in and of one another. Similarly, responding to *Leaves*, John Ingram declared that God "cannot shew thee his face of love until he hath slaine thee . . . been within thee . . . and eaten up thy flesh there."[119] It was through this language of violence that oneness with God was explored, developed, and maintained.

This violent relationship constituted a passage toward complete unity with God that gave rise to radical claims of internalized divinity. Opening his let-ter as though discussing temporal inheritance, Sedgwick dryly informed Walford that "till thou art 21 thou cans't nott inheritt." Yet as it progressed, this seemingly unexceptional discussion shifted into the language of oneness in God, culminating in an incontrovertible claim to godhood: "Ile Revive thy Memory, Thou wer't with mee in the beginning before the world was, there I possessed thee: . . . and soe I shall eate uppe thee, and then thou shalt forgett these present Temporarye things and Remem-ber Eternall thinges from the Beginning." Through this radical self-identification as the literal Father of the Trinity with memories of the beginning of time, Sedg-wick claimed God's power, including the ability to "Command Sun Moone & starres & tyme it self."[120] Speaking at the trial of James Naylor, Major-General Whalley later recalled how Sedgwick declared that "he was God; and divers horrid things" in front of Cromwell and Henry Ireton.[121] Coppe also perceived himself as omnipotent,

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118. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 20v.
119. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fols. 17v–19v; Ingram, *A True Relation*, 1.
120. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fols. 55v–56r, 19r.
121. *Diary of Thomas Burton*, ed. John Towill Rutt, 4 vols. (London, 1828), 1:103–4.

"heere & there and everywhere."[122] Rather than simply proclaiming an inner light or particular revelation, Sedgwick and Coppe reached for extreme conclusions, professing a complete unity with God. Thus, they believed themselves to possess even his deepest memories, knowledge, and power, and the ability to impart these to others—in the role of the son—as part of the process of initiation or conversion.

From this inner presence of God, some of these radicals reached their infamous antinomian stance, the individual rendered incorruptible and above sin by divine inhabitation. As one correspondent explained: "Heaven is come downe & lives in flesh, yet noe flesh is able to defile itt for itt is the Lord."[123] Another member claimed that God lived in him and "cannott bee troubled for hee is greater than to bee offended, and being sweetnesse nothing can bee bitter to him . . . behold nothing can defile that which was never uncleane."[124] Although there is no evidence that Sedgwick developed a practical antinomianism, he engaged in its theological and rhetorical strains. He called for bawdy indulgence in the "*new wine of the kingdome*, till you are drunk out of your own *wits* into the Princely Spirit of God" and prophesied that "you mad lads shall SWEARE . . . the Spirit filling every oath with truth: you shall curse your enemy the Devil with all plagues to the pit of hell, and so dam him and ram him in." Thus, he invoked "Ranter" tropes of the mad "crew" or "lads" and of "ramming and damming" as well as Coppe and Clarkson's enthusiasm for drinking and swearing.[125]

This doctrine seemingly did lead others to extreme forms of practical antinomianism, including sexual promiscuity. One correspondent hoped that "all the good Wives att Weymouth remember their loves unto mee, and that I lodged with them one by one." Commenting on the wife-sharing arrangements of two other members, he asked, "when you will invite my W[ife] to such a kindenesse," commenting that his age and infirmity left her no opportunity to "doe her drudgery."[126] Of course, such language was potentially part of the group's allegorical spiritual exuberance, rather than evidence of actual practices. This might go some way to explaining the origins of the Ranter reputation for sexual openness: either it was a reality, or contemporaries mistook their allegorical carnal mysticism for descriptions of practice, just as their graphic metaphors of consumption might explain rumors of strange eating rituals and excessive drinking.[127] In a sense, it seems the practical/metaphorical distinction was relatively unimportant, as antinomianism provided a shared yet exclusive language, whether or not it was enacted.

122. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 24r.
123. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 33v.
124. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 35v.
125. Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 117–18; Hessayon, "Abiezer Coppe and the Ranters," 363, 368; *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 5–6, 14–15, 143.
126. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 34v.
127. On Ranters and eating, see *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 21–22.

Common identity was also forged through a "pose . . . of a divinely instituted madness," to borrow Nigel Smith's phrase, often building on both Pauline and Erasmian examples.[128] While *The Spirituall Madman* played upon Sedgwick's popular reputation following his doomsday prophecy, it also invoked a radical language of insanity and divine revelation.[129] As McDowell explains, questions of rationality figured heavily in orthodox–radical debates among puritans regarding direct revelation and prophecy.[130] Sedgwick rejected the role of reason in church government as early as 1643 and around 1648 preached that God's "dispensations are confusions to . . . the reason and wisdome of men: but they are the wisdome and judgement of God."[131] Walford later amplified this rhetoric, writing that "the Eternall God is a full Condic[i]on & is then Compleat when Men Judge him weake & foolish."[132] Indeed, one correspondent offered this as justification for antinomianism, claiming that God could not be affronted by sin because his "thoughts are nott our thoughts nor his wayes our wayes for if the Lord should looke downe & behold men & women naked & bee troubled then his thoughts must bee as our thoughts are."[133] Claims to divine wisdom through the rejection of human wisdom, inspired by Paul's assertion that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men" (1 Corinthians 1:25), were also used by Salmon, Erbery, Pinnell, and Coppe.[134] Such rhetoric offered a vital resource to this radical network. As Peter Lake and Michael Questier argue, although religious conflict typically concerned the right to define "orthodoxy," the language of conformity only stretched so far.[135] Those operating beyond its plausible extremities needed to develop alternative rhetorical strategies. While Sedgwick held a primitivist belief in a forthcoming "*true orthodox*" Church, he recognized that, by rejecting all existing ordinances, he placed himself beyond contemporary conceptions of orthodoxy and,

128. Smith, *Perfection Proclaimed*, 56–57; *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 4. See also Hill, *World Turned Upside Down*, chap. 13; Nicholas McDowell, "Decorum Personae: *The World Turned Upside Down* and the Praise of Folly," *Prose Studies* 36 (2014): 219–30; Ariel Hessayon, "*Gold Tried in the Fire*": *The Prophet TheaurauJohn Tany and the English Revolution* (Aldershot, U.K., 2007), 390–91; McDowell, *English Radical Imagination*, 38–42; and Katharine Hodgkin, *Madness in Seventeenth-Century Autobiography* (Basingstoke, U.K., 2007), 87–95.

129. Sedgwick, *Madman*.

130. McDowell, *English Radical Imagination*, 38–42.

131. Sedgwick, *Scripture*, 27; Sedgwick, *Flashes*, 21.

132. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 14v.

133. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 35v.

134. Salmon, *Heights in Depths*, 18–20; William Erbery, *The Mad Mans Plea* (London, 1653) (Wing E.3230); *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 54, 84; Pinnell, *A Word*, sig. A8v; McDowell, "Decorum Personae," 224–27. See also *A Justification of the Mad Crew* ([London], 1650) (Wing J.1261).

135. Peter Lake and Michael C. Questier, "Introduction," in *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560–1660*, ed. Lake and Questier (Woodbridge, U.K., 2000), xix–xx; Lake, *Boxmaker's Revenge*, 408.

in the meantime, he and others turned to an alternative language of madness to legit-imize this marginal position.[136]

Related to this anticipation of a new church ordinance was an intensified vision of the apocalypse and a New Jerusalem. This became tied up with God's inhab-itation of their flesh, a time of imprisonment in "bonds," where he "must remayne until hee comes to full strength in Israell."[137] Walford explained that "God will nott always live in flesh for love is too great to stay longe there." At the "appointed time" he would "depart," heralding the apocalypse.[138] Referencing Revelation, Walford fore-saw "twoe great daies a Coming": "the Marriage day" and "the supper of the Lord." During these days "wee shalbe Eaten upp & devoured that there may bee found in the Earth none but the Lord . . . these 2 daies wilbe our undoing & our undoing wilbe our making."[139] If conversion and spiritual development through consumption was a common motif, then being devoured by God was the ultimate apocalyptic expression of this, leading to complete and permanent unity in him. After this consumption, all would be one with the Lord, Walford and others argued, leaving "none but the Lord to remaine both in heaven & Earth who is I am."[140] The prevalence of this belief was echoed by Erbery, who described how Sedgwick, Joshua Sprigge, and Peter Sterry had achieved a fourth "step" of revelation, understanding that God, "captive in our flesh," would free himself and "be all in all, yet man shall be all in God."[141] Likewise, in 1648 Sedgwick had repeatedly prophesied that God would become "all in all," an extension of his long-standing concern with millenarian unity and the fate of the New Jerusa-lem that gained new significance within this radical network and underpinned his political interventions.[142]

Furthermore, this sense of spiritual unity offered a surrogate for physical proximity and affection. One correspondent greeted Rawlinson as one "with whome I now am, though I am not, in whome I live & love forever." Writing to Walford, "JH" asked for forgiveness, claiming that, although "I have omitted to salute you hitherto in the externall forme of salutations, yet have I embraced you in my heart & kissed you with my eternall kisses, & meeting you in the bosome of our Father," echoing the group laid up together "in Copp's bosome."[143] In *A Second Fiery Flying Roule*, Coppe revealingly described how "Wil.Sedgewick [in me] bowed to that poor deformed ragged wretch, that he might inrich him, in impoverishing himself," suggesting that

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136. Sedgwick, *Madman*, 2, 9.

137. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fols. 20v–21r, 31r–v.

138. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 38r; Sedgwick, *Madman*, 4.

139. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fol. 6r.

140. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fols. 15r, 31r–v.

141. William Erbery, *The Grand Oppressor* (London, 1652), 32 (Wing E.3226).

142. Sedgwick, *Justice*, 10; Sedgwick, *Leaves*, 109; Sedgwick, *Flashes*, 76, 185, 281. Such a transition supports Guibbory's suggestion that these radicals untethered the legacy of Israel from narratives of national election, recasting it in individualistic and yet potentially universal terms; *Christian Identity*, 215–19.

143. Worc. Coll., MS Clarke 18, fols. 19v, 23r–v.

they shared this sense of divine unity.[144] Admittedly, Sedgwick never gained such widespread notoriety or suffered such serious punishments as others within this group, perhaps in part because he retreated from print between 1649 and 1656. Nonetheless, his numerous personal connections, his commitment to the shared doctrine of divine unity, and his role in the conversion of at least one other member reveal his significance within this radical milieu.

Much like Como's antinomians, this group (Ranters? My One Flesh?) formed its own identity through reaction against, evolution from, and appropriation of a whole range of puritan beliefs and practices. Indeed, this grouping likely owed its origins to the early seventeenth-century dynamics explicated by Como. The trajectories of Coppe, Salmon, Wyke, Clarkson, and Sedgwick through various sectarian and spiritual positions in the early 1640s suggest that they each arrived at this aggressively separatist, antiformalist, and perfectionist position via forays into a preexisting antinomian milieu.[145] They organized in ways that were identifiable within puritanism yet imbued them with a distinct mysticism indebted to the antinomian underground. The intense conversion narratives, rejection of worldliness, and carefully fostered religious community of "My One Flesh" would have been familiar to Sedgwick, who was well versed in voluntary meetings and private worship. Furthermore, this mystical millenarian pantheism extended from his ambition to establish a New Jerusalem within the hearts of believers in preparation for the coming Judgment. None of Sedgwick's earlier positions led inevitably or even directly to his later radicalism, and yet these later developments can only be fully understood with this broader puritan context. Sedgwick traveled through a range of positions within puritanism to reach this radical extremity. His beliefs were far from static, but there was a consistency and logic to their development that continued even after this radical peak and that speak to a coherent religious journey.

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By June 1654, Sedgwick had retreated somewhat from his former views. Although refusing to "wholly condemn my former speaking," in a letter to John Reeve he admitted to seeing "an evil spirit which got into it." He urged Reeve to avoid falling into the same "pride of spirit" involved in claiming "an infallible knowledge of divine mysteries." In 1661, he hoped others would be "warned by my experience," offering "the fruit of my long travels, and dangerous encounters with this enemy: With whom I have endured a long and tedious warfare." Sedgwick's "lofty conceits of an essential oneness with God" (as Reeve described them) gave way to a "new ministry." By 1654 he had returned to orthodox emphasis on doctrine derived solely from scripture, claiming to "tremble at the word, lest we fall under the curse for adding to and taking

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144. *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 100. Brackets in original.
145. Como, *Blown by the Spirit*, 28–30, 390–91.

from" it.[146] Two years later he spoke affectionately of the "*honest old Puritan-party*" for its sobriety, resilience, "meekness," and reliance on prayer, qualities he now considered commendable.[147]

Sedgwick's retreat was not noticed only by sectarians. During James Nayler's trial in December 1656, Major-General Packer recalled Sedgwick as "a far more horrid blasphemer . . . yet he is reclaimed, and become a very useful instrument in the Church," while Whalley agreed that he had been "brought home."[148] Indeed, that same year Sedgwick emerged from his retirement from "publick affairs" to defend Cromwell against a Fifth Monarchist petition, arguing that, despite its faults, the Protectorate offered a bulwark against renewed war.[149] Furthermore, when Parliament allowed Nayler a keeper and minister during his sickness in prison in 1657, the governors of Bridewell appointed Sedgwick to the latter role, to "confirr with [Nayler] according to the said order of Parliam[en]t." Interestingly, Cromwell had directly recommended this provision and wished to select a minister himself, leading Parliament to debate whether he should intervene so directly. How this debate resolved and who actually selected Sedgwick is unclear, although the Bridewell records suggest Sedgwick's appointment was perhaps preordained, as, in contrast to the keeper's appointment, there was little discussion about the minister's.[150] His latest endeavor, it seems, was to convince radical blasphemers to follow his newly mellowed example.

Yet despite this renewed affiliation with mainstream puritanism, Sedgwick retained ties with old radical friends. From around 1649—the height of his radical turn—until at least 1654, he shared the benefit of his wealth with Reeve, who candidly informed him that the rich were judged by charity, not ministry.[151] He also maintained a friendly, if argumentative, relationship with the Quaker Isaac Pennington, reflected in Pennington's later correspondence with Sprigge and Sedgwick's son.[152] Earlier, Sedgwick had signed a petition on behalf of Nayler alongside the likes of Giles Calvert, Robert Bacon, and Sprigge, author of the preface to Sedgwick's *Some Flashes of Lightnings*. Indeed, he maintained lifelong friendships with some; on his death he

146. Reeve, *Remains*, 10–12, 24, 31–32; Sedgwick, *Upon a Book*, 224, 238.

147. [William Sedgwick], *Animadversions upon a Letter and Paper, First Sent to His Highness by Certain Gentlemen and Others in Wales* (London, 1656), 49–51, 57–58 (Wing S.2383).

148. *Diary of Thomas Burton*, ed. Rutt, 1:101, 103–4.

149. [Sedgwick], *Upon a Letter*, sig. A2r.

150. Bethlem Museum of the Mind, MS BCB-09, p. 815, http://archives .museumofthemind.org.uk/BCB.htm, image 870; *Diary of Thomas Burton*, ed. Rutt, 2:131–33; *Journal of the House of Commons*, 7:540. On Nayler in Bridewell, see [E. G. O'Donoghue and Norman Penney], "Bridewell Hospital and James Nayler," *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* 23 (1926): 25–31, 72–76.

151. Reeve, *Remains*, 5, 37. Indeed, in 1649 Coppe identified what Smith describes as an "altruistic spirit" in Sedgwick: *Ranter Writings*, ed. Smith, 100; Smith, *Perfection Proclaimed*, 55, 233.

152. Friends' House Library, London, MS Vol. 342 (John Pennington MSS, Vol. 2), 197, 207–9.

left £100 for "charitable uses" to his "Loving Freind" Sprigge and £20 to his "Freind" Bacon.[153] Although we know little of Sedgwick's relationship with Bacon, the fact that it existed at all is revealing. When Robert Rich, a former disciple of Nayler, remembered Sedgwick in his roll call of radicals in 1666, he was writing with instructions to disperse £30 each to various "churches" in London following the Great Fire. Among the usual denominations, Rich also included the "Church of the First-Born, who worship God in Spirit, and have their Conversations in Heaven." This money was offered to his "old Acquaintance[s]": William Rawlinson (a member of the "My One Flesh" network), William Blackborrow, and Sedgwick's friend Bacon.[154]

The details of the Church of the First-Born are vague, but it had clear connections to Sedgwick's radical milieu around 1649. Geoffrey Nuttall suggests that it was unlikely a formal organization, and Rich's account implies a loose community that promoted universalist toleration through the language of unity in God. Tellingly, Quaker Gerard Roberts described them as "*Out-casts*" from the Quakers, who actually "in plainness are Ranters." Rich's donation was intended for a communal dinner or supper, drawing together a dispersed group of compatriots to be "born again into the new Life of Love" and "with one heart and soul . . . meet and break bread in the singleness of their hearts, and behold my Spirit is with you from the beginning to the end." As noted in the 1680 edition of Rich's letters, Bacon organized this meeting in 1668. Another note included in this edition regretfully declined the invitation but anticipated the day when "the Lord will destroy the Covering cast over all flesh, into which we enter after the Consummation of all Types."[155] Both the personnel involved and the apocalyptic language of unity in God suggest a connection between the Church of the First-Born and the radical communities surrounding "My One Flesh." Furthermore, Sedgwick was remembered as a part of this community. Rich not only counted Sedgwick among respected sectarian figures but also included him alongside authors like Saltmarsh, Erbery, and Nayler, whose writings sustained his ongoing spiritual reflection.[156] These networks persevered in some form and, judging

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153. TNA, SP 18/131, fols. 104r–5r; Sedgwick, *Flashes*, sigs. A3r–[A6v]; TNA, PROB 11/313/277.

154. Robert Rich, *Love without Dissimulation* ([London, 1667?]), 1–6 (Wing R.1361).

155. Rich, *Love without Dissimulation*, 5–6; Robert Rich, *The Epistles of Mr. Robert Rich to the Seven Churches* (London, 1680), sigs. a2v–br, pp. 105–16 (Wing R.1356); Gerard Roberts, *Impudency and Ranterism Rebuked* ([London], 1670), 3 (Wing R.1597). On the "Church of the First-Born," see Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "The Last of James Nayler: Robert Rich and the Church of the First-Born," *The Friends' Quarterly* 23 (1985): 527–34; T. A. Birrell, "English Catholic Mystics in Non-Catholic Circles—I," *The Downside Review* 94 (1976): 60–81 at 66–69; Leo Damrosch, *The Sorrows of the Quaker Jesus: James Nayler and the Puritan Crackdown on the Free Spirit* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), 223–25, 228–29, 240–44, 267–69; and Nigel Smith, "Hidden Things Brought to Light: Enthusiasm and Quaker Discourse," in *The Emergence of Quaker Writing: Dissenting Literature in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. Thomas Corns and David Lowenstein (London, 1995), 57–69.

156. Rich, *Epistles*, 107; Rich, *Love without Dissimulation*, 5–6.

by his ongoing relationships, Sedgwick saw little contradiction in returning to more orthodox godliness while retaining connections with puritanism's more extreme elements.

Furthermore, Sedgwick demonstrated intellectual as well as personal ties with his radical past. Arguing for clemency in the regicide trials in 1660, he offered an analysis of the civil wars consistent with his 1648 prophecies: caused by religious division, war had purified corrupt royalism but in turn corrupted puritan and parliamentarian leaders. Once again, he argued for the exigent nature of providence, claiming that the war was won by gifts of prayer, preaching, and prophecy that "dissipated" after serving their purpose. Thus, Sedgwick welcomed the Restoration as a return to episcopal church, godly magistracy, and social hierarchy.[157] Rejecting the exclusivity of puritanism, he called for a wide-ranging liberty of conscience for "all forms" in order to draw the good from each into a broadly comprehensive Church of England that would be a tool for pursuing religious unity.[158] Although he yet again promoted different means to achieve his goals, his aim of reconciliation through social hierarchy and godly union remained the same. Indeed, Sedgwick insisted that the substance of his message remained intact from his prophetic spirit in 1648. He claimed that his arguments in 1660 were the "same things" that he wrote twelve years previously and that "they have continued in the inward frame of my mind, through many and sore spiritual trials, ever since, without any change."[159] Although his return to the Church of England appeared at odds with his former radicalism (a perception Sedgwick acknowledged and tried to address), this shift was actually enabled by the experimental and extreme antiformalism of his "high mystical" period. Believing that God was not to be found in any single form, Sedgwick found it quite possible to accept an established church so long as it could encompass multiple forms.[160]

This was not the "experience of defeat" identified by Christopher Hill. Sedgwick's mentality resists division into pre- and post-Restoration. Instead, 1648 was a far greater watershed, leading him consistently to emphasize peace, reconciliation, and unity. He had long abhorred "the filth and deceit of war," and a fear of renewed hostilities helps explain his journey from opposing to cautiously supporting the army in 1648, to defending the Protectorate in 1654, to welcoming the Restoration

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157. [William Sedgwick], *Inquisition for the Blood of Our Late Soveraign* (London, 1660), 30–35, 71, 131–35 (Wing I.223A).

158. Sedgwick, *Upon a Book*, 83, 155–56, 190–92, 199–209; [Sedgwick], *Inquisition*, 23–28, 82–85.

159. Sedgwick, *Upon a Book*, 9–10, 46–47.

160. Compare J. G. A. Pocock's argument that Sedgwick "employed the antinomian scepticism of all claims to authority as a paradoxical justification of submission to whatever authority exists": Pocock, "Authority and Property: The Question of Liberal Origins," in *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Pocock (Cambridge, 1985), 54. On antiformalism as a kind of spectrum, see Davis, "Against Formality."

in 1660.[161] Perhaps he was defined less by the experience of defeat than the trauma of victory. His concern with spiritual reconciliation and unity as a means of political settlement persisted; as late as 1661 he insisted that "common liberty" could only be achieved through a collective return to God.[162] This led to seemingly self-contradictory support of whichever path he believed led to stability. Rather than predisposing Sedgwick toward any particular political expectations, puritanism instead proved flexible. It both adapted to and conditioned Sedgwick's experiences and motivations, allowing him to explore potential solutions to the political problems he perceived within a broad and malleable religious framework.

Indeed, for all its extremities, Sedgwick's career was marked by surprising internal consistencies. His spirituality remained coherent, subject to developments that were lucid even if they sometimes manifested in shocking ways. From his origins as a typical godly minister, Sedgwick gradually adapted and augmented many core aspects of puritan thought and practice even as he grew increasingly antagonistic toward mainstream godly culture. His emphasis on the New Jerusalem, for instance, developed from a desire to see a new church delivered within God's people in England, to a rejection of all postapostolic dispensations, and eventually to a belief in complete divine unity that, along the way, provided him a model for understanding how a divided nation might find peaceful settlement. Likewise, his apocalyptic belief in Christ's reign and the purification of the world developed into an expectation of consumption by God. Similarly, the voluntary meetings and extraparochial activities at Farnham foreshadowed audacious experiments in radical religious communities held together by a common language of self-exclusion from orthodoxy. Focus on the word of God paved the way for a fierce primitivism, and his emphasis on heavenly wisdom over human reason became a claim to divine knowledge through self-professed madness. Sedgwick was a radical puritan insofar as his beliefs and practices radicalized the godly conventions he reacted against, rather than emerging separately.

This is not to say that Sedgwick would not have perceived a binary opposition of "radical" and "mainstream" puritanism. He spoke of his own life in polemic terms of "Courtier" versus "Fanatick," although he claimed to take an unpopular mediating position between the two: "Tis but just I should receive both your neglects into me, standing between you: I am content to feel the evil of both, because I love both; and

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161. Sedgwick, *Upon a Book*, 164; Hill, *Experience of Defeat*, 97–117. On these various stances, compare and contrast Sedgwick, *Justice*; [Sedgwick], *Upon a Letter*; [Sedgwick], *Inquisition*; Sedgwick, *Upon a Book*. On the Restoration legacy of radicalism and debates about periodization, see Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, 2000), chaps. 15 and 16; Richard Greaves, *Deliver Us from Evil: The Radical Underground in Britain, 1660–1663* (Oxford, 1986), 227–29; Warren Johnston, *Revelation Restored: The Apocalypse in Later Seventeenth-Century England* (Woodbridge, U.K., 2011), 18–22.

162. Sedgwick, *Upon a Book*, 188–99.

have in my soul good for both."[163] Thus, when returning to a more conventional godly life and support of the restored monarchy, he felt no need to pick a particular side but was able to reconcile to the Church while also maintaining friendships with radical acquaintances. Equally, it was unnecessary to "wholly condemn" his old ministry, which still offered some useful insights.[164] To be puritan was not to remain confined within strict boundaries. There were distinctions and divisions, and yet they did not erect an impermeable barrier.

Sedgwick's orthodoxy and radicalism were in conversation as much as conflict. As he came to radicalism by degrees, his path was conditioned by his experiences within, and reaction against, mainstream puritanism. In turn, his religiosity as he returned to the church was informed by his former radicalism. Throughout, his beliefs contained a kernel of political hope—for temporal and spiritual unity and peace—yet they did not always lead him to seek those ambitions in predictable ways. Sedgwick thus reveals the extent to which it was not only the godly community that could be varied and heterogeneous, but also individual godly experience. Puritanism could be navigated in quite personal ways, and provide all manner of outlooks, while still retaining a consistency and coherence that made it distinct. This was especially true of the puritan life of William Sedgwick.

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163. Sedgwick, *Upon a Book*, 49.
164. Sedgwick, *Upon a Book*, 30.