Questions to think about:
John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity”
1. According to John Winthrop, what covenant have the colonists made with God? What would be the consequences of either upholding or breaking this covenant?
John Dane, A Declaration of Remarkabell Prouedenses in the Course of My Life
2. Why does John Dane’s father beat him?
3. What happens between Dane and the maid?
4. What made Dane reform his “wild” ways and how complete was this reform?
Sarah Good and Bridget Bishop
5. Describe the roles of the community, the family, and women in Puritan society (see Out of Many, pp. 63–66, and Winthrop’s sermon). How did the women who were accused of witchcraft in Salem in 1692 challenge these roles? (Use specific examples from the assigned sources.)
6. Why were Good and Bishop accused of being witches? What evidence was used to prove that these women were witches? How would this evidence hold up in court today?

1. Excerpt from John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (1630). In 1630 Puritans established the Massachusetts Bay Colony. On the journey across the Atlantic Ocean, John Winthrop, the first governor of the colony, gave a sermon titled “A Model of Christian Charity” in which he outlined how Puritans saw themselves, their place in the world, and their relationship with God. This sermon was Winthrop’s vision for the new colony. Central to that vision was the covenant that Winthrop said the colonists had made with God. A covenant is an agreement entered into freely by both parties. Colonists viewed subsequent events, like the Pequot War, King Philip’s War, the Salem Witch Trials, and King William’s War through the lens of this covenant they believed they had made with God.

…Thus stands the cause between God and us. We are entered into Covenant with Him for this work. We have taken out a commission. The Lord hath given us leave to draw our own articles. … We have hereupon besought Him of favor and blessing. Now if the Lord shall please to hear us, and bring us in peace to the place we desire, then hath he ratified this covenant and sealed our Commission, and will expect a strict performance of the articles contained in it; but if we shall neglect the observation of these articles which are the ends we have propounded, and, dissembling with our God, shall fall to embrace this present world and prosecute our carnal intentions, seeking great things for ourselves and our posterity, the Lord will surely break out in wrath against us; be revenged of such a [sinful] people and make us know the price of the breach of such a covenant.

Now the only way to avoid this shipwrack, and to provide for our posterity, is to follow the counsel of Micah, to doe justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God. For this end, we must be knit together, in this work, as one man. We must entertain each other in brotherly affection. We must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities, for the supply of other's necessities. We must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience and liberality. We must delight in each other;
make other’s conditions our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work, as members of the same body. So shall we keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us, as his own people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways. So that we shall see much more of his wisdom, power, goodness and truth, than formerly we have been acquainted with. We shall find that the God of Israel is among us, when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies; when he shall make us a praise and glory that men shall say of succeeding plantations, "the Lord make it like that of New England." For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us, so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world. We shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God, and all professors for God's sake. We shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into curses upon us till we be consumed out of the good land whither we are going.

2. From: John Dane, A Declaration of Remarkabell Prouedenses in the Course of My Life¹. Dane was born in 1612 and died in 1683. In this excerpt he looks back on his youth. Dane’s autobiography is an excellent source for understanding the Puritan mind-set. (Note that Dane was a New Englander: try reading this excerpt with a Boston accent and some of the peculiar spellings may make more sense.)

Consarning my self; when I was but a lettell boy, being edicated under godly parents, my Conshans was veary apt to tell me of evells that I should not doe. Being now about aight yers ould, I was given mutch to play and to run out without my fathers Consent and againe his command. One a time, I haveing gone out most parte of the day, when my father saw me cum home, he toke me and basted [beat] me. I then cept home, and followed my busenes two or thre dase. My father and mother Comended me, and tould me that god would bles me if I obeyed my parents, and what the contrary would ishew [issue] in. I then thout in my harte, o that my fatther would beat me more when I did amis. I fard [feared], if he did not, I should not be good…

I did think myself in a good condishon. I was convinsed that I should pray and durst doe no other, and Red and here sarmons and durst due no other; yet I was given to pastime and to dansing, and that I thout lawful. Now uppone a time, when I was groune 18 yers of age or thare abouts, I went to a dansing scoll to larne to dans. My father hering of it, when I cam home tould me, if I went agayne, he would bast me. I tould him, if he did he should never bast me againe. With that, my father toke a stick and basted me. I toke it patiently, and said nothing for a day or to, but on morning betimes I res and toke 2 shurts on my back and the best sute I had, and a bybell in my pocket, and set the dores open and went to my fathers chamber dore and said, god by father, god by mother. Why, whether are you going? To seke my fortin, I

---

¹ New England Historical Genealogical Register, 8 (1854), 149–51.
answared. Then said my mother, goe whare you will, god he will find you out. This word, the point of it, stuck in my brest, and afterwards god struck it home to its head. Allthough I thout my fatther was two Strict, I thout Soloman said, be not holy over mutch, and daved [David] was a man after gods oune harte, and he was a danser; but yet I went my Journey, and was from him half a yere before he hard whare I was. I first settled in barcumsted, and thare Rought on a shobord that had bene improvd that waie. On a nyte, when most folke was a bead, a mayd cam into the shopbord and sat with me, and we Jested together; but at the last she cared it so, and put huself in sutch a poster, as that I made as If I had sum speshall ocashon abrod and went out; for a fared, If I had not, I should have comitted folley with hur. But I ofen thout that it was the prayers of my parents that prevailed with god to kepe me. I then gave my self mutch to dansing and staying out and heatting myself and lying in haymowes, the pepell being a bed whare I abod that I lost my culler and never Recufered it a gaine…

I now being at harford, Mr Goodin preacht thare, and he preacht consarning prayer. But on saboth day, not being in that trim that i would haue been in (I had a great band that cam over my shoulders that was not clene, and sum other things that I would have had,) I would not goe to meeting but walkt in the filds close by a meadow sid. Thare was, whether fly, wasp or hornet, I cannot tell, but it struck my finger, and watter and blod cam out of it and paind me mutch. I went up to a hous and shoud it, but thay knew not what a sting I had at my harte. Now I thout of my mothers words, that god would find me out. I hastend home to the Camber I lay in, at my masters house; and when i cam thare I toke my bybell and lokt over sum instructions my father had Ret, and I weapt sorly. The payne and swelling increast & sweld up to my shoulder. I prayd ernistly to god that he would pardon my sinn and heall my arme. I went to a surgin and askt him what it was. He said it was "the take". I askt him what he meant. He said it was taken by the provedens of god. This knoct home on my hart what my mother said, god will find you out. Now I made great promises that if god would here me this time I would Reforme. It pleased god in a short time to ease my [me] and I did Reforme, and stod in aw of gods Judgements, though I had a linkring mind after my former pastime.
3. Sources pertaining to Sarah Good.\(^2\) Here you have two pieces of testimony pertaining to Sarah Good, one of the three women first accused of witchcraft. She was executed on July 19, 1692. Sarah’s father, an innkeeper, died when she was a teenager. Her mother remarried and as a result Sarah and most of her siblings never received their inheritance from their father. Sarah married Daniel Poole but he died, and when he died he was in debt. Sarah inherited the responsibility for paying off his debts. Sarah’s fortunes did not improve when she married William Good and they were eventually forced to live on the charity of others. Many turned their backs on the couple. Sarah Good did not bear her misfortunes placidly, as the following documents show. Hostility was reciprocated by many Salemites and even by Good’s husband, William. During Good’s trial one of her accusers claimed that Good’s specter was stabbing her with a broken knife. The girl was examined and was found to have a knife stashed in her clothes. One of the men in the courtroom recognized the knife as one he had thrown away in the girl’s presence not long before. Despite this and other indications that the accusations against Good were unfounded, she was found guilty of witchcraft and sent to the scaffold. She refused to confess to witchcraft and remained crotchety and unrepentant to the end. At her execution, when the attending minister, Nicholas Noyes, asked Good one last time for a confession she responded that if she was killed God would make him (Noyes) drink blood. Interestingly, Noyes later died of an internal hemorrhage which caused him to bleed at the mouth.

When reading about Good and Bishop pay special attention to chronology. When did Good and Bishop supposedly act out their malevolent deeds?

Good: It was Osborne.
Hathorne: What is it that you say when you go muttering away from persons’ houses?
Good: If I must tell, I will tell.
Hathorne: Do tell us, then.
Good: If I must tell, I will tell: it is the commandments. I may say my commandments, I hope.
Hathorne: What commandment is it?
Good: If I must tell you, I will tell: it is a psalm.
Hathorne: What psalm?
After a long time she muttered over some part of a psalm.
Hathorne: Who do you serve?
Good: I serve God.
Hathorne: What God do you serve?
Good: The God that made heaven and earth (though she was not willing to mention the word God).

Her answers were in a very wicked, spiteful manner, reflecting and retorting against the authority with base and abusive words, and many lies she was taken in. It was here said that her husband had said that he was afraid that she either was a witch or would be one very quickly the worse. Mr. Hathorne asked him his reason why he said so of her, whether he had ever seen anything by her. He answered no, not in this nature, but it was her bad carriage to him. “And indeed,” said he, “I may say with tears that she is an enemy to all good.”

In other words, had he seen her do anything that might lead him to believe that she was a witch?

---

**Samuel Abbey and Mary Abbey against Sarah Good**

*June 29, 1692*

Samuel Abbey of Salem Village, aged forty-five years or thereabouts, and Mary Abbey, his wife, aged thirty-eight years or thereabouts, deposed and saith that about this time three years past, William Good and his wife Sarah Good, being destitute of a house to dwell in, these deponents, out of charity, they being poor, let them live in theirs some time, until that the said Sarah Good was of so turbulent a spirit, spiteful, and so maliciously bent that these deponents could not suffer her to live in their house any longer and was forced for quietness sake to turn her, the said Sarah, with her husband, out of their house. Ever since, which is about two years and an half ago, the said Sarah Good hath carried it very spitefully and maliciously towards them. The winter following after the said Sarah was gone from our house, we began to lose cattle and lost several after an unusual manner, in a drooping condition, and yet they would eat, and your deponents have lost after that manner seventeen head of cattle within two years, besides sheep and hogs, and both do believe they died by witchcraft. The said William Good on the last of May, [that] was twelve months ago, went home to his wife the said Sarah Good, and told her what a sad accident had fallen out. She asked what. He answered that his neighbor Abbey had lost two cows, both dying within half an hour of one another. The said Sarah Good said she did not care if he, the said Abbey, had lost all the cattle he had, as the said John Good told us. Just that very day that the said Sarah Good was taken up, we, your deponents, had a cow that could not rise alone, but since presently after she [Good] was taken up, the said cow was well and could rise so well as if she had ailed nothing. She, the said Sarah Good, ever since these deponents turned her out of their house, hath behaved herself very crossly and maliciously to them and their children, calling their children vile names and hath threatened them often.

---

10 Arrested.
4. Cotton Mather, *Wonders of the Invisible World* (1692) [a source pertaining to Bridget Bishop]. Bridget Bishop was the first woman convicted of witchcraft and executed (on June 10, 1692). Like Sarah Good, Bridget Bishop had been widowed (in Bishop’s case, multiple times). And like Good, Bishop flouted Puritan social expectations for women. But unlike Good, Bishop was prosperous and a regular church-goer. Bishop’s marriages had made her a wealthy woman and she owned two taverns. In addition, she dressed provocatively (by Puritan standards).

Cotton Mather was a prominent Puritan minister; he belonged to one of the leading families in Massachusetts Bay Colony. In his *Wonders of the Invisible World*, Cotton Mather summarized the trials of several of the accused witches, including Bridget Bishop. He wrote this book as a defense of the witch trials.

Accusations of witchcraft were not uncommon in England and its colonies in the seventeenth century, but convictions were rare because witchcraft was difficult to prove. One reason why so many men and women were found guilty of witchcraft in Salem and its environs in 1692 was that the courts chose to accept spectral evidence. So, for example, if someone claimed to have seen the specter of an accused witch doing something, this was seen as evidence that the accused was indeed a witch. During the trials, Cotton Mather was a firm supporter of the use of spectral evidence to convict accused witches.

II. The trial of Bridget Bishop: alias, Oliver, at the Court of Oyer and Terminer held at Salem, June 2, 1692.

I. She was indicted for bewitching of several persons in the neighborhood, the indictment being drawn up, according to the form in such cases usual. And pleading, not guilty, there were brought in several persons, who had long undergone many kinds of miseries, which were preternaturally inflicted, and generally ascribed unto a horrible witchcraft. There was little occasion to prove the witchcraft; it being evident and notorious to all beholders. Now to fix the witchcraft on the prisoner at the bar, the first thing used was, the testimony of the bewitched; whereof, several testified, that the shape of the prisoner did oftentimes very grievously pinch them, choke them, bite them, and afflict them; urging them to write their names in a book, which the said specter called, ours. One of them did further testify, that it was the shape of this prisoner, with another, which one day took her from her wheel, and carrying her to the riverside, threatened there to drown her; if she did not sign to the book mentioned: which yet she refused. Others of them did also testify, that the said shape, did in her threats, brag to them, that she had been the death of sundry persons, then by her named; that she had ridden a man, then likewise named. Another testified, the apparition of ghosts unto the specter of Bishop, crying out, you murdered us! About the truth whereof, there was in the matter of fact, but too much suspicion.

II. It was testified, that at the examination of the prisoner, before the magistrates, the bewitched were extremely tortured. If she did but cast her eyes on them, they were presently struck down; and this in such a manner as there could be no collusion in the business. But upon the touch of her hand upon them, when they lay in their swoons, they would immediately revive; and not upon the touch of anyone’s else. Moreover, upon some special actions of her body, as the shaking of her head, or the turning of her eyes, they presently and painfully fell into the like postures…
IV. One Deliverance Hobbs, who had confessed her being a witch, was now tormented by the specters, for her confession. And she now testified, that this Bishop, tempted her to sign the book again, and to deny what she had confessed. She affirmed, that it was the shape of this prisoner, which whipped her with iron rods, to compel her thereunto. And she affirmed, that this Bishop was at a general meeting of the witches, in a field at Salem Village and there partook of a diabolical sacrament, in bread and wine then administered!

V. To render it further unquestionable, that the prisoner at the bar, was the person truly charged in this witchcraft, there were produced many evidences of other witchcrafts, by her perpetrated. For instance, John Cook testified, that about five or six years ago, one morning, about sunrise, he was in his chamber, assaulted by the shape of this prisoner: which looked on him, grinned at him, and very much hurt him, with a blow on the side of the head; and that on the same day, about noon, the same shape walked in the room where he was, and an apple strangely flew out of his hand, into the lap of his mother, six or eight foot from him.

VI. Samuel Gray, testified, that about fourteen years ago, he waked on a night, and saw the room where he lay, full of light; and that he then saw plainly a woman between the cradle, and the bedside, which looked upon him. He rose, and it vanished; though he found the doors all fast. Looking out at the entry door, he saw the same woman, in the same garb again; and said, In God's name, what do you come for? He went to bed, and had the same woman again assaulting him. The child in the cradle gave a great screech, and the woman disappeared. It was long before the child could be quieted; and though it were a very likely thriving child, yet from this time it pined away, and after divers months died in a sad condition. He knew not Bishop, nor her name; but when he saw her after this, he knew by her countenance, and apparel, and all circumstances, that it was the apparition of this Bishop, which had thus troubled him.

IX. Samuel Shattuck testified, that in the year 1680, this Bridget Bishop, often came to his house upon such frivolous and foolish errands, that they suspected she came indeed with a purpose of mischief. Presently whereupon his eldest child, which was of as promising health and sense, as any child of its age, began to droop exceedingly; and the oftener that Bishop came to the house, the worse grew the child. As the child would be standing at the door, he would be thrown and bruised against the stones, by an invisible hand, and in like sort knock his face against the sides of the house, and bruise it after a miserable manner. Afterwards this Bishop would bring him things to dye, whereof he could not imagine any use; and when she paid him a piece of money, the purse and money were unaccountably conveyed out of a locked box, and never seen more. The child was immediately hereupon taken with terrible fits, whereof his friends thought he would have died: indeed he did almost nothing but cry and sleep for several months together: and at length his understanding was utterly taken away.

XI. William Stacy testified, that receiving money of this Bishop, for work done by him, he was gone but a matter of three rods from her, and looking for his money, found it unaccountably gone from him. Some time after, Bishop asked him whether his father would grind her grist for her? He demanded why? She replied, Because folks count me a witch. He answered, No question, but he will grind it for you. Being then gone about six rods from her, with a small load in his cart, suddenly the off-wheel slumped and sunk down into a hole upon plain ground, so that the deponent [William Stacy], was forced to get help for the recovering of the wheel. But stepping back to look for the hole which might give him this disaster, there was none at all to be found…
XII. To crown all, John Bly, and William Bly, testified, that being employed by Bridget Bishop, to help take down the cellar wall, of the old house, wherein she formerly lived, they did in holes of the said old wall, find several poppets, made up of rags, and hog’s bristles, with headless pins in them, the points being outward. Whereof she could now give no account unto the court, that was reasonable or tolerable.

XIII. One thing that made against the prisoner was, her being evidently convicted of gross lying, in the court, several times, while she was making her plea. But besides this, a jury of women, found a preternatural teat upon her body; but upon a second search, within three or four hours, there was no such thing to be seen. There was also an account of other people whom this woman had afflicted. And there might have been many more, if they had been, inquired for. But there was no need of them.