

* be killed with the lightning, as many had been, she should go right to hell. I heard the words, and they struck me to the heart, thinking within myself, what that could mean, and saying to myself, what is that hell, I began to recollect what I had been taught about hell; which before I had thought no more of, than to repeat the words, as they were taught me: and as I thus pondered (though so young) I began to have horrible conceptions of that place, and often said to myself, what, is my sister Rebecca going there? what, is she going to hell? This distressed my soul to that degree, that I went to bed, and began to cry, and to pray to some great God, which I began to conceive of; for I had before thought no more of prayer, though I was taught (and my father prayed in his family every night and morning) to repeat a number of words, as I did my lesson at school; but I now began to think there was a heaven and hell; that there was a God, who was such a hard hearted and cruel being, that there was need of praying a great deal, to get him pleased, and get his favour, and did not wonder, that my father prayed so much; I thought if he had not prayed so much, we should all be sent to hell.

I now used to pray at every opportunity, even while I was walking along, when going to school, or elsewhere; that this angry God would not send me to hell. I used likewise to pray for my relations, that they might be all saved. I would sometimes give way to play and vanity with my play-mates, and then I would think that God was more angry than ever, and so I would pray and confess, and promise to make it up.

I now began to examine and study what I read, and what I was taught in my catechism, that Adam had rebelled, and that all the world must be sent to hell and be punished with all that could be inflicted on them for that sin, excepting here and there one, that God had picked out, and the rest, though they were invited to come to Christ, and a sort of sham-offer of salvation made them, yet there was none for them, neither did God intend to save them, when he made them the offer, and yet would punish them to all eternity for rejecting Christ, when there was no Christ for them.

Such blasphemous, but natural consequences arose from what I had been taught; which caused me to conceive God to be an ill-natured, cruel being, pleasing himself with seeing and keeping poor creatures in everlasting torments,