Question: Whether God is not Angry with the Country for doing so little towards the Conversion of the Indians?

Solomon Stoddard, 1723

Romans 8:19 (KJVEC) For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Stoddard recognizes that there are two camps of interpretation of the Romans 8:19-21. Those who understand The Greek word κτισις, should be understood to mean creature as it is rendered in the KJV, and those who believe it should be understood to mean creation, including all of nature. Stoddard is in the former camp and argues against the later for the following reasons:

1. The “frame of nature” is going to be destroyed at the Day of Judgment.

   Psalms 102:25 (KJVEC) Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed.

   2 Peter 3:7 (KJVEC) But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved to fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

2. Stoddard asserts that what is meant by creature, is meant the Gentiles.

   Mark 16:15 (KJVEC) And he said to them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. The period was coming when the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles. They had been enslaved by Satan into a miserable state of ignorance and idolatry and vile courses so that it seemed impossible that they should ever by happy.

Doctrine: When the Jews rejected the Gospel, God sends it to the Gentiles, and they received it.

This was foretold in the OT. Isaiah 53:1 (KJVEC) Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

Compare Isaiah 65:2 (KJVEC) I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; with Romans 10:21 (KJVEC) But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and gainsaying people.

Psalm 2 and [?]

Christ foretold it in Luke 14:18 (KJVEC) And they all with one consent began to make excuse.

Matthew 22:5 (KJVEC) But they made light of it, and went, one to his farm, another to his merchandise. And the remnant took his servants, and treated them spitefully, and slew them.

God has given them to Christ. Psalms 2:8 (KJVEC) Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Romans 15:11-12 (KJVEC) And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.
These promises were fulfilled. Psalm 110:2-3.

Reason 1. This is what God promised Abraham, that all the nations of the earth would be blessed in his seed, Christ.

Reason 2. It was as much for the honor of Christ. Psalms 72:17 (KJVEC) *His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed.* Revelation 5:9 (KJVEC) *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*

Reason 3. There would not be one nation that God would withhold His mercy from. Romans 3:29 (KJVEC) *Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.*

Use 1. Of Warning not to reject the Gospel. The Jews rejected it on two counts:
   1. A spirit of slumber. Worldly affections ate out their religion.
   2. They were blinded. Romans 10:3 (KJVEC) For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. The Law blinded them to the need for a Redeemer.

Use 2. Of Examination. Whether God is not angry with this country for not preaching the Gospel to the heathen? Is this the reason for the 60 years of diseases and devourers that have been sent? We should ask why God is sending these, that show He is angry. England and papers reflect that there is little care for the Indians. Is this a reason for the fighting and the wars?

Stoddard asserts these are instruments to punish them for not bringing the Gospel to the Indians for the following reasons.
   1. Christ commands that it be preached to them. The Great Commission requires it despite our feelings, opinions, and challenges with them.
   2. Doing so reflects the honor we should have for Christ. Profession needs to come with action. “If a spirit of love to Jesus Christ had flourished in us, it would be the joy of our hearts, to see congregations of Indians waiting on God in His House, joining in prayer, and hearing the Gospel, and celebrating the Memory of the Death of Christ.”
   3. We ought to have done it out of love to mankind. Love and pity calls for it. It is a act of love to our own nature to seek their salvation: If we can further that, we shall do them great service.
   4. The first reason we came was to bring the Gospel to the Indians. It was in the charter.
   5. England was in the same position once. We need to do the same that was done for England.
   6. The examples of others may make us ashamed. Germans and Danes bringing the gospel to the East-Indies. They printed the Bible in the native language. Much has been done.
7. The “Papists” are doing better, spreading the gospel in Peru and Mexico.

8. If they embrace religion, they would live more comfortably in this world. Tends to flourish….i.e. be civilized and westernized.

9. If they embrace it might provoke us to emulation. One example encourages another, which in turn bolsters the former, etc.

Use 3. It is a desirable thing that the Indians be brought to faith. It comes with blessings for both. We should pray for the conversion of the Indians.

1. That will be far better than to only make peace. Hope of a durable peace.

2. That will be much better than to destroy them. It is better to convert them: then they will do good, they will serve and glorify God, they will help to enlarge his Kingdom, and be a benefit to their Neighbors.