

Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, John Eliot, Session 2, Waban's Wigwam to Natick, MA [1646-1674]

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This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on John Eliot, 1604-1690 Apostle to the Indians. This is session 2, Waban's Wigwam, October 1646 to Natick 1650 to 14 Praying Indian Villages, 1674.

Welcome back to our second session on John Eliot, the Apostle to the Indians, from 1604 to 1690.

In our first session, we dealt with some of the things that made him of significance. We saw how in the Hall of Flags in the Boston State House, there's a mural of John Eliot, as well as on the Congregational Library Archive, there's actually carved in marble at 14 Beacon Street of John Eliot speaking to the Indians. He printed the first book, the first book printed in the United States, the Bay Psalm Book, which was in 1640, in which Eliot was involved in translation into meter for the Psalms.

Later, in 1663, he translated into the Algonquin Indian language the whole Bible, 1180 pages, the first Bible to be printed in America in the basement of the Indian College, the first brick building at Harvard University. However, it was destroyed in 1698, and the bricks were used elsewhere. So now we traced him from his birth and after that at Whitford, his childhood at Nazeing, and the death of his parents as he attended Cambridge University.

And then, after the death of his parents, he went to connect up at Little Baddow by Chelmsford with Thomas Hooker, one of the early Puritans who then Hooker, in about 1630 or thereabouts, made his way to Holland and then to America and settled in Boston for a brief time. And then Hooker ended up founding Hartford, Connecticut, and became the first governor of Connecticut. John Eliot then made his way to Boston in about 1631.

There was a missing pastor there who had gone back to kind of entice his wife to come to America, John Wilson. John Eliot took the pastorate of the first church in Boston, just outside the Boston Gardens on Commonwealth Street there. And he had that church for a year.

They wanted him to stay and tried to, you know, get him to stay as their teacher, even when John Wilson came back, but he had promised the Nazeing people that basically they had to come back and so they, that he would be their pastor. Many of the people from Nazeing, his childhood church, and his family made their way to Boston and then down to Roxbury. So, what Eliot did was then he moved from Boston after one year of preaching there, and he moved down to Roxbury.

They had a pastor there, Thomas Weld, who was a senior pastor, nine years older than Eliot. And then Eliot basically was a teacher there for about 12 years. His wife-to-be came over and was married, the first marriage in the Roxbury church.

And they had six children. And Eliot then, for about 12 years, focused on the church there at Roxbury, the first church of Roxbury. We showed you pictures of that and videos of that as well.

In this second session, what Eliot is going to do here is about 1646. He's going to go to the wigwam of Waban in Newton or Nonatham as it was called back then. And he's going to preach to the Indians in their language in 1646 basically. So, obviously, he had a few years to get ready for that.

He had this guy Coconel to basically teach him and, lived in his home, and he learned then with great difficulty probably, but he was a very gifted man. He learned and by the way, he's 39, 40 years old now. So, learning a new language as hard as when he's 39 or 40 years old is quite an accomplishment.

So, he learns the language, and then he, what we're going to see in this session today, the second session, we're going to trace what John Eliot did with the Indians from Waban's wigwam in 1646, all the way up to 1674, when there are 14 praying Indian villages, largely as a result of his work and a thousand Indian converts in that period from 1646 to 1674. So, it's an amazing period. This is also going to be the period when he translates the Bible into Algonquin.

So, you can see it's kind of a guy who had a strong work ethic, needless to say. So let's start out with Waban's wigwam in 14, or I'm sorry, in 1646 at Nonatom, which today is Newton, Massachusetts. Here's a video basically showing the location of Waban's wigwam and its location on a Google map.

Here, you can see where Waban's wigwam was just kind of south of the Massachusetts Turnpike Route 90 and to the west a little bit of Route 95 in the Newton area or Chestnut Hill area. This is where we'll show you actually on Eliot Memorial Drive, one of the memorials left to Eliot in that area. This is where he preached his first sermon in Waban's wigwam.

Notice on the east side of this Waban's wigwam meeting in 1646, the word shepherd is carved on the left side and Gookin is carved on the right side. Those were two of his friends who spent a lot of time witnessing the conversion of the Indians under Eliot's preaching. Now, Nonatom means rejoicing because they rejoiced at the word of God, and God rejoiced over their penitent sinners, it was said.

The first sermon, by the way, the first sermon that Eliot ever preached in Algonquin, was done in the Dorchester Mill area, and basically, it bombed. There was no response from the Indians, just basically that he bombed. He knew that, by the way.

However, this Kutshamikan, let me see if I can say this correctly, Kutshamikan basically was the first Christian convert at that when he preached there in Dorchester Mills. He was a Satcham, so that was a big deal. We're going to see more from him in a few minutes.

The first meeting at Waban's wigwam was on October 28th, 1646, and this was at Newton. Basically, there were four people that went with him, and these are kind of his buddies that are going to travel with him often. Daniel Gookin was appointed later by the general court to supervise the Indian towns.

So, he's going to have a political position. Thomas Shepard was the minister at Cambridge, Massachusetts. He came and was very influential at that time.

John Wilson, the pastor who came back, was Boston's first church pastor. He also was there. So Thomas Shepard, John Wilson, and Daniel Gookin were guys that he hung out with and came out to see his work as he preached in this Nonantum, Massachusetts [modern Silverlake/Newton], Waban's wigwam.

He preached on the Ten Commandments, and he preached ironically on Ezekiel chapter 37, verse nine, which is the vision of the dry bones. He then, quote, then said he unto me, prophesy unto the wind, end quote. And when he said prophecy unto the wind, all the people looked around, and they looked, and here was this fellow named Waban, and they all started staring at Waban.

Only later did Eliot learn that Waban's name meant wind. And so he's saying, prophesy unto the wind, all the Indian folk looked at Waban as if this was directly at him. And so, it was kind of an amazing thing that Eliot picked this passage, and that Waban was there, the wind was there, and he preached on it.

So, it was amazing. His sermon went on in the Algonquin language for an hour and 15 minutes. After the sermon, Eliot, and this was, I think, one of the keys to understanding Eliot.

After the sermon, they had a question-and-answer period of three hours. John Eliot respected the Indians so much that he allowed them to ask questions, and he wrestled with their questions for three hours. This was his custom.

He often did this. So, it was kind of an amazing way to honor them. As they had questions, he fielded those questions and attempted to answer them to their satisfaction.

Now, some of the questions may be, how may we come to know Jesus Christ? This hurt Eliot in one sense because he said that by reading the Bible and praying, he realized that there was no Bible in their language. And this spurred him on to say, when they say, how can I know Jesus Christ? They've got to be able to understand the word of God, but they need the word of God in their own language. And that spurred him down to translate the Bible into their language.

He did the New Testament, by the way, in 1661, two years, and then finished the whole Bible in 1663, which was printed. Another question that they came up with was, does the white man's God hear Indian prayers? Your God understands English, but does he understand Wampanoag Algonquin? And Eliot basically said, God made me, God made the English, God made you. He understands everything about you.

And so, he understands your prayers prayed in your language. Waban himself, who is kind of a chief and very respected individual, said, how can we believe what our eyes cannot see? And Eliot told him, and he said, Hey, we're in Waban's wigwam. See this wigwam? Did the raccoons make this wigwam? Did the foxes make this wigwam? Did the wind make this wigwam? No.

You see the wigwam, and you know that somebody made it. And even though you can't see who made it, you understand that this wigwam, seeing the results of the person's work, you know that some person made this. It wasn't made by foxes.

It wasn't made by beavers. It was made by some human being. And so when we look at the world, we realize it's not made by foxes or even by people.

We can't do this. It's made by God. Therefore, though we can't see him, we can see his handiwork, and he basically uses the cosmological argument, which has been used in apologetics for years.

So, it's good. Good, good answer there. The second meeting, Eliot came back every, basically they call it a fortnight every other week.

So he preached one week with the Indians at Nonantum or Silverlake/Newton area. And then he would preach one week back at Roxbury at his home church. And then he would go back and forth, back and forth like this.

And they called it a fortnight every other weekend. And so, he, the second night he was out there was November 12th, 1646. And this time, he preached again on the 10 commandments: repent of your sins, pray to God and believe in Jesus Christ, escape hell, and go to heaven.

Questions came up this time. And now the question is, you can see, how does it come to pass that seawater is salty and water that comes from the land is fresh? Interesting. I wonder what his answer was.

And then they ask again, why are strawberries sweet and cranberries sour? Again, here are some more questions that are more theologically oriented. And the Indians asked these: where do our little children go when they die? They have not sinned. And so they asked the same question many of us ask: what happens to our children when they die when they really don't know sin, and they die so young and many of their children did die?

As did, I should say, Eliot had six children. John Eliot had six children. He outlives all but two of them.

Four of his children died before he did. And that's a great sadness to him and something that's really hard on a parent. And so, he watched four of his children die and only had two left.

He outlived all but two. The question is, why did God not kill the devil that made all men so bad? God has all the power, so why didn't he take the devil out? Another good question. Eliot emphasized prayer with them.

He also emphasized the Sabbath. Puritans were very much into Sabbath keeping. And so, did they keep the Sabbath? Well, one of the Indians responded that for the Indians, this is the easiest of all. We never work on any day.

If we can help it, said one of the Indians. And so it's just kind of a little humor there. Here's a haunting question.

There was, here's a haunting question. Why, seeing the English have been in the land for 27 years, they have never taught the Indians to know God until now. Very, very haunting question.

Here's another sad question from an old man: a very old man asked this question. He asked whether it was too late for such an old man as he, who was near death, to repent and seek God. And Eliot and his friends basically responded, do you remember the parable of equal wages in Matthew 20? I believe it is, where they all got paid the same, but then God hired some in the 11th hour, and they got paid the same.

And so, the old man, they comforted the old man with the parable of equal wages and saying, no, you're good, man. You're old, you're old, but you're good. Repent and believe in Jesus, especially you.

And some of the, what shall we say to some of the Indians who say to us, what do you get by praying to God and believing in Jesus Christ? And so some of the Indians said, well, what benefit is there? You pray to God, and I don't pray to God, and it doesn't go any better for you than it does for me. Your children go around naked like my children do. Our corn is as good as yours.

We take more pleasure than you. If we saw that you got anything by praying to God, we would do so. Whereas what benefit is there? Eliot responded kind of with his fingers, his little finger, and his thumb.

And he basically said God gives two types of blessings. One are what I want to call the little things. And then God gives you the big things.

So, the little things basically would be things like clothes, food, sacks, houses, cattle, and pleasures. Those are the little things in life. The great mercies, the thumb, the great mercies are wisdom, knowledge of God, Christ, eternal life, repentance, and faith.

These are for the soul and for eternity. And so he says, you can't see them, but the big things, the things that really matter, those are the things that Christianity addresses. And so anyways, responding, here's one from a wife.

Okay. Interesting too, that the women are asking questions as well. Wampas's wife asks this question: when my husband prays, praying Indians if my husband prays if I say nothing, and yet my heart goes along with what he says, do I pray? And she had been learning to spin and doing various other things.

And in 1647, this is one year after she passed away and died. Eliot visited her and prayed with her and told her, and she told him that she still loved God, though he made her sick, and was resolved to pray to him so long as she lived. She was willing to die and believed that she would go to live, leave, and live happily with God in Christ there.

She was the first adult Indian who died under Eliot's care of the Indians there. Okay. So Eliot then preached to these Indians, and they were asking questions and things like that.

The Satyam problem, the Satyam problem, and the Powwow problem became more evident as the chiefs were losing power, as the Powwows or the priests were losing power. Then, there was more opposition to what Eliot was doing. In Eliot's analysis after the Indian visits, Eliot says this quote: it is very likely if ever the Lord converts any of these natives, they will mourn for sin exceedingly.

And that's what happened. And consequently, love Christ more dearly. One of his earliest things, and I put it up on the web, is just beautiful.

It's called Tears of Repentance, Tears of Repentance, and tells the story of many of these early converts Indians as they repent of their sin and confess their sins in tears and weeping and asking Christ and embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ, the good news, the good news that Christ died for their sins. It's just beautiful. The third meeting was held on, again, fortnight, November 26, 1646.

And the theme there was the temptation of the devil. Now that one went over really well because they understood they had a kind of a good God and a bad God. And so this conflict there, they seem to understand that quite well.

Wampas, the man whose wife died, brought his children to Eliot at Roxbury. Wampas came to Roxbury, bringing his children, asking Eliot if he could educate his children. So you can see the way they trusted this John Eliot.

It was kind of an amazing thing. They really trusted him. Waban, the leader, also then started, Waban was a leader in this Nonantum, Silverlake/Newton area.

And basically, the Ten Commandments were really big, the Puritans and things like that. Waban then started making rules that the Indians should abide by. And he gave them fines for these rules.

His third rule was that there was to be no wife beating, including only one serious offense. The offender shall have his hands tied behind him and to be carried into a place of justice and severely punished. So, in other words, the wife-beating was gone now.

And this tells you, a lot of people say, well, Christianity, you know, we should just let the natives be the natives. Well, yeah, these guys are beating their wives and stuff like that. Christianity comes, and they stop beating their wives.

Is that a good thing or a bad thing? Well, you change your culture. I love how academics today argue from their armchairs about what they should have done back then. And yet these people are sitting in their air-conditioned offices, knowing nothing of real work like this, working with people, and struggling with their cultures.

Number seven, all those men that wear long locks, she'll pay five shillings. And so basically, a lot of them cut their hair as actually kind of this mixing of Christianity and culture. And so anyway, Waban's rules then were kind of interesting.

The fourth meeting was held on December 9th, 1646. The Indians then offered their children to be educated by the English and said, however, they couldn't pay anything. And so, Eliot was big on catechizing the children.

That was a big thing for him. And so, what he's going to do is get support from England to actually provide for schoolmasters and schoolmistresses to teach the children the way of Christ. So, the winter set in.

Meanwhile, through snow and ice and winter cold, John Eliot continued in alternate weeks to mount his horse and tread the rugged trail through the woods to Waban's cabin. And more and more Indians waited. And so basically, there are more and more Indians; he's speaking to them in their own language.

They looked upon the success of the gospel among the Indians as a fulfillment of the promise of God, the father to the son. In Psalm chapter two, the father says to the son, ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the utmost parts of the world for thy possession. And they thought that this then was the Father talking to Christ about the conversion of the Indians.

Now, Kutshamikan, here's a story of what happened. He was teaching the boy the catechism, and he was rebuked. The boy was rebuked because he would not say, Honor your mother.

He would say, Honor your father, but then he would skip saying, Honor your mother. They rebuked the boy. Quote, on the next lecture day, therefore, they exhorted Kutshamikan to prepare the way for the son's reformation by the confessing of his own sins.

So, they came to the father, and the father was really upset because the boy would say, Honor your father, but not honor your mother. So, the father's upset. So, Eliot and John Wilson then from the first church of Boston, approached this Kutshamikan guy, and they say, you want your son to repent of that? Why don't they know that this guy had problems himself?

Why don't you confess your sins as a model to your child and see what happens? And being thus faithfully admonished, he honestly acknowledged and bitterly lamented his offenses. At last, the boy yielded and made the most humble confession and taking his father's hand and treated his forgiveness.

His humiliating, his humiliation overcame his parents so much that they wept aloud. So Kutshamikan told Eliot that the Sakams were upset with him because they were losing their custom revenues. And so he was. He was one of those chiefs.

And so he told them the other chiefs were getting upset with Eliot and things. Now, I want to talk about the support for Eliot's missionary work. And Eliot could not have done it so effectively without the support of these kinds of people.

The visitors that came out to Nonantum were people like Thomas Shepard, whom we said was from Cambridge, Massachusetts. He was a pastor. He died about 1649.

John Wilson of Boston, the first church of Boston, John Wilson, who where Eliot had been pastor, died about 1667. Mr. Dunster was president of Harvard College. He came out also to listen to the Indians confessing and things like that.

And then actually is involved. Harvard was involved with the Indian College that was then founded. That's where the Eliot Bible was printed, as well as many other things there.

Eliot's friendship network. I want to break it up into three groups: the mentors, three mentors, three companions, and three supporters in England. Okay.

So, it's three mentors, people that Eliot was helped by would be of course, Thomas Hooker. And I think that's where his conversion experience was. And Thomas Hooker then as a Puritan who comes to Boston and then onto Hartford and becomes the first governor of Connecticut, a Puritan leader, Thomas Hooker.

Thomas Mayhew, we said he was doing Indian work a little bit before a couple, you know, a couple of four years before Eliot over in Martha's Vineyard. He had done it very successfully, preached to them in their language, and was very capable. He wasn't as systematic as Eliot was, and Eliot with these villages and things, but he was on Martha's Vineyard, very effective.

And his children, Mayhew's children, then after him, Thomas Mayhew, and then the children after him kept on the work with the Indians for over a hundred years, 150 years. So, it's kind of an amazing guy, Thomas Mayhew. And so they both shared this vision for the Indians.

Mayhew did it in Martha's Vineyard. Eliot would do it in the Natick, Massachusetts, area. Thomas Weld was nine years older, and he was the senior pastor at the first church of Roxbury.

Eliot was more the teacher, and Thomas Weld was the chief minister. And so those would be three of his mentors, Hooker, Mayhew, and Weld. His companions, guys kind of on the same level that they just, they came to some of these meetings at Wabon's Wigwam.

Thomas Shepherd from Cambridge and Richard Gookin took over the Indian villages in 1687; he died. And actually, Gookin's name, when I show you that thing at Nonantum or Newton, they actually have a memorial for it. You can see Shepherd's names on one side and Gookin's on the other, and then a tribute to Eliot.

So, for Shepherd and Gookin, and then Eliot, the tribute is to Eliot. So these are some of his buddies. John Wilson, who was the pastor of Boston, was a good traveling friend for Eliot.

His friends were Thomas Shepherd, Richard Gookin, and John Wilson. Now, he had three supporters in England, and these were critical. Edward Winslow, basically, took the stories that came out of Thomas Mayhew and John Eliot, and he publicized those stories in England.

On the basis of that, the people in England were informed of the great work that Eliot was doing. Therefore, they actually raised support based on the Tears of Repentance. And I'm going to list some other books, not really books. They're like 60, 50, or 90 pages; they call them tracks.

Those were published in England and then became the basis for raising funds for Eliot to help him basically give the Indians tools so that they could farm. They didn't have farm tools and things. And then also for their headmasters and headmistresses that would teach the children that they would be paid so that they could teach the children for free.

So yeah, so about six months after John Eliot preached to the Indian Algonquins at Wabon's wigwam, catechizing the children and things, this is in 1649 now, it's about two years later, in the execution of Charles I, the Long Parliament incorporated the President and Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England. So, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England became a society in England that could raise funds that really helped support Eliot. Now, with the power, and basically, they raised money, about 11,000 pounds, which was an amazing sum back then.

Eliot then got a sum of 50 pounds a year, an annual stipend, 50 pounds a year that really relieved him and helped his salary and things like that. And yeah, for the education. Now, the person who became over was a guy named Robert Boyle.

And so, he was the second of the supporters in England. We had Edward Winslow, who brought the tales that Eliot was the story of the Indian's conversion to England was Edward Winslow. But Robert Boyle was a philosophical intellectual who was head of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in England.

Boyle then saw what Eliot was doing and really caught a vision of what Eliot was doing. So he worked behind the scenes and pumped stuff over to help Eliot with all that he could from Society. And it amounted to quite a bit, actually.

The final guy was, of course, Richard Baxter, who was one of the early Puritan people who wrote many books. Richard Baxter, you can go to the Christian Classic Ethereal Library at Calvin College online, and they'll have many of Richard Baxter's Puritan works. John Bunyan and Pilgrim Progress are all Puritan-type backgrounds as well.

So, Eliot's philosophy of mission, Eliot says this: Mr. Eliot's care for the Indians was not confined to religious teaching. Read that again. That's important.

Mr. Eliot's care for the Indians was not confined to religious teaching. It was his favorite and well-known opinion that no permanent good effect could be produced by efforts for their spiritual welfare unless civilization and social improvement should proceed or accompany such efforts. So, he saw the social ramifications of the gospel needed to accompany the preaching of the gospel itself.

Edward Winslow, as we said, backed this and raised much money for him. One of the books that they published was *The Day Breaking If Not the Sun Rising of the Gospel with the Indians in New England*. It tells the story.

Winslow was going back, and apparently, they rushed these stories to him, kind of handwritten form. Winslow took them back to England with him, put them in publishable form, and then kicked them out. That Day Rising, If Not the Sun Rising of the Gospel was based on Malachi 1:11, which says, quote, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, thy name shall be great among the Indians.

They put the Indians in there. Three months later, there was another document that was based on some work by Thomas Shepherd, basically featuring Eliot and his work. The clear sunshine of the gospel broke forth upon the Indians in New England.

Eliot's work was featured in that as well. By the way, I have copies of these documents on the website. If you go to Biblical eLearning and you go under history, New England history, and things, and John Eliot, you'll find all these documents.

Now they've been preserved, and I have kind of collected them and put them all together. It's really interesting to read the stories of some of these Indians and their conversion. Some of the Indian questions were like this.

What is the first sin of the devil? What was the devil's first sin? And whether the devil or man was made first. Was man made first, or was the devil made first? And why didn't God give all men good hearts? How many of us have asked that? Why didn't God give all men good hearts? And whither do children go when they die, seeing

they have not sinned? Here's a perceptive one from these Indians. They were very perceptive people.

What did the English men think of Mr. Eliot, who comes among wicked Indians to teach them? What did the English think about Eliot? A very interesting question because some of the English people are actually going to resist what Eliot was doing. We'll see that later. A third tract came in 1649, the glorious gospel, the glorious progress of the gospel amongst the Indians in New England.

Three letters from John Eliot and one from Thomas Mayhew, who was the missionary to the Indians on Martha's Vineyard. A second bill was passed in 1649, July 27th and an act for the promoting and propagating of the gospel of Jesus Christ in New England, directed directly at Eliot's work and supporting it. This missionary effort by this group lasted about 120 years.

So much after Eliot passed, this continued. So, with the intelligent persistence of Edward Winslow at the outset in getting a bill drafted and then keeping the interest in it alive without its sponsorship, the missionary work of John Eliot among his neighbors, neighboring Indians, might have ended at its beginning. I don't really think that it would have ended at the beginning.

I think Eliot would have figured out a way and done it because he was just so persistent and resilient in his commitment to his dream. But anyways, Winslow helped him a lot, and the results were that the 1,200, 1,200 pounds and these types of things, the largest expenditure, it turns out, was for the printing of Eliot's Bible in 1663. And largely, well, we'll talk about this when we talk about the Bible, but a printing press was sent over to America based on this society just so that Eliot could print his Indian Bible, a thousand copies of it.

Robert Boyle, the governor of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, caught Eliot's vision and really helped him. So, Richard Baxter, Edward Winslow, and Robert Boyle were three people in England who really helped him. Ironically, as I said before, in the first session, the hope was that the Indian converts might breathe life into the dead Anglican church.

So the Anglican church, supported what Eliot was doing for the conversion of the Indians in America, but Eliot and some of the Puritans were still thinking, hoping that their stories of the conversion and the tears for their sin and the repentance and the turning to Christ, that their stories could be taken back to England and then it would help purify and induce repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and the coming alive, the reviving, the reviving of the church in England, which they saw as dead. And so it's very interesting to see the back and forth on that one. And they were hoping that some of that would go back to England and that the Indians could actually be a model for the Indians, for the people.

Now, Eliot then met in 1646 at Waban's Wigwam in Newton or Nonantum. Okay. Now, what happens is Waban, a very astute man actually, when the first time Eliot preached there, asked Eliot whether the Indians could get some land for themselves.

They roamed all over the place and didn't have land, and all the English were setting up fences and towns, and they couldn't go in there and that kind of thing. And so, Waban said, well, we need some property too to kind of do. So what happened is, and now we'll show you his, the first Indian village, the first praying Indian village, was at a place called Natick.

Natick means place of the hills. They looked at Newton, obviously, Nonantum would have been the obvious place to do it, but they looked there, and there really wasn't enough to support a village and things like that. So, they looked down by the Charles River.

There's a bend in the Charles River and this Natick. And so, they went to Natick then. And I now have some pictures that I want to show of the Natick church.

And there's a, there's a rock there that honors, and a plaque there that honors Eliot as well as the free Beacon library is a historical site where there's a kind of an obelisk, which with Eliot's name carved into it and things. So, I'll show you those. Okay.

Here's the sign outside the Eliot church in Natick to this day. And then right next to the church, I'll show you next, there's a rock with a memorial plaque on it. It's very interesting.

Thirdly, we'll go over to the Beacon free library and see the obelisk there dedicated to John Eliot. Here's inside the Eliot church. The first name on the top left here is actually the name of an Indian man who took over for Eliot after Eliot left.

After him, all the people that are listed are English. And so the church went away from its Indian roots. Here's the wonderful rock memorial about 50 yards from the Eliot church in Natick.

And here's the obelisk at the free Beacon library, a couple hundred yards the other way from the rock from the Eliot church. And while we're doing Natick, we might as well get the northern part of Natick where the post office is. This is the Natick post office, where there is a mural of John Eliot speaking to the Indians.

Okay. Now Boston was pushing out. So the settlers were settling in Boston, which was pushing out, and the Indians needed some place to be.

And so, they put kind of out quite a ways, Natick out quite a ways even as it is today, although it's a suburb of Boston now. The Indians were rovers and hunters, fishers, and fencers, and concepts of owning land and villages like that were very foreign to their way of thinking. However, the sawmills and the corn mills and stuff polluted the rivers and things and hurt the Indians in terms of the fishing and things like that.

And so the Indians were desirous to have their own land. 6000 acres at Natick was approved. And this is kind of Wellesley area, Wellesley Needham area today.

And Natick, of course, is still known to this day. Just get on the turnpike, the Massachusetts Turnpike there. And basically, you come to Natick, and you can see it there.

So, in 1650, then, so what I'm suggesting then is okay, 1646, he goes to Wigwam, Wigwam's, Wabon's Wigwam. And then in 1650, 1650, four years later, they actually got the land for the Natick village, a praying Indian village. They set up by the Charles River, and they basically built a footbridge over the Charles River.

It was 80 feet across and nine feet high. The Indians were really, really proud of themselves. And actually, apparently downstream or whatever, the English bridge that they built collapsed a year later, winter, you know, and are rough in New England and stuff and collapsed the bridge.

And the Indians bridge stood solid. And the Indians were so proud of that. It was kind of a good thing.

Then Riverhead, they called it a weird kind of thing. The Indians would fish like this, and they would build a wall out into the river. Again, this is not like the Niagara River, this Charles River in this area is pretty, you know, it's not that big.

Anyway, they build out a rock wall and leave a hole in the rock wall from both sides. And in that rock wall, they would put in a basket, which they called an eel basket, or they called an eel pot, an eel pot. This eel pot was made of strips of wood and other things.

The fish would then be forced to go through the hole because the walls came out. And then they would be in this basket, basically, they'd catch them in the basket. And that's how they did some of their fishing in this eel pot called an eel pot.

Well, later on, and we'll come back to this, Eliot was translating the Bible, and it says in Sisera, you know, Jael, and Deborah and Barak go out to war against Sisera and Jabin, king of Hittites and the book of Judges. Basically, what happens is it narrates that this woman will go to her lattice and look out her lattice for her, expecting her

son to come home from that battle victorious. And so, Eliot's translating this into Algonquin.

And he says, what is lattice? They don't have lattice on their windows. Actually, they don't have windows. So anyways, he says, how do I do lattice? Well, he told the person that he was working with on translation.

And he said, well, maybe that's an eel pot, an eel pot. Well, we've described what an eel pot was. And Eliot just had a gut feeling that, and Eliot was brilliant at this.

I mean, he really caught the translation. He says, you know, it's not really that, that's not it. And so he didn't have a word.

So, he made up a word, lattice-ot, lattice-ot. So, he used the word lattice and just put a O-T on the end, lattice-ot, and then use that and then taught him, tried to teach him what a lattice was and things. I remember when I was in Israel, I was doing Hebrew, and I went into a store.

And in those days, I wanted to buy a cassette tape. Okay. These are for people that had magnetic tape, went around in circles and you could play it on a boom box or whatever in those days and things.

So, I wanted to go to cassette tape. And so, I go into the store, and I don't know the word cassette tape and stuff. So, I described to the guy a machine that goes around and that you hear with your oznayim, your ears, and things.

And I'm trying to describe this thing. I walk out of there, unsuccessful. I didn't get the cassette tape or anything else.

I got home, and I looked it up, and the Hebrew word for cassette is kasetim. They just use the English word kasetim and put an im ending on a plural ending in Hebrew. And that's the way it was.

So, when you go between languages, sometimes the languages don't line up exactly. And you kind of have to do this jimmying thing between languages. Eliot did that.

And by the way, this is back in 1640. The guy's 40 years old when he's trying to learn this language. It's really amazing what he was able to do.

The town governance. Natak needs the town's governance. How are they going to govern the town? Eliot says, Exodus 18.

He basically says rulers of the 10, rulers of the 50, rulers of the hundred. You elect your leaders of the 10. You elect your rules of the 50.

You elect your rules at the hundred and things. And so, he sets up what was foiled before he had gone to England with that. And the king got so mad at him.

He had apologized to the king because he was undermining the kingship with this. Well, now, in the churches, he implements this. So he goes from the Christian commonwealth, which bombed in England, got him in big trouble.

Now he writes another document called the Communion of churches in which they use this Exodus, Jethro's advice to Moses in Exodus 18 there. And so it's kind of funny. He's a persistent kind of guy.

Eliot's covenant was written up, and the people pledged to it in 1651. And here's some of the pledges. This is beautiful.

This is how Eliot set up this covenant with these people. "God shall rule over us." Boy, what a statement.

God shall rule over us. Isaiah 33:22, the Lord is our judge. The Lord is our lawgiver.

The Lord is our king. His book that shall guide his book that shall guide us and direct us in the way. Oh, Jehovah, teach us wisdom.

Send thy spirit into our hearts and let it teach us. Lord, take us to be thy people, and let us take thee to be our God. End quote.

What a beautiful statement. The Indians then it was a covenant between the Indians and God and things. Eliot, the key to Eliot, I think, was his friend friendliness and his kindness.

I guess you could just call it, he loved the Indians. He respected them. He respected them and treated them with dignity and respect.

He listened and interacted with their questions. He took their children and catechized and taught them the gospel and new ways of living and things. And they trusted him.

The Indians trusted, but they didn't trust. You know, we're going to see later on; they didn't trust a lot of the English settlers. Okay. But they trusted Eliot.

And if Eliot told them, that was like the gospel and stuff. So, Eliot had quite a relationship with these Indians. They loved him.

As a matter of fact, he loved them. It was beautiful. Now, a couple of anecdotal stories.

Wabon, Justice Wabon, who makes rules for everybody else. Right? So Wabon is a big old guy and the major character now. Well, the problem with Wabon is that he's got all these rules, right? So, then somebody shows up at his house on the Sabbath.

Remember the Puritans and the Sabbath? Okay. You don't violate the Sabbath. So Wabon's at his house on the Sabbath.

Somebody comes, and an unexpected visitor stops in. He knows that there's a raccoon in the tree over there. And so, what happens is he goes out, and he gets the raccoon, kills the raccoon, and then provides food for his unexpected visitors. However, some people turned Wabon in and actually got caught then on the Sabbath.

He was, what is this you're doing? Killing animals on the Sabbath? So Wabon was violating his own rules. They caught him and called him on it, and he then backed down, and he was wrong and stuff like that. And not even he could get away from his own law and things.

So, I don't know. I just thought that was kind of funny. Here's one that's funny.

It's not really funny, but there's a guy named Totherswamp. Totherswamp and he was a leader of the Indians and things like that. And what happened was Totherswamp also, the Indians had problems with alcohol and getting drunk basically.

Gaming, gambling, and the drunkenness and things. So, what happened is that Totherswamp was the leader there, and three older guys got drunk. So they got drunk, and they said, oh man, we're dead meat, and Totherswamp's going to be on our case, and we're going to get in trouble here.

And so, what happened is basically these guys said, okay, but Totherswamp has a son, 11-year-old son. What happens if we get his 11-year-old son drunk too? If we get his 11-year-old son drunk, then he's not going to do anything to us. He's going to have to do it to his son.

So, he's not going to put us in the stocks or do anything bad to us because his son is drunk also. So these three guys basically get Totherswamp's son drunk. No, they'll not get put in the stocks or whipped and stuff.

So Totherswamp saw what they did. He had those three guys put in the stocks and beaten like was the rule back then. And his own son was briefly put in the stocks and then taken to school, where they whipped him and his own boy.

And so this is showing their commitment to Christianity. Apparently, the Indians were deeply impressed by their ruler's sense of duty, that he would do that even to his own son to teach his son a lesson and things like that. However, and I don't want to talk too much about Totherswamp, what I want to talk about is Eliot's response.

Adams, in his book on Eliot, tells the story of the three guys getting drunk and the son getting drunk. And Eliot said I could read nothing in it but displeasure. I began to doubt about our intended work.

I knew not what to do. In other words, Eliot saw this, and part of the problem was one of the guys that was drunk that did this to that little boy. It was one of Eliot's translators who had translated the Bible with Eliot.

Eliot knew this guy really well. And now he's asking himself, I began to doubt about our intended work. And you can see this processing.

This is an honest man. He's saying, is everything falling apart here? The guy who's translating the Bible with me stopped getting this 11-year-old kid drunk. What am I doing? What am I doing here? And if anybody's been in the ministry, you know, at certain points, you ask yourself those kinds of questions.

And I just love it that this man is honest and this level of his honesty. I knew not what to do. The blackness of the sins, the person reflected on, may my very heart fail me.

For one of the offenders, the least in the offense was that he had been my interpreter, whom I have used in translating a good part of the Holy Scriptures. And in that respect, I saw much of Satan's venom. And you can just see, he's really, really getting upset, questioning himself and what he's doing.

And that's another thing that made John Eliot who he was. And so, okay. I want to comment on the life of women.

A lot of people criticize; they say, all the colonists come in, and they, you know, do all this stuff for the Indian culture. They throw it out, and Christianity dominates and destroys all these things as if people in our generation should be talking about destroying culture, tearing down monuments, and banning Tom Sawyer.

And actually, even in Massachusetts now, they don't read the Iliad and the Odyssey anymore. Can you believe that? Homer's Iliad and the Odyssey. It's been around for 2000 years, no longer.

Okay. So, we are not; we are not ones to cast stones, is all I'm trying to say. And I just really, we get these people on their high horses.

But what I'm saying is, okay, so let's look at what the life of women was like to the Indians back before Christianity and what their effects were. One of the great improvements was soon visible among them in their treatment of their wives. Wife beating, which was rather normal in Indian culture, was outlawed among them.

Okay. Is that a good thing? You say, well, Christianity teaches you can't beat your wife. That's the Indian culture to beat your wife.

Well, what, you know, really? Okay. That's a great improvement. Okay.

The movement moved away from polygamy also. There was polygamy in that culture and things. They moved away from it.

And I think Eliot and I read some things in a very gentle way. Didn't just say, cast your wives out on the street, and these poor women have nowhere to go. No, it was just that they would go more toward monogamy, and it was done over a period of time.

Eliot understood. You just can't, you know, throw those women out and that kind of thing. So, polygamy was reduced.

Wife abuse was, was also outlawed and things like that. We read the story before about a woman who says that before my husband prayed, he was very angry and forward. But since he began to pray, he has not been so angry, but only a little.

And so even the wives could see the difference that Christ made in their husbands. And this woman says, you know, my husband used to be really angry all the time. He's a Christian now, and he's not so much anymore.

Wampus, Wampus on some trivial occasion, in a fit of passion, beat his wife in this brutal manner of the females that had formerly been, as usual among savage tribes, very common and passed without notice. But since they received Christianity, they had learned to consider it a great offense. The transgressor, in such cases, was exposed to a fine.

Wampus was made to stand up and answer for his fault in the public meeting. And so here's the guy being rebuked in public for what he did. John Endicott, one of the governors of Massachusetts, actually made his way out around 1651.

So, this is, Natick has just been established for about a year. Natick was established as a praying Indian village, and they're establishing all these things. The governor of Massachusetts comes out to visit Natick.

And here's John Endicott's comments. John Endicott was impressed with their industry and ingenuity, fort, meeting house, and bridge. Eliot was about 47 years of age at this time, 47, 1651.

Endicott truly said that this was one of the best journeys that I have had in many years. So, Endicott goes out and sees what's going on in Natick. And he says, man, this is the best thing I've seen in a number of years.

And so he was really impressed. Eliot was just doing some incredible things as far as building the culture, the Christian culture of Natick, and the praying Indian village there. However, this was founded in 1650.

The first church didn't come in until about 1660. There was about 10 10-year period there where the village was a praying Indian village, but the church had not formed to all the things that Eliot wanted to see. And so Eliot was catechizing and doing various things with these Indians and things.

And some of the Indians then were some of these confessions. Okay. Let me read one of them.

And this is Totherswamp, the man with the drunken three guys going after his child, getting him drunk and stuff. He says, quote, now this is his confession. Okay.

I confess I deserve hell. I cannot deliver myself, but I give my soul and my flesh to Christ. And I trust my soul with him, for he is my redeemer.

And I desire to call upon him while I live. Waban's confession, by the way, didn't make it. And they had to wait until he was approved because there was another guy who was a school teacher who also had his confession.

There's a guy named Robin Speen who tells a story, a touching story of his child making a confession on the verge of death. Father Robin comments I could not tell whether the sorrow for the death of his child or the joy for its faith was greater. Okay.

Let me read that again. He could not tell whether the sorrow for the death of his child or the joy of its faith was greater when it died. So he's got a child that dies.

There's joy in that the child knows Christ, but there's also sadness in the loss of the child. And so, you get this with the Indians and things like that. They had a day, what they call a day of asking questions.

And this day of asking questions was like three years later when they would ask the Indians doctrinal questions. It's almost like a ministerial confirmation when they go to an examination for a minister to the gospel, where they ask them questions and do things like that. And so here you have it.

They're doing this to the Indians. And so they call it a day of asking questions, and some of them pass. And like I said, Wabon didn't pass.

He came back later. Something else that I should mention is that 14 years after Wabon's wigwam in 1646, 14 years later, they established the first church in Natick in 1660. And there are about 50 people that kind of passed into and became the basis of Indians that became the basis of the praying Indian church there.

One thing that I caught later on, and I didn't realize it, is that Eliot would travel these long distances, long distances, and his stamina was kind of incredible because he would be preaching in Roxbury, and then he'd get on a horse and ride all the way over to Natick. Then he was up in Merrimack River and just these long trips through the woods, sometimes where there are no paths and stuff, riding on a horse and just a, just, it was really rough time there breaking through some of these territories and things. And it turns out that he was lame in one leg.

And I didn't realize that until I read a number of sources. And one of the people mentioned that he had sciatica in one of his legs. It was so bad that his leg was basically paralyzed.

And so, he was lame in one leg. And so, his three sons were trained at Harvard. Eliot's three sons were trained at Harvard.

And as we said, all four of his four out of his six children died before he did, which was a very sad and heavy thing for him. Both he and his wife who lived, he lived to be 86. And so that was a real heavy thing. I don't know what's, what you can view as harder than the death of a child.

You know, children should die, parents should die first, and then the children, when the children die first, is devastating to parents. And some people have had to face that kind of thing. So, okay, now more Indian towns.

Natick, now 1660, is in place. There are 15 Christians in a church there, probably about two or 300 Indians there. They are Christian, not totally members in the

church, but Christian in this praying Indian town. The Natick model then was they scaled it up. And so they basically scaled it up to seven towns and then to 14 towns.

And so some of these towns like Chelmsford today, I'm going to give you the modern names, Littleton, Marlboro, Grafton, Hoppington, Natick, of course, and Stoughton. And then Canton, I just found out Canton also, that's interesting. Canton, just below Roxbury, there, and you can go drive down the 95 today, and you go past Canton.

Canton was where John Eliott Jr. became pastor. And so he actually became the pastor in the Canton church. It was an Indian church there.

So, Gookin became superintendent of the 14 villages, Christian-praying Indian villages. Daniel Gookin became superintendent of that in 1656. And on Sunday, let me just read a quote here.

On Sunday, the Indians assemble twice at the beat of the drum and walk solemnly to the meeting house, dressed in their English best. On the bare benches inside, the men sit on one side, the women on the other, precisely as in English practice. We see Waban, now grown old, paid a tribute for his prudence and piety.

I do not know of any Indian who excels in him. So, Waban was quite a guy who was respected by the Indians. And then also here we have Winslow telling that he was, Waban was respected by the English as well.

It's very interesting to me that when I was Googling, I was Googling a map of finding Newton and where some of these towns were, and they're in the Wellesley area, Newton area, and Natick area over kind of Southeast of Boston. It's more of the South Boston side and things. And I came across a little village. Can you guess what the name of the village was? Waban.

Yeah. I dare say there's very; I don't know anybody who knows the background of Waban, but that town is named Waban. And that's where Waban was from.

So, it's just, it's very interesting. This Waban name exists to this day. I think there's a Waban reservoir and other things named Waban out there till this day.

And I believe it goes back to this Indian that Eliot was one of Eliot's first converts and a very respected man. So, all right. So, we talked about it, and I want to move to 1660, which was the church at Natick.

They then expanded it to the 14 villages, and now Gookin and Eliot go around, and this is 1674. Now that date, 1675 is going to be a very important date. That's King Philip's war.

The year before King Philip's war in 1674, Gookin and Eliot went around and visited all 14 churches and villages, I'm sorry, villages. So Gookin, who's over the villages, and Eliot go revisit these 14 Indian praying Indian villages in 1674. Here's a short video clip of some of the signs that exist today celebrating those 14 praying Indian villages.

The next year and our next session will be the accession of King Philip's war in 1675. There was a great mass murder burning downtown. It was a terrible conflict between the settlers and the Indians, and it was fierce and tremendously fierce.

As a result, great damage was done. These 14 villages are going to, some of them just evaporate as far as they're Christian praying Indian villages and stuff. And Eliot's going to have to start all over again.

So, we'll end with that, but let's end in a positive note. Eliot then, from 1650, with Natick being the first town, 6,000 acres were given to them, and there were up to 14 villages of praying Indians by 1674. That is amazing.

Thousands of Indians, a thousand Indians, came to know the Lord through the work of John Eliot. And the next time, we want to pick up first with the Eliot Bible, where he translated in 1663, the Bible into the Algonquin language. Then, we'll look at King Philip's war, the aftermath of that war, and the end of John Eliot's life.

Again, I hope you can be as inspired as I have been through the work of this fellow John Eliot back in the 1600s, 1640, 1650, as we said, with Natick, and then up to 1674, just the year before King Philip's war and what a tremendous impact he had both in England and also among the Indians and just what an incredible work he had done. So, for one more session, I hope you can join us for the final session on John Eliot's life. Thank you very much.

This is Dr. Ted Hildebrandt in his teaching on John Eliot, 1604-1690 Apostle to the Indians. This is session 2, Waban's Wigwam, October 1646 to Natick 1650 to 14 Praying Indian Villages, 1674.