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# TESTIMONIES

CONCERNING

THE CHARACTER AND MINISTRY OF

**MOTHER ANN LEE**

AND THE FIRST WITNESSES OF THE GOSPEL OF

**CHRIST'S SECOND APPEARING;**

GIVEN BY SOME OF THE AGED BRETHREN AND SISTERS  
OF THE

139-3

**UNITED SOCIETY,**

INCLUDING A FEW SKETCHES OF THEIR OWN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE:

APPROVED BY THE CHURCH.

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We are witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom  
God hath given to them that obey him. *Acts v. 32.*

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ALBANY:  
PRINTED BY PACKARD & VAN BENTHUYSEN.

.....  
1827.



*Northern District of New-York, to wit:*



BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the seventh day of May in the fifty-first year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1827, Seth Y. Wells, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor in the words following, to wit :

"Testimonies concerning the character and ministry of Mother Ann Lee and the first witnesses of the gospel of Christ's second appearing ; given by some of the aged brethren and sisters of the United Society, including a few sketches of their own religious experience : approved by the Church. We are witnesses of these things ; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. *Acts v. 32.*"

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned ;" and also to the act entitled "An Act supplementary to an act entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints "

R. R. LANSING, Clerk

*Of the District Court of the United States  
for the Northern District of New-York.*

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## TO THE READER.



THE testimonies contained in the following pages will speak for themselves. They have been given by members of the United Society who are venerable for their age, long experience, and respectable standing in the Society; persons whose honesty and integrity have been faithfully proved, and in whose veracity the reader may safely place entire confidence. These witnesses having embraced the gospel of their present faith during the period of Mother Ann's ministry in this country, and having lived in obedience to her testimony more than forty years, they have sufficiently proved its nature and tendency by its effects upon themselves, and by the blessed fruits of righteousness which it has produced in the Society. Hence they are fully able to bear witness to others concerning the character and ministry of the first founders, who came from England, and also of the blessed effects of that gospel which was revealed by them, and which is still maintained in the Society. Perhaps there is more said respecting Mother Ann's moral character than was necessary; but as there has been such a flood of slander poured out against it, the witnesses, generally, having had perfect knowledge of her character, felt it their duty to say something in contradiction of such base and unjust slanders. But we are confident that every candid person will readily perceive, by the testimony of her works, that there could be no foundation for charges of such a nature.

*Admitted by B. ...*  
JUN 18 '47

A part of these testimonies have been written by the persons whose signatures they bear; but as a number of the witnesses, either from age and infirmity or want of practice in writing, were unable to draft their own testimonies, they communicated the substance to some of their brethren or sisters who were able to write it for them; and the manuscripts have either been examined by them, or carefully read to them, and wherever any thing occurred that was not stated exactly according to the sense and understanding of the witness who gave it, it was altered or

JUN 12 '43

amended agreeable to his or her feelings; so that nothing should be published or put on record but what should meet the sense and feelings of the subscribing witness. Great care and pains have been taken in this respect, by those concerned in writing these testimonies, as well as by the subscriber in preparing them for the press. And as the witnesses are still living, they are ready and willing to bear testimony to the truth of what they have stated, and to give all necessary information to any candid and honest enquirer who may desire it. The peculiar phraseology observable in some of these testimonies, may appear singular to readers unaccustomed to the like; but plain and simple truth has been the only aim, and it is hoped they will be found intelligible to all.

Many more testimonies have been written and collected which are equally worthy of confidence with those contained in the following pages; but as these are considered amply sufficient for the present publication, it is judged advisable not to enlarge the work; they are therefore omitted: they will however be preserved in the Church for any future occasion that may require their publication.

SETH Y. WELLS.

*New-Lebanon, May 1st, 1827.*

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☞ Readers who desire further information respecting the faith and principles of the United Society, are referred to a small volume entitled, *A Summary View of the Millennial Church*; also to *The Testimony of Christ's Second Appearing*, and to *Dunlavy's Manifesto*.

## INTRODUCTION.



Among the various movements and revolutions that are constantly taking place in the civil, political and moral world, the subject of religion, in many places, appears to attract unusual attention. Many are seriously enquiring, "What shall we do to be saved?" Some are looking to one denomination and some to another. And where souls are seriously awakened in their enquiries, their convictions of sin, and their desires to obtain the life and power of religion, naturally lead them to form a connection with those sects and denominations which, in their opinion, possess the most of it. And it may often be observed that they will cleave to those who appear to have the most zeal, and whose religion is displayed in many words, and abounds with long prayers, flaming sermons and much noise.

By these means they are frequently led into the dark mazes of fanaticism, where they get bewildered and lost amidst a confusion of false ideas and notions, injected into the mind by the spirit of Antichrist. Hence arise their exalted imaginations of heavenly things, while the true substance of the cross of Christ, and the real work of humiliation and repentance are quite overlooked. We readily admit that the strong wind, the earthquake and the fire are all necessary in their proper time and season; but where the *still small voice* is wanting, the essential word of God cannot be heard.

Awakened souls, who are truly and honestly seeking after godliness, ought seriously to consider that sin is the only separating wall between God and the soul; that the way out of sin is the only way to Heaven; and that unless they can find some way of deliverance from those evil propensities which naturally lead into sin, they never can find salvation from sin, nor obtain an entrance into the Kingdom of Christ. Powerful conviction may awaken their souls; but cannot save them, nor deliver

them from the bondage of sin. They ought therefore to seek **some effectual way of deliverance, and not rely upon their supposed conversion for deliverance while their inbred corruptions still remain.**

The false ideas and erroneous opinions which prevail so extensively among the professors of religion, about conversion, regeneration and the new birth, may be found among the dark inventions of Antichrist. They are the delusive charms made use of by the Devil, to lull souls into a fatal security about their future state, while their lusts and corruptions still remain in full force within them. There are indeed many souls who, after being awakened by the spirit and power of conviction, so as to feel themselves separated and lost from God, will sometimes earnestly cry for mercy till they are near falling into despair. In this situation, a ray of light from some ministering spirit of Heaven, is sometimes conveyed into their souls, in some way or manner, for their relief and encouragement. This may be more or less powerful, according to the nature of their conviction and their humility under it. But alas! this merciful condescension of heavenly love, instead of being rightly improved, is often taken for an evidence that they are regenerated and born of God, and all their sins forgiven; as tho' this great work required nothing more than what is wrought by this instantaneous operation of Divine Power, sent to inspire hope and encourage the soul in the way of well doing.

To be converted signifies nothing more, in reality, than to be turned or changed; and a man may be turned from the error of his ways, and do better than he has done; and he may afterwards be turned back again and do worse. But these turnings or conversions will never redeem his soul from the corruptions of a fallen and depraved nature. He may experience a thousand such conversions without finding any deliverance from the bondage of sin, or travelling one step in the regeneration. The work of regeneration is not the work of a moment, a day nor a year; it is the work of our whole lives. Its effect is to purify the soul from sin, and raise it from the death of the fall to a life of righteousness in Christ. It is impossible for any soul to travel

in the regeneration while living in any known sin; and without a travel in the regeneration, no soul can ever find the new birth. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (See I. John iii 9, & v. 18.) This is the testimony of the beloved apostle John; and it is well worthy of the serious consideration of those who think themselves regenerated and born of God, and yet live in sin. These darkening clouds of anti-christian delusion about the work of regeneration, must be effectually removed before souls can truly find out what they *must* do to be saved.

When the present testimony of the gospel which we have received, was first declared in this country, there were many who had long been waiting for some Divine manifestation to remove those clouds of darkness and dead formalities under which they had long groaned, and which seemed to overwhelm the professors of religion around them. Their object was to find something that would not only convince the understanding, but purify the heart from dead works, and effectually deliver the soul from the bondage of a sinful nature. They could not build their hopes of salvation upon a transient ray of Divine light that affected the sense and feelings for a little moment, and then left them to wander in darkness and doubt till another momentary return of the same or something similar. Nay; they could not rest satisfied short of an enduring substance—a light that would continue to shine brighter and brighter till the perfect day—an essential reality that could not be doubted—that was as evident as the light of the sun in a clear day, and as indisputable to themselves as their existence.

This they confidently expected from the assurance they had received in the light of the revival of 1779;—nor were they deceived. Tho' it came from a quarter where they had never looked for it, and in a manner which they had never thought of; yet it proved to be an indisputable reality, evidently proceeding from a source which must, of necessity, be pure and divine, and resting on a foundation firm as the everlasting hills. Such was Mother Ann's testimony in the view of these honest

enquirers; and they fully believed it, because they were firmly convinced that they felt the witness of it in their own souls. Yet they could know it, *in reality*, till they had faithfully proved it by their own actual knowledge and experience. And this they could not do without receiving and walking in it, and yielding a ready and willing obedience, from the very heart, to all its instructions.

Here they found the cross; here they had a clear view of the essential difference between the spirit of the world and the spirit of Christ; here they saw the separating line between the righteous and the wicked; between the flesh and the spirit—between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. And they were no longer at a loss about the way in which they *must walk* to find salvation, if they wished ever to obtain it. All queries on that subject were now at an end with them. The only object that now remained was for them to make their choice, and decide for themselves, whether they would embrace the cross of Christ which now appeared so plain before them, and renounce forever the alluring enticements of the world and the darling pleasures of the flesh; or lose all these heavenly prospects which had been opened to their view in the revival.

The contrast between these two was clear and striking; but the cross appeared terrible; and many who had been active and zealous in the revival, were now filled with fear and trembling, from an awful and deep sense of the greatness of the undertaking, and its infinite importance to their eternal welfare. Hence those who were honest-hearted, and willing to make any sacrifice for the salvation of their souls, could not hesitate. Without waiting to consult with flesh and blood, they readily embraced the testimony; and confessed their sins with a full determination to take up their crosses and follow Christ in the regeneration, regardless of what *they* might suffer from the enemies of the cross, through evil report or persecution. And tho a large portion of these things soon fell to their lot; yet it did not discourage nor dishearten them. They fully believed that those who were not willing to *suffer* with Christ, and for his sake, could never *reign* with him. And by the opposition they met

with, they were enabled to see more clearly the darkness and blindness that overwhelmed the antichristian world, and the envenomed spirit of persecution which ruled and governed in it.

On the other hand, they were able to feel a more lively sensation of the peaceable nature of Christ's Kingdom, and to know by daily experience, its peaceful, yet powerful operations in their own souls, continually purifying their consciences from dead works, and drawing their souls nearer to the living fountain of life. By their obedience to the testimony they found increasing light and understanding in the things of God, increasing power and victory over the nature of evil in themselves, and an increasing sense and feeling of true humility, which constantly taught them their daily dependance on the mercy and goodness of God for all their protection and all their enjoyments. They also found an increasing sense of thankfulness and gratitude to God for divine manifestations and heavenly blessings. They now felt an increasing love to each other, and to all the household of faith. And in the temporal prosperity with which God has continually blessed them, they have not been forgetful of the poor and needy of this world; and their charity for a lost and perishing world, and their sincere desires for the happiness of their fellow creatures, are the effects of that blessed gospel which they first received from Mother Ann, and in which they have been increasing from that day to this.

Thus those of the Society who first embraced this testimony, and who have walked in obedience to it, have proved it to be the true and genuine testimony of Christ; because it has not only kept them from all actual sin in their knowledge, and saved them from those pollutions which are in the world "through lust;" but it has also proved a source of never failing comfort and peace,—"a well of living water springing up to everlasting life," by which their souls are supplied from day to day with the spirit of divine life.

These things are not cunningly devised fables, but serious realities. They are nothing less than the blessed effects of those divine manifestations showered down from Heaven, which have supported these faithful followers of the Lamb through all those



trials and afflictions which they have endured from the enmity of the wicked since they first embraced the testimony. And these divine manifestations have been continued to them from that time to this, and have continued to produce the same salutary effects in every faithful soul. Hence the subscribers of the following testimonies, from a sense of duty and tender compassion to lost souls, have given a few sketches of their own knowledge and experience, that all who are honestly seeking after the way of life and salvation may become partakers of the same divine blessings.

S. Y. W.

# TESTIMONIES.



## TESTIMONY OF JOHN FARRINGTON.

In consequence of an extraordinary revival of religion which took place at New-Lebanon in the summer of 1779, and extended through the neighboring towns, I was brought into a deep labor of mind concerning my own salvation. In this revival I diligently attended the meetings, and was much engaged in religious exercises, by which I was greatly awakened to pray earnestly to God for deliverance from sin, and from the nature of evil ; but no deliverance could I find.

I closely observed the operations of this revival ; but could not find that it wrought any abiding effect upon its subjects. I therefore diligently searched the scriptures, prayed to God, and confessed my sins to Him alone in secret places. But all this produced no abiding comfort ; for I found that in all my labors and struggles I could not obtain any victory over sin ; nor could I see any among the subjects of the revival that appeared in any better situation, as to religion, than myself. Notwithstanding all my experience in the illuminations of the Divine Spirit, and all the flattering encouragements of many old professors, who earnestly endeavored to persuade me that I was a christian and an heir of salvation, my feelings were not satisfied. I felt myself unworthy of the name of a christian, and had no confidence in making a public profession of religion, unless I could live according to my profession ; and therefore determined not to name the name of Christ, till I could depart from iniquity, nor call myself a christian without being convinced that I was such in reality. (See 2 Tim. ii. 19.)

In the spring of the year 1780, I received intelligence of a singular sect of christians who had come from England, and lived somewhere above Albany, and who excited much attention on account of the singularity of their religion and the remarkable power and operations which

attended it. This intelligence made me very anxious to see the people for my own satisfaction, feeling myself fully prepared by my late experience and my knowledge of the scriptures, to receive an understanding, and to judge of the virtue and efficacy of their religion. In agreement with my parents I went to see them, (being then in the 20th year of my age,) and was among the first in this country who visited these remarkable strangers. I found them indeed a very singular people; and after critical enquiry and careful observation, I had evidence sufficient to satisfy me that they possessed the power of God beyond any other people I had ever seen. Instead of asking me to tell my religious experience, and inviting me to join the church, as my former teachers had done, Mother Ann Lee, the leader of this little community, taught me the necessity of confessing my sins in the presence of God's witnesses, and showed me the propriety of bringing my deeds to the light, and of being joined to the Lord in one spirit, according to the scriptures. I saw and acknowledged this to be right. I tarried several days, and saw with much admiration the wonderful displays of Divine Power among these people.

When I was about to take my leave of them to return home, Mother Ann told me I might open my mind and confess my sins, if I was so minded, before I returned home. I said I believed it to be right to confess my sins; but I had thought to return home and labor to get a deeper sense of sin, and try to mend my life a little. Mother replied, "That is very good; but you can gain a deeper sense of sin after you have confessed them, as well as before, and be better able to mend your life." Being fully convinced by what I had heard and seen, that this was the real requirement of God, I undertook it, and made as honest a confession as I was able at that time. After I had got through, Mother said, "You have done very well so far; but you have not confessed all." She then told me of a number of secret sins that I had committed, which I had not recollected, and which I well knew was before unknown to any living mortal but myself: and I was fully convinced that she could not have known these things but by the revelation of God. I therefore felt able to return home and say as the woman of Sa-

maria did of Jesus Christ, *I have seen a woman who was able to tell me all that I ever did in my life.*

Here I received that holy unction from Christ, through Mother Ann, that fully enabled me to cease from sin. Here I found boldness and confidence before God and all men, and felt my adoption into the family of Christ, and among the sons of God. Here I found an entrance into the pure and peaceable Kingdom of Christ, and felt my soul united to the invisible, heavenly host, and filled with the quickening power of God, which gave me strength to resist all evil, and to keep every sinful propensity in subjection to the law of Christ. And I felt a full assurance that by continuing in obedience to the testimony I had then embraced, I should gain a complete dominion over the powers of darkness, and reign triumphant with Christ, in purity and holiness. In this I have not been deceived; for I have found my faith fully verified. Indeed it is impossible it should be otherwise; for the testimony that I received, and with which I united, was like a two edged sword against all ungodliness and every appearance of evil; therefore all who are obedient to it, must certainly be saved from all ungodliness. This grace I have obtained, and this power I have received through the special ministration of Mother Ann Lee, whose piercing testimony awakened the inmost feelings of my soul, and roused the sleeping faculties of my mind, which had long been bound in nature's darkness.

Thus did my soul receive a special manifestation of the healing power of God, as really as the impotent man at the Beautiful gate of the temple received the miraculous cure from Peter and John. (See Acts iii.) And here I would ask all candid people, By what authority and power did Peter and John heal the lame man's infirmity? Did they communicate that which they did not possess? Peter testified that God had glorified his son Jesus; and through faith in this same Jesus whom they had crucified, was this man healed. Even so I can testify before all men, that it was through faith in Mother Ann, whom God raised up and endowed with the spirit of Christ, that I was healed of the infirmities of my spirit; even through Christ manifested in that woman, who was shamefully persecuted, abused and slandered by a lawless and wick-

ed generation; because she zealously maintained the principles of purity and holiness, and boldly testified, by precept and example, against all the abominations of the wicked.

It must appear evident to every reasonable mind, that had she not possessed the spirit and power of Christ, she could not have communicated it to others. And had she been laden with iniquity, and fraught with evil and unclean spirits, as many have asserted, she could not have purged those things from other souls. Christ did not cast out devils by Beelzebub, and no one else could ever do it. The nature of evil and all evil deeds are directly opposed to godliness, and if ever subdued and purged out of a soul, it must be done by the spirit and power of goodness, or it never can be done at all. And had not Mother Ann brought forth the genuine fruits of righteousness in her own life and example, she never could have wrought in souls such conviction of sin, and turned so many from the ways of iniquity into the pure paths of peace and righteousness, as she has done; and that this was truly the fruit of her labors, many living witnesses can testify from their own personal knowledge and experience.

But this same Ann Lee, this instrument in the hands of God, by whom so many souls have received life and salvation, is accused of all manner of evil by the enemies of righteousness and purity. Her name is cast out as evil; her character has been impeached by the tongue of slander; she has been called a blasphemer and a lewd prostitute; she has been charged with beastly intemperance and witchcraft, and many other abominations; and all this catalogue of crimes have been alledged against her by those who had little or no acquaintance with her.

Now let the candid among mankind judge and compare evidences; let them contrast the accusations against her with her uniform testimony and doctrine. Her worst enemies cannot deny that her testimony was as opposite to every evil of which she is accused, as fire is opposite to water. Can any man or woman of common sense suppose that thousands of rational beings, born in a land of liberty and civilization, and brought up in the midst of moral and religious principles and instructions, and in the pursuit of a pure and undefiled religion, and who possess-

ed all the propensities of human nature common to other people, would deny themselves of all worldly pleasures and enjoyments, and subject themselves to the dictates of a woman of base character, who lived in direct opposition to those principles which she daily preached to others? Or are the people called Shakers such dupes to folly and fanaticism that they will constrain themselves against every dictate of reason and common sense, and in violation of every feeling of nature, to maintain for such a long period of time, the principles of a fanatical female whose life and example contradicted her own testimony?

I was well acquainted with Mother Ann, and had many opportunities with her during her ministration in this country. Being a free man, and feeling a powerful religious attachment to her and the Elders with her, I embraced every suitable opportunity to visit them, and be in their company at the different places where they ministered the gospel. I often visited them at Watervliet, and was with them in prison at Albany—I was with them at Harvard, Shirley, Woburn, Ashfield, Richmond and Hancock, in Massachusetts, at Enfield in Connecticut, and here at New-Lebanon: I have seen and heard them in many meetings, and was well knowing to their deportment in public and private, and was well acquainted with their manners at home and abroad, and therefore feel fully able to give a true statement of their lives and characters. And I feel it justly my duty to contradict the false reports which have been spread abroad by the tongue of slander concerning them: for in all my acquaintance with them, I have ever observed the same uniform example of temperance, chastity, righteousness, and every gospel virtue. Their lives and characters were in strict conformity to the doctrine and example of Christ; and they constantly taught the same to others.

Altho many malicious and abusive charges have been published abroad in the world, for the purpose of criminating the character of this Society and its first founders; yet all that can be said in the spirit of slander, is unworthy of the credit or attention of any rational person. Those who have little or no acquaintance with the Society, are not qualified to give any correct information concerning it. And as to those who have apostatized from

us, they condemn themselves by violating their own faith and consciences ; and to them the words of the beloved apostle will justly apply : " They went out from us, but they were not of us ; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us." (See 1 John ii. 19.) Many such unfaithful members have vainly pretended to hold relation for a season ; but their ungodliness has justly brought them under reproof ; and instead of reforming, they have thereby taken occasion to indulge themselves in resentment and falsehood, and to deny the faith which they had once embraced, and become as traitors to those who honestly maintain the cross of Christ. Such apostates have often palmed upon the Society and its leaders the crimes which they themselves had committed, while pretending to hold relation with us.

The crime of drunkenness, in particular, has often been charged upon Mother and her companions, with a degree of assurance that seemed to defy contradiction. But were these charges to be closely investigated, instead of the positive evidence of facts, they would be found to rest on the assertions of malice, the surmises of prejudice, and the hearsay of scandal. I can truly testify, from my own personal acquaintance, that the character and example of Mother and the Elders were altogether the reverse of any excess, either in drinking or eating, or any other indulgence whatever : and that they invariably taught the same sobriety and temperance to others. I have been a witness to many instances in which Mother admonished intemperance in those whom she taught ; but in no way did she do it more effectually than by the godly example which she continually displayed, during the whole of her life, among us. Ever faithful in good works, she often deprived herself of comforts, that she might be able to comfort others. She spared not her strength nor her life in promoting the cause of God, in strengthening the feeble, comforting the afflicted, reproofing the careless, correcting disorders, purging out sin, and zealously striving, at all times, to build up righteousness and peace in all who embraced her testimony.

I once was young, but now I am old ; and through my life, have been an attentive observer of the ways and actions of men ; but I have never seen the persecutor

prosper, nor the vile slanderer rise to honor. When the gospel first opened here in New-Lebanon, the little despised flock who first embraced it, were mostly people of small property, and in low circumstances; many among us were indeed very poor; and all of us, like the rest of mankind, were bound in sin and iniquity, possessing our full share of all the evil propensities of a fallen nature, and sunk in slothfulness, filthiness, intemperance, and a multitude of other evil habits. These were our inward enemies with which we had to contend; while without we had the prejudices, jealousies, slanders and persecutions of an unbelieving world to encounter, who spared no pains in trying to impede the work of God among us, and discourage us in our undertaking, crying out, *delusion! fanaticism! witchcraft! the work of the devil!* and the like—confidently predicting that we should soon run out and come to nought; and many expressed their belief that we should become chargeable to the town.

But what has been the result? I bless the God of Heaven that I have lived to see the fulfilment of those blessed promises, given us by the faithful messengers of truth, who first administered the gospel to us, "That if we would yield a faithful obedience to the law of Christ, now made manifest, we should be blessed in our outgoings and incomings—in our basket and in our store; and above all that we should enjoy the blessings of peace and salvation, which Christ had promised to the faithful." As the fruits of their precepts and examples of industry, neatness, prudence, temperance and godliness, I have seen a Society of people spring up, and grow and increase in order, beauty and harmony, till they are, in my view, the glory of the earth—a city of refuge—a shining light and a tree of life to the nations.

On the other hand, I have seen the false accuser, the vile slanderer and proud persecutor, who gladly would have trampled under foot the meek and lowly followers of Christ, either left to become a shame and a reproach to civil society, outcasts among men and vagabonds in the earth; or if their rank and standing in society has preserved them from these disgraces, they have not escaped the stains of dishonor, nor the stings of a guilty conscience. Numbers have lingered out their days under



evident guilt and condemnation, and left this mortal stage with "a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation," knowing that the day of reckoning must come. Where now are those proud and malicious persecutors who vainly strove against the work of God here in New-Lebanon and its vicinity, in the early days of our faith? Behold, they are scattered to the four winds! But few remain in this town, as the sad relics of a dishonored gang—a once haughty, riotous, cruel and unfeeling band of intolerant persecutors. Many of them have been swept from the earth by untimely deaths and retributive judgments, till nothing but an empty name is left to their forlorn remembrance. They have received the reward of their doings, and shared the fate of persecutors in every age of the world. Hence it is a point of wisdom for all who know not this gospel, to beware how they treat it; for whether they believe it or not, it is a serious reality, that the God of Heaven has laid the foundation: Christ has set up a kingdom on earth which shall never have an end. And those who bless this work, will be blessed; and those who curse it, will be cursed. (See Gen. xii. 3.)

Knowing and feeling a sense of these things, and standing in the fear of God, I solemnly warn all to be careful that they *touch not the Lord's anointed, and do his people no harm*. Remember the counsel of Gamaliel to the Jewish high priest and his council: "Refrain from these men and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." (See Acts v. 38, 39.)

JOHN FARRINGTON.

*New-Lebanon, June, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF ELIAB HARLOW.

In consequence of the many vague and contradictory reports which have been spread abroad in the world concerning the first founders of this Society, many candid and respectable people have expressed a desire to receive

from living witnesses, belonging to the Society, a true statement of facts respecting its first rise in this country, and especially concerning the character and manners, moral and religious, of the first founders and leaders. As I was one among the first who embraced the faith and tenets of the Society, and have had a general knowledge of the circumstances of its rise and establishment, and was intimately acquainted with Mother Ann Lee, and the first Elders and leaders, I shall endeavor to give a little sketch of facts which came under my own observation at different times and places.

Having received intelligence of a strange people living in the wilderness above Albany, who came from England, and who attracted considerable attention on account of the new and very singular religion which they professed, I felt an inclination to visit them. Accordingly, in the fore part of June, 1780, I set out one Saturday morning, in company with a number of other young people, to go and see them, with a view to attend their meeting the next day. As I was, at that time, about 18 years of age, of an airy turn of mind, and full of vanity, I did not go with the expectation of getting or seeing any good; but merely to gratify my curiosity, as I had heard that they were exercised with singular and strange operations. But when I came to see the people and their worship, and heard their testimony and observed the remarkable operations which attended them, my mind was struck with the fear of God, and I was fully convinced that the power of God was there. Mother Ann's appearance seemed truly beautiful and heavenly, while walking the floor under the beautiful operations of the power of God: such Godly fear and heavenly love I never beheld in any person before. As my mind, at that time, was not biassed with any kind of prejudice, neither in favor of the people nor against them, I could look on with an impartial eye, and felt able to judge with candor. The beautiful singing of Mother Ann so attracted my feelings that I was really delighted with it; and indeed no one could listen to it without admiration; even her very countenance could not but inspire a heavenly sensation. In passing by me, as she walked the floor, she turned to me and said, "Young man, you must wait with patience; your time is not come.

yet." This she repeated several times, which inspired me with a feeling of reverential love. What it meant I could not then comprehend ; but I kept my feelings from my companions.

After returning home and reflecting on what I had seen and heard, I found that I was not yet prepared to take up a full cross against the world, the flesh and all evil, according to the testimony which Mother had held forth. I was very proud, and was not willing to let my faith and feelings be known to my nearest friends. So I went on, consulting my own feelings, and trying to pray to God and keep myself from sin ; but I found I was not able to resist temptations, and was frequently overcome in many ways, until I drew up a determination to take up my cross and confess my sins as soon as I could get a suitable opportunity. After this, I had power to resist temptations, which strengthened me in my resolution.

Persecutions soon arose, and through the malicious influence of those who hated the cross, and were determined to put a stop to the increase of the work of God, Mother and the Elders were imprisoned in Albany, together with a number of leading characters who had embraced their faith, from New-Lebanon. This prevented me from visiting them again until a little before Mother was separated from the rest of her companions, and sent to Poughkeepsie jail, when I visited them in prison, and still found them the same wonderful people, still bearing a powerful testimony against all sin, with a courage and fortitude which remained entirely unshaken by their imprisonment. Tho confined within the walls of a prison, they could speak the word of God through the grates of the prison to multitudes of people with undiminished confidence in that divine authority by which they were commissioned. In this prison I had a privilege to fulfil my promise, and confessed my sins to one of the Elders. Ever after this I found increasing strength to bear a testimony to others, and to keep my justification and live in obedience to the instructions which I had received from Mother and the Elders.

After they were released from prison, I had many opportunities with them at Watervliet, Harvard, Ashfield, Hancock, New-Lebanon and Stephentown ; and I always

found their example to correspond with their teaching. They maintained an inflexible and undeviating testimony against all dishonesty, fraud, covetousness, injustice, slothfulness, idleness, hypocrisy, lies, lust, pride, fleshly affections, and intemperance of every kind. They taught us to be prudent and saving in all things that God had entrusted to our care: "for (said they,) you cannot make one grain of corn, nor one spear of grass grow without the blessing of God." They taught these things by example as well as by precept; for they were remarkably prudent in all these things. I have seen Mother, after feeding a large concourse of people, go to the tables and examine the situation in which they were left, and gather up the fragments, and pick the bones which had been carelessly left with meat on them, and make her meal out of the fragments and gleanings of the tables; and say, "You New-England people are very wasteful; you ought to pick your bones clean, and be more saving and prudent; you must save all, and let nothing be lost through your carelessness, that you may have something to give to the needy."

Mother always manifested great concern for the protection of those who had set out to take up their crosses against a carnal nature, and follow Christ in the regeneration. Knowing that we were unskilful and unacquainted with the subtilties and wiles of Satan, and were exposed to be caught in his snares many ways, she spared no pains, day nor night, to teach us how to shun the snares of the adversary. She would often speak to the young people after this manner: "See that you do not lay temptations to provoke carnal desires in each other; but shun every appearance of evil. Ye young women, see that you behave yourselves modestly in all your manners before the young men, and in no wise entice them. And you young men, see that you lay no temptations before the young women, as they are the weaker vessel. But if they should be overcome in their feelings, and offer themselves to you, stand ye like men of God, and teach them the consequences of those things, and save yourselves and them."

Mother also taught the married people to be careful, and see that they laid no snares for each other. "But

“do your duty to each other in the fear of God, (said she,) and love one another as Christ loves the Church. Christ never had carnal knowledge of the Church; so you must labor to subdue a carnal nature in yourselves; and in so doing, you may be helps to each other. And be agreed to bring up your children in the fear of God, and be careful to govern them. See that while one is correcting a child, the other does not take the child’s part; for that will spoil the child, and neither of you will be able to govern your children so.”

Thus did she instruct the married and the unmarried, each according to their situation and circumstances, and spared no pains to plant the principles of purity and righteousness in all. And all who were faithful and obedient to her instructions, found an increasing victory over the nature of evil, and proved the truth of her testimony by their own experience.

Many evil reports have been circulated in the world against Mother and the Elders, in which they have been stigmatized as the basest of characters. Mother, in particular, has been charged with drunkenness and debauchery, and all manner of evil, by the enemies of truth. But I would ask, Who are the best able to give correct information concerning her character; those who have had the most intimate acquaintance with her, and who have been honestly seeking after the truth, with a full determination to walk in it—who have continued to obey the light of God revealed to them through Mother and the Elders, and have received the fruits of their labors, which are righteousness and peace, and a justified conscience? or those who are seeking every indulgence of a carnal nature, to fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and who are therefore ready to swallow down every evil report which they can find; like base birds and beasts, that delight to seek out and devour carrion?

The truth is, Mother saw the loss of man to be in the lust of the flesh, and took up her cross against that fallen nature, in all its branches, and labored in sufferings and cries to God for deliverance from it. And she continued to labor for mortification and death to that nature, until she found complete redemption from it, and in my view she was as free from any carnal desires as a new born in-

fant ; for all her conduct clearly showed it ; and I have not the least doubt that she was so in the sight of a pure and holy God. Hence she was able to teach and lead other souls out of that corrupt nature ; and her testimony was like a flaming sword against it in all its branches. This was so opposite to the nature and feelings of fallen man, that she and her testimony were both despised and hated. And this has been the cause of all the evil reports that have been spread abroad against her and her followers. But I can testify that all those slanderous reports are false, and without the smallest foundation in truth.

When I take a view of the goodness of God in calling me from the course of the world, in the prime of life and in the height of youthful vanity, to take up my cross and embrace the gospel of Christ's second appearance, through Mother Ann, I feel myself under the greatest obligations of thankfulness to God : for this gospel has saved me from the pollutions that are in the world through lust. And I am confident that the gospel which is able to save me from sin in this world, will save me from the punishment of sin, which is death and hell, in the world to come. By strict obedience to the orders and counsels which have been graciously given by Mother Ann, and those who have stood as her successors in the lead, I have found that degree of mortification and death to all carnal inclinations, that instead of feeling desirable, they are odious and loathsome to every feeling of my soul.

And I can truly say, that the comfort and peace I daily enjoy in the gospel, more than repays me for all the crosses I have taken up, besides the assurance I feel of eternal happiness hereafter. Therefore I can testify by my own experience, to the truth of our Saviour's promise : " There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions ; and in the world to come eternal life." (See Mark x. 29, 30.) After having forsaken all for the gospel, I have received an hundred fold of heavenly blessings and gospel union, with parents

and elders, brethren and sisters, which I would not exchange for all the glory, riches and honors of this world.

ELIAB HARLOW.

*New-Lebanon, July 21st, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF RACHEL SPENCER

As I have found the gospel of Christ's second appearing to be the greatest treasure I can enjoy in this world, and as I was among the first in this country who received this precious treasure from Mother Ann Lee, and became personally acquainted with her, I feel it my privilege to maintain her testimony and bear witness of her character and ministry.

I lived in New-Lebanon in the time of the great revival of 1779, when religion seemed to call the attention of almost all classes of people. I was then about fifteen years of age; and tho I sometimes attended their meetings, and was not without serious impressions; yet I made no professions of religion: for I considered it no trifling matter to profess to be a christian and not be one in reality. And I could not consider myself one; because I knew I did not follow Christ. Nor could I see among all the professors, any one that I thought did follow him as I believed a christian ought to do. But when I heard of Mother Ann and her companions, and was told of their faith and testimony, and the manner of life they lived, I felt a serious impression on my mind that they were the true people of God, and I had a great desire to go and see them.

But I soon found that the reports which had made such an impression on my feelings, had produced a very different effect upon my parents, and filled their minds with prejudice against the people and their religion. Tho the opinion of my parents did not alter my feelings; yet as I was young, I thought it best for me to keep still and say nothing till I could go and see them and judge for myself.

It was not long before I had an opportunity to visit them at Watervliet, in company with a considerable number of other young people from New-Lebanon; and I was soon convinced that they were indeed the true followers of Christ, such as I had never seen before. We spent the Sabbath there and attended their worship, saw the mighty power of God among them, and heard their testimony, which made a deep and solemn impression upon us all. Many of our company had been very light and carnal while on our way there; but they returned with very different feelings. On our way home, all were solemn, silent and thoughtful; scarcely a word was spoken by any of the company. None doubted of its being the work of God; nor did they hesitate long in making their choice. Nearly all who went in that company are now living, and are faithful members of the Society.

For my own part, I embraced the testimony with full confidence, and confessed my sins the first opportunity afterwards, being then sixteen years of age, and have ever found cause to be thankful from that day to this. By faithful obedience to the precepts of Mother Ann, I have been saved from sin, and have been enabled to walk in the straight and narrow way, that way of self-denial and the cross which Christ and his apostles taught. In this way have I walked, and this cross have I borne for nearly forty-six years, and maintained my faith with a firm and unshaken mind; and it has proved to me a treasure more valuable than mountains of gold: nor would I exchange the stigmatized name of a Shaker, and the heavenly treasure I possess with it, for all the kingdoms of this world and all the glory of them.

With regard to Mother Ann, who was so much abused and persecuted while living, and whose character has been so scandalized by the wicked since her decease, I can truly say, I bless God that I ever found such a Mother. And I can testify before all people, that I ever found her remarkable in all piety and godliness, and a swift witness against every evil propensity, and every thing that pertained to the depravity of a fallen nature. She was ever faithful in strengthening and confirming the feeble, relieving the buffeted, comforting the afflicted, cheering



the sorrowful, building up the good, and purging out the evil.

In her common deportment she was meek, modest, reserved and thoughtful; yet free and open in conversation when occasion required, and her words were words of wisdom. I really loved and feared her more than any person I ever saw. I loved her testimony and the blessed power of God which attended it; for it was life to my soul; yet that which was carnal and ungodly in me would often tremble at her presence. I then believed her to be a woman chosen and anointed of God, and endowed with the spirit and power of Christ. And by the increasing light and understanding I have received, and the continual support I have felt from the same heavenly and Divine Spirit, I have been constantly confirmed in my first faith, without a doubt or scruple.

As to Mother Ann's religious character and conduct, I never felt under any necessity of going to her enemies for information, nor of listening to the tales of slanderers, "who know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm;" because I have had sufficient opportunity of knowing for myself. I can say I have heard, seen and felt the true and genuine spirit of righteousness which she displayed in all her words and actions. I have seen her undaunted and composed even in times of the bitterest persecution, and saw her meet her enraged persecutors with a calm and unruffled countenance.

I was a witness of the cruel persecution which took place in New-Lebanon, when Mother and the Elders were so shamefully and cruelly abused. I was at George Darrow's when that riotous mob assembled and surrounded the house. Mother and the Elders had been some days in the neighborhood, visiting the Believers from house to house. They had been to Jebez Spencer's in Stephentown, and on their return, accompanied by many of the Believers, they called and visited several families on the road, where they were detained, and spent their time in singing and serving God till a very late hour. When they arrived at George Darrow's we all arose and thankfully received them. We had a joyful and happy meeting. Mother was very bright and cheerful, and her soul seemed to be filled with divine power and love. No

candid and reasonable person could have entertained the least suspicion of her being intoxicated, as her ungodly persecutors afterwards reported. She displayed nothing but godliness in any of her conduct or conversation.

After much exercise, the night being far spent, Mother retired to a small bedroom on the lower floor, and the Elders up stairs. I was very early in the morning employed in the kitchen, with a number of the sisters, in preparing breakfast and putting the house in order; and we had nearly finished our work when the mob came. The house was at that time clean and decent, and all was still and quiet, when suddenly we were beset on every side by a large gang of unprincipled wretches in mob array. The principal rooms below were nearly filled with the brethren and sisters, who endeavored to keep the mob out; but regardless of remonstrances or entreaties, they rushed in like furious tygers. A number of them burst into the kitchen and furiously assaulted the sisters who were collected there. We strove with all our strength to keep them back, but in vain. They seized and hurled us out of doors, one after another, with the utmost violence. I was thrown out and beaten so that my flesh was black and blue in spots all over me. Many others of the brethren and sisters shared the same fate. Several doors were broken to pieces; the ceiled partition of the little room where Mother had retired, was torn down flat to the floor; and she was hauled out and thrown into the carriage without any ceremony. Two of the young sisters followed her and sprung into the carriage.

The ruffians then drove furiously off to Eleazer Grant's, abusing all who attempted to follow her. At Grant's she was cruelly and shamefully abused. Indeed the inhuman and savage conduct of this mob was such that day, that I should really think any persons of any character would shudder at the thoughts of having their names exposed to the public, as being concerned in such horrid transactions. And what malignity of spirit must a man possess who can expose his own disgrace and that of his mob companions, by raking up transactions so long past, merely with a view to confirm the slanderous reports of Mother Ann's being intoxicated that day! Can the enemies of truth think to maintain their malignant slanders by charging the drunk-

eness of a mad and unprincipled mob upon Mother and the Elders? I know the charge to be false. The house from which Mother was taken was perfectly clean and in good order. There was no appearance of filth nor of drunkenness till the mob came. Their appearance and behaviour was indeed more like intoxicated madmen than like sober, rational beings. And when they left the house it looked shockingly. But Mother's deportment was perfectly decent and upright; and as a passive sufferer in the hands of a cruel mob, no person could justly accuse her of the least impropriety. It is true she did not fear the mob; nor could they compel her to yield to any of their unjust requirements. Knowing her own innocence, and conscious that she was doing the will of God, and feeling confident of his divine protection, she could not fear the wicked; altho she expected to suffer abuse from their hands, as she often had done before. But had she been guilty of the base things charged against her by her enemies, they would have had no occasion to continue their accusations down to this day; for both she and the Society which she planted would have been sunk in oblivion many years ago. "The tree is known by its fruit; and a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." But this testimony of the gospel which Mother Ann planted in the midst of so much opposition, has weathered the storms of persecuting malice nearly forty-six years; and I am thankful that I am yet able to bear witness of it: for I know it will forever stand, "and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it."

RACHEL SPENCER.

*New-Lebanon, June, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF HANNAH COGSWELL.

I received faith in the present testimony of the gospel in the fore part of January, 1781. I was then in my eighteenth year. I went to Watervliet to visit Mother and the Elders, and was received into their family. I lived and lodged in the room with Mother Ann more than four months and a half, and sometimes slept in the same

bed with her. She taught me to confess and forsake, and repent of all my sins, and take up a daily cross against my carnal nature. In obedience to her teaching I have found salvation from sin, and have "escaped the pollutions that are in the world through lust."

Mother left Watervliet and set out on her journey for Harvard the 1st day of June following. I remained there till the 20th of November, and then came to New-Lebanon to live, which has been my abiding place ever since. While Mother remained with us, she visited many places where her testimony had been received, at some of which she spent considerable time, particularly at Harvard and Ashfield. I visited her in every place where she tarried any length of time, and I ever found her a perfect pattern of godliness, both in word and deed. Her soul was filled with the power and gifts of God, and her testimony against sin and wickedness was as a sharp two-edged sword; yet she was meek and merciful, kind and charitable, always ready to comfort the afflicted and help the needy.

I have been with her in times of persecution, and have repeatedly witnessed the wounds and bruises which she received from the hands of her wicked persecutors, who hated her for the testimony which she bore. She was truly, "a *woman* of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." I feel confident that in point of suffering and persecution, sorrow and cries to God, day and night, for the salvation of lost souls, she came the nearest to the Lord Jesus Christ of any other woman on earth. I have not been following a drunken woman nor a harlot—nay in no wise. I know from personal acquaintance that she was a very temperate woman, in all things; and she ever taught the same to others. I never knew her to make but very little use of spirituous liquors, and that only as a medicine; and in all my acquaintance with her, I never saw the least sign of intoxication in her.

Can an evil tree bring forth good fruit? Let any rational person judge. I can testify with confidence that, in obedience to her precepts, I have been kept from sin and from all manner of pollution and wickedness for more than forty years. This is the truth; and this blessed power of God, which was in Christ Jesus, I received

through Mother Ann. Can it be possible that so much virtue and goodness, justice and truth, as we have truly found in her, ever proceeded from a corrupt fountain? All the false accusations and slanderous reports that have been spread abroad in the world, cannot injure Mother Ann, nor destroy her testimony. And tho they may deceive and impose upon the understandings of strangers, yet they cannot alter the feelings of any of her faithful followers, who know the truth by personal acquaintance and actual experience.

Is it not very singular that those who had very little, if any personal acquaintance with her, and some too, who perhaps never saw her, except when they came with mobs to persecute her, should pretend to know so much more about her than those who were with her day and night, and knew all her proceedings, and who can confidently say, in the truth and sincerity of their hearts, that they never found any evil in her? Or can rational people be led to believe that we were such dupes and idiots, as to be incapable of knowing whether the abominations alleged against Mother and the Elders were true or false, when we had so fair an opportunity? Or will they suppose that we were so blinded by delusion and fanaticism that we could not have seen, at least, some part of those abominations, if any thing of the kind had been transacted? The truth is, we were not blinded nor deceived with regard to such things. Mother Ann's testimony was keen enough against every thing of that nature to keep us on our watch; and had she been guilty of those things, it would have destroyed our confidence in her at once. But we know those charges to be false, as well as we know they have been reported.

I can say, for one, that I have not been led blindfold by a vain imagination these forty-five years past. I know by the revelation of God in my own soul, that Mother was the Lord's anointed, and that Christ really began his second appearance in her, and dwelt in her, and that her body was a temple for the Holy Spirit. (See 1 Cor. vi. 19.) However incredible this may appear to an unbelieving world, we know that we are not left in darkness and doubt concerning these things; they are as clear and certain to us as the light of the sun in a clear day. Here

we find the promise of Christ verified : " He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." (John viii. 12.)

I know of a certainty, that Mother Ann had the gift of prophecy and the revelation of God, by which she was able to search the hearts of those who came to see her ; for I have myself been an eye and ear witness of it. I have known some to come to her under a cloak of deception, thinking to conceal their sins in her presence ; and I have seen her expose them by the searching power of truth, and set their sins before them ; so that they have been constrained to confess, with guilt and shame, that she had told them the truth, and to acknowledge that the light and revelation of God was in her. I am not insensible of the spirit of unbelief which prevails in the world against the spirit of truth, and especially against testimonies of this kind ; but I can say with the apostle Paul, " I speak forth the words of truth and soberness ;" my eyes have seen and my ears have heard what I have stated ; it is no vain imagination.

By obedience to the testimony of the gospel, which I received from Mother Ann and the Elders who stood with her, I have found salvation from sin ; and this, I can truly say, feels more precious to me than all created things. Why then should I hold my peace ? I regard not the sneers of an unbelieving world. I am not ashamed to acknowledge Mother Ann as my mother in Christ. I know she lived a pure and sinless life ; and I know that she was not guilty of any of those shameful crimes which the wicked have laid to her charge. I know that she loved righteousness and hated iniquity ; and I can bear witness that her soul abounded in goodness and love ; and that she was able to minister the same to others, I have seen and felt it in numberless instances. I know that the spirit of Christ was formed in her ; and I have ever found the same spirit in all her faithful followers. I have been well acquainted with all her successors in the Ministry, and I have always found in them the same godly example, and the same Christ-like spirit ; and I feel a firm and unshaken confidence that, in obedience to her precepts, they follow her as she followed Christ. Under their ministration, and in obedience to this gospel, I feel my faith established and my soul resting on a sure foundation, against which

the tongue of slander and the gates of hell can never prevail.

To the truth of these things I can freely bear witness in the presence of God and before all men. And as my days on earth are drawing to a close, this is probably the last opportunity I shall ever have, in this world, to express my feelings in writing concerning Mother Ann's ministry; and I do it with a heart of thankfulness and gratitude to God for such a privilege. And under his divine blessing and protection I leave this testimony, for the benefit of all who love the truth.

HANNAH COGSWELL.

*New-Lebanon, June 6th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF PHEBE CHASE.

In early life my mind was often exercised with serious impressions and concern about the welfare of my soul. In consequence of this, the leaders and Elders of the church considered me as a suitable candidate, and well prepared to become a church member. Accordingly I was taken into the Congregational church at Providence, in the state of Rhode-Island, where I then lived, being in the 19th year of my age. I continued a member of that church for several years, and with respect to what was there required of me, I walked "blameless and without rebuke," or even a gentle admonition, until I embraced the gospel of my present faith; then indeed, (although they could bring no moral accusation against me,) I was quickly excommunicated from their church. But while I was in this good standing with them, instead of growing and increasing in the knowledge of the Lord, I daily increased in pride and arrogance; the natural propensities of my mind were more inclined to evil than ever; and still I was called a good christian, and a wholesome church member. Alas! how aptly may the words of the prophet be applied to such! "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." (Matt. xv. 8.)

I finally began to feel uneasy and troubled in my mind. I saw that all was not well with me; my poor soul lay at stake. I could often feel a sense that God was calling upon me to come out from among them. But how should I come out? I knew no way out; and of all the sons and daughters of the church to which I belonged, there was not one that was able to lead me out. It was then I cried to God, and prayed for deliverance; and earnestly entreated that I might find a people that served him in righteousness and truth; for I fully believed there was such a people somewhere; but I knew not where to find them. It was not long before I received the answer of my prayers. In the summer of 1780, the joyful news of peace and salvation came to my ears; and the way was open and free for all, or as many as were willing to confess and forsake their sins. By hearing the report, I received a measure of faith, and believed it to be the work of God; but I knew it not.

The following year, in March, I visited the people called Shakers, at New-Lebanon, being then in the 24th year of my age. Having become fully convinced that they were the people of God, I came forward and confessed my sins, with a full determination to forsake them forever. I sincerely confessed them to God before his witnesses, and felt my mind greatly released from the weight and burden I had long been under. And through the mercy and goodness of God, I was able to feel a sense of the light and manifestation of Christ in his second appearing, through Mother Ann Lee; and by the revelation of God in my own soul, I can bear witness to the truth of her testimony. I know by my own experience, that she was able to show to lost souls the root and foundation of sin, and the cause of their loss from God; and to show the way whereby they might travel out of their loss.

As I was favored with many privileges with Mother and the Elders that stood with her, I feel it my duty and privilege to testify the things that I have been eye and ear witness of; and more especially on account of the shocking crimes and abominations that have been so unjustly laid to Mother's charge. I was certainly better acquainted with her than her accusers were. I have been with her in times of persecution, and have witnessed her



sufferings; and had she been such a base woman, "a wine-bibber," and the like, I certainly should have discovered it, and should not have followed her: for I had made my escape and fled from such like people, to find a better sort. And I was not disappointed, nor mistaken in the change. I had sufficient opportunity to know that the charges alleged against Mother Ann were false. And I can also bear witness that she not only maintained a sharp and powerful testimony against wickedness of every kind; but she supported her testimony by her godly example in all things. She was every way faithful to teach and admonish the people to good works, and to keep the fear of God in all their goings forth, in all things, both spiritual and temporal. I never saw the least appearance of intoxication in her, from first to last; nor did I ever see her make any intemperate use of ardent spirits of any kind; indeed I cannot recollect that I ever saw her make use of any at all. She was not a woman that indulged herself in any kind of intemperance whatever, but far from it.

Mother Ann was indeed a pattern of righteousness and virtue which I feel confident was never excelled among women; and her pure and heavenly example, (which is well worthy of the attention and serious consideration of all females,) like a true pillar of light, is still increasing and abounding in all her faithful children.

I can truly say that, according to the measure of my faith and obedience to Mother Ann's testimony, I have been protected from the snares of Satan, and the evil propensities of a lost nature, to the present day; so that I am truly enabled to keep a conscience void of offence towards God and all men. Altho I have passed through many scenes of tribulation; yet I have always found comfort and peace in the gospel. I have always been blest with faithful and kind Elders, brethren and sisters, who are dear to me as my own life, and with whom I can worship God in spirit.

In addition to these things, I have been blessed with many heavenly visions, and have enjoyed many precious manifestations of the power and goodness of God. These heavenly gifts and divine manifestations, I very well know, are too far above the power of nature to gain the credit of an unbelieving world; but to me they feel like

the bread of life; they have fed and refreshed my soul, from time to time, for more than forty-five years, by which means I have been nourished and supported, strengthened and comforted to this day. Why then should I not know from whence good cometh? and why should I not bear testimony of these things? Yea, why should I not thank God always, that he has called me by the everlasting gospel, to be a partaker of so great a salvation? This I truly do: and I rejoice that there is still an administration of the same spirit of truth, and a continual succession of the same christian example maintained in the Church.

PHEBE CHASE.

*New-Lebanon, June, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF ABIGAIL COOK.

I was born and brought up in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. When I was about the age of sixteen, my father, Zechariah Watkins, moved with his family, to Patridgefield, (now called Peru.) I was soon after married to Gamaliel Cook, who had moved up with my father, from the same place. From my childhood I was often exercised in mind about the salvation of my soul, which increased upon me as I grew older. After I was married I felt still greater trouble of mind; tho my husband was very kind to me, and my feelings were very much attached to him; and I soon found that he was exercised with deep concern of mind as well as myself. We had neither of us joined any church, but were continually seeking for something to satisfy our souls.

In the fall of 1780, we heard of Mother Ann and the people who followed her; but did not in anywise believe they were of God: my feelings, more especially, were quite biassed against them. The winter following, my husband's distress of mind became so great, that one day, while on his knees, crying fervently to God to direct him in the right way, he suddenly broke out in very loud acclamations, which were succeeded by a violent shaking of the body, at which I was greatly alarmed. He then

testified that the people we had heard of, were the people of God, and that they were in the right way. This was a striking evidence to me; for I believed he was operated upon by the power of God.

Soon after this, some who had embraced this new religion, came into Patridgefield, and we visited them, and found them to be very upright and godly in their conversation and deportment; and all their teaching agreed with the precepts of Christ and his apostles. My feelings of nature and the vanities of the world strove hard to stifle my conviction, and induce me to try, if possible, to turn some other way; for this way was excessively crossing to my vain hopes of carnal enjoyments, being then only in the eighteenth year of my age. But their testimony was too clear for me to withstand; I could not gainsay that word of God which I heard from them. In short we both confessed our sins, and set out, once for all, to obey the testimony of the gospel. This was in February, 1781.

About the beginning of March, we visited Mother Ann and the Elders at Watervliet. The love and kindness I there saw in them, both among themselves and towards those who visited them, was truly beyond any thing of the kind I ever saw before. Many people were there from different places, and their house was but small; and in order to accommodate all who came, they gave up their own beds and slept on the floor themselves, with but very little to lie on, or to cover them. This affected my feelings very much. In all their words and actions they displayed pure godliness and innocence. They taught us to confess and forsake sin, to live upright and pure, and to be honest and just in all things. They often reminded us that death, judgment and eternity was the certain lot of all; and exhorted us to live in such a manner that we could meet these in justification and peace. My husband continued strong in the faith until he departed this life, at Hancock, in 1788.

Mother Ann was very modest and chaste in her deportment. I have often heard her admonish young women to be modest, and not by any means to lay temptations before the other sex. I visited Mother and the Elders often at different places—at Ashfield, Harvard, Hancock and New-Lebanon, and always found them very exemplary and godly in all things. As I increased in the

knowledge and understanding of the things of God, they appeared to me more and more like Christ, which gave me full assurance that I should be saved, if I would be faithful to take up my cross and forsake all sin; for sin is the separating line between God and the soul,

Mother was always faithful to teach prudence and economy, as well as all other virtues. I have many times seen her, after the people had been eating, go and gather up the fragments, pick the bones and collect the little slops of broth into one dish, and make her meal of these, and say, "It is good, it is the blessing of God, and should not be lost." They always seemed to receive their food, as well as all other things, with great thankfulness, and taught us to do so too. "For (said they) you cannot make one spear of grass, nor one kernel of grain grow without the blessing of God." They often taught us to love one another. Mother would often say to those that were married, "You ought to love one another in the Lord."—To the man, "Be kind to your wife;"—and to the woman, "Be subject, and obey your husband in the Lord: it is according to the doctrine of the apostles." She taught children to obey their parents; and parents to teach their children godliness, and bring them up in the fear of the Lord.

Mother was faithful in teaching, counselling and instructing in every virtue, of which she was herself a perfect pattern. I never saw the least failing in her. As to intemperance, of which she has been so often and so unjustly charged, I never in my life, had the least suspicion of any thing of the kind in her. I know of a certainty, that in all things, Mother walked very circumspectly. Her testimony is truly that which leads souls to God. This I know; because I have proved it by more than forty years experience. She testified to us that, if we were faithful, her spirit would remain with us: and so it has proved. I have felt the same spirit in every succeeding ministration in the Church, down to this day. I have also been an eye and ear witness to the same testimony and example, and can freely testify to what I have heard, seen and felt.

ABIGAIL COOK.

*New-Lebanon, June 2d, 1826.*

## TESTIMONY OF RICHARD TREAT.

Being one of those who first received and obeyed the testimony of the gospel in America, and who, through the mercy and goodness of God, have been enabled to keep it and bear testimony in its favor to this day; and feeling sensible of the many blessings I have enjoyed, and still do enjoy in it, I consider it my duty to give a short statement of what I have found, experienced and felt in my own soul, through the power and influence of this blessed gospel. If my testimony can be of any benefit to the candid part of mankind, or direct any who are laboring under the burden of a wounded conscience, where to find the true physician who is able to probe the wound, and apply the healing balm, I shall feel satisfied that I have not written in vain.

I was born in Sharon, Connecticut, March 14th, 1757. When I was a small child, I was much affected with my mother's discourses concerning a life of godliness, and especially about Jesus Christ, and of his being crucified by the wicked. These discourses excited in my mind many serious thoughts about religion. As I grew older, I often felt deeply exercised in mind, and had many serious reflections concerning the life that Christ's followers were taught by his precepts and example to live. When I was about eleven years old, my father moved up into New-Lebanon, where I have lived ever since.

From this time revivals of religion were often breaking out among the people, and many were awakened to seek after religion and join the churches of the different denominations. But these revivals would soon die away again, and the people become as lifeless as before; so that I could see no difference between the professors and the profane, which often filled my mind with serious trouble. I felt a great desire to find something that would save me from sin, and cried to God in the best manner I could; but I could not obtain my desire. I have often prayed, even when going into young company, that I might be kept from sin; but my youthful mind was so easily led astray, that my prayers availed but little. In the spring of 1779, I married a wife; but this by

no means released me from a wounded conscience, which I felt almost continually, from the age of eleven to twenty-three, when I was taught the way out of sin.

In June 1779, a remarkable revival broke out in New-Lebanon. Many of the people were filled with great power of God and saw wonderful visions; and many prophesied that the millennium was nigh, even at the door. The work was very powerful through the summer.—I had great faith in it, and received a measure of light, and fully believed that Christ was about to make his second appearance; but I feared we should not know him. Elder Joseph Meacham, our principal leader in the revival, said that he feared he should not know Christ when he came; for he would come like a thief in the night. Many believed this to be a preparatory work, and were confident that a greater work was about to take place. In the fall, the spirit, life and power of the revival was withdrawn, and “marrying and giving in marriage” increased abundantly. But many retained their confidence and waited in hope; but would say they could not help any one; for they were not able to help themselves.

After the spirit of the revival was withdrawn, the exercises of my mind were distressing beyond expression. I believed I had committed the unpardonable sin; for I thought I had sinned against so great a light that I could not be reclaimed. I continued in this deplorable state of mind through the winter.

In the spring of 1780, we received intelligence of a strange people who lived in the wilderness, about seven miles northwest of Albany, and who, it was said, possessed the spirit of discernment, and the gift of working miracles, and other apostolic gifts. Many people visited them from the country round. Some believed they were of God, and were under the influence of divine power; while others imputed their extraordinary gifts to the spirit of witchcraft. When I heard of these things, I fully believed it to be the very work which had been prophesied of in the time of the revival, and was determined to visit them.

Accordingly I set out on foot, in company with Justus Webster, an acquaintance of mine. The weather was very rainy and the roads muddy, and being unacquainted

with the way, our journey was very tedious; but I was determined to go on at all hazards; for I believed my case would there be decided. It was late in the evening before we arrived at the place, and as we drew near to the house we heard them singing, which struck my mind with a feeling which I cannot describe. We were kindly received, and seated by a fire to dry our clothes: for we were very wet and muddy. Mother Ann said, "James, go fetch some water and wash these men's feet." These were the first words I heard from her mouth. The man soon came with a large, clean pewter basin of water. I began to object against being thus waited upon; but he replied, "Make no words." He then washed our feet and dried our stockings. After this I seated myself in another part of the room, observing every motion, and expecting soon to hear my final doom. They seemed to notice my companion more than they did me, which seemed to me an evidence of my reprobation; tho I had not made known my feelings to any one.

At length John Partington came suddenly up to me, and with his finger made the sign of a cross upon my breast, saying, "Thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." There, thought I, that is just what I expected; and immediately I fainted and fell on the floor.—When I came to myself, I heard Mother say, "Come James, let us go in; for that man prays." She came into the room, and looking upon me, said to Elder William, "Take this man and hear him open his mind." I went with him and opened to him the state of my mind, and told him I believed I had sinned against the Holy Ghost. "Nay child, (said he,) you cannot do that until you have received the Holy Ghost." These words were to me the most comforting sound that had ever reached my ears. He told me I might confess my sins. This I was really thankful to do, and did it faithfully and heartily; and truly I felt the greatest satisfaction in exposing the worst sins I had committed.

I remained there a number of days, and received many precious gifts of God. I was instructed how to forsake sin, and my soul was filled with the power of God. At

length Mother told me I must return home and right all my wrongs; and where I had injured or defrauded any one, in any way, I must make restitution, and take up my cross against all sin, and especially against the works of the flesh. She said if I would do this faithfully, the power of God would never leave me, but would give me power and victory over every sin. I returned home and did as I was taught. But when I came to confess to the wicked wherein I had wronged them, and offered to make restitution, they were offended to hear me mention and offer restitution for such small trifles, as they considered them. But I was faithful in my duty, and I found the promise of Mother completely fulfilled to me. Altho I considered myself but a babe in Christ, I felt, according to my little measure, the baptism of his spirit. Whenever evil presented itself to me in temptation or thought, I instantly felt the power of God run through my soul, and the evil was in a moment banished from me, so that I felt entirely released from it.

In about a month I made another visit, and carried my wife with me. By this time the enmity of the wicked began to show itself. The children ran out of the houses, hallowing, Shaker, Shaker, and mocking us as we passed along the road. At this time my wife confessed her sins, and set out with me in this self-denying way, and remains a faithful and sincere believer to this day. I found the testimony had greatly increased since my last visit. The word of God in Mother and the Elders, was swift and powerful beyond expression. It was like a two-edged sword against all sin and all manner of uncleanness. Many people continually resorted theré to hear the word of God and learn the way of salvation; and many confessed their sins and set out to take up their crosses.

Mother Ann's testimony was like flames of fire to search out and bring to light the hidden works of darkness. She exposed with keen and cutting severity the deceitful craftiness of young men to tempt and seduce young women; and the alluring arts of young women to attract and ensnare young men—showing that all these practices proceeded from the nature of lust, the seed of the serpent; and that it produced self-defilement, deceit, hypocrisy and all manner of evil communication, which tended to corrupt the mind, to darken and defile the senses, and sink



the soul into the filthiness of the flesh and separate it from God. Her testimony was the most mortifying to a carnal and fleshly nature that can possibly be imagined. Never since the world began, was the filthy, fallen nature of lust so powerfully and so effectually exposed. Yet the tenderness and charity of Mother and the Elders towards poor souls who were lost in the flesh, and honestly desired to find the way out, was as boundless as their severity against sin.

While I was there at this time, there came four carnal, high minded and foppish young men, on a Sabbath morning, and rode up to the house and hailed it, and said, "We understand that there are those here who have the spirit of discernment, and can tell people their sins; and we want to have ours told." Mother and Elder William went out and invited them into the house;—they refused to come in, but insisted upon having their sins told. Instantly the power of God fell upon Elder William, and he exposed their sins to them with such plainness and such power, that they immediately hung down their heads, and were ashamed even to look each other in the face, and immediately mounted their horses and made off with themselves as fast as possible.

Great numbers of people came from various parts to see them, whom they fed and lodged freely, without manifesting any lack of any thing. They would often meet the brethren and sisters at the door, when they came, saying, "Come in, brethren and sisters, come in; we have but little room in our house; but we have a great deal of room in our hearts." It was clearly evident that they felt willing to give up all their earthly substance, yea, and their own lives also, for the sake of planting the gospel in this land. This I felt as sensibly as I could feel one hand from the other. They spared not even their own lives, but gave them freely. They were accounted poor, having nothing but what they gained by their honest industry; tho they had taken up a lot of land which they held by lease in perpetuity from Stephen Van Rensselaer, Esq. yet it was in a wilderness state when they took it. But by their industry they had cleared some part of it, so as to accommodate themselves and their little family with some pasture and tillage land. It appeared

evident, however, that they could not devote what little they had to feed so many people as were continually visiting them, without suffering materially themselves.

I returned home, and the brethren in New-Lebanon, taking these things into consideration, agreed to send something for their relief. Accordingly we collected nine fat wethers to send them, and David Darrow undertook to drive them up to Watervliet; and having proceeded within about eight miles of Albany, he was pursued by some evil minded men from New-Lebanon, who robbed him of the sheep, and seized his person under pretence of treasonable conduct. Tho the malicious conduct of these men evidently proceeded from a spirit of enmity against this *new religion*—the testimony of the gospel which had then just been received and embraced by so many people in New-Lebanon; yet the pretence for these rash proceedings was as follows: It had been reported that Mother Ann had come over in Burgoyne's army, and was a camp woman, and engaged in plotting against the liberty of the country. And many who opposed the testimony and rejected the cross of Christ, were willing to believe these reports, and were ready to assist in any means to overthrow the leaders of the work, and suppress the testimony. Hence these enemies of the cross, having received information of David Darrow's going with the sheep, seized this occasion to vent their malignity by charging him with a design of conveying his sheep to the enemy. The event showed the real object of these malicious persecutors.

David Darrow, after being robbed of his sheep, was required to give bail for his appearance at Albany for trial. At the time appointed, he appeared before the commissioners in Albany, in company with Joseph Meacham and John Hocknell. They were all three committed to prison without any trial. A few days after this, Mother and the Elders were taken from their own dwelling and conducted to prison also, without any trial. Such were the measures taken by their enemies to suppress the work of God, and prevent the spread of the gospel. But the measures taken to destroy the testimony of Mother and the Elders, instead of producing that effect, was the very means of extending its power and in-

creasing the number of believers. The prisoners, conscious of their own innocence, and filled with the power and gifts of God, sung and praised God in the prison, that they were counted worthy to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake. This gave great offence, and was the occasion of their being removed from the jail in the old City-Hall, to the prison in the old fort on the hill. There they were visited by many people, who heard the testimony and confessed their sins in this prison.

I visited the Elders while they were in prison. The mighty power of God which attended their singing was so extraordinary, that it really seemed to me as if the very foundation of the prison trembled. After they were released from prison, I visited them frequently, at different places—at Watervliet, Harvard, Ashfield, Hancock and New-Lebanon, and found a continual increase of the power of God. And in all the many privileges I had with them, I never saw the least fault in them, neither in word nor deed. They were like angels in my view—being continually filled with the gifts and power of God, and striving, with great fervency of spirit, to help souls to God, that they might have the law of Christ written in their inward parts, and be able to keep the gospel when they should be left without their present help. Hence they labored in sorrow and sufferings, and spared no pains to plant and establish the gospel in this land.

I visited Mother just before she left this world. She counselled me to be faithful and keep the way of God. She said, if one half who had set out should finally keep the way of God, she should be thankful. She spoke in the spirit of prophecy and said, "The time will come when the Church will be gathered into order, and then it will be known who are good believers. But that is not my work; it is Joseph Meacham's work: my work is nearly done." I then took my last leave of her. I can truly say, I never saw any thing in her but godliness, from the first day I ever saw her to the time she left this world. And I know by the spirit of God that dwelleth in me, that she is the Lord's anointed—"the Bride, the Lamb's wife—in whom is no guile."

In persecution she suffered exceedingly, and with great patience. In sorrow she exceeded any one I ever saw.

Many times have I seen her on her knees, with the tears flowing from her eyes and dropping on the floor, crying to God with such cries as I never before heard from any mortal. The energy of her spirit was so great, that it seemed enough to break the hardest heart and melt it into tears. Such was her labor and tribulation to plant and maintain the gospel. At other times she was filled with great joy, and would fill a whole assembly with joy in a few minutes. Even the heavenly joy that seemed to shine in her countenance, was sufficient to cheer the heart of every beholder. The manner of her life, conversation and deportment, was every way entirely different from that of a camp woman; and very different indeed from that of a drunken woman. Not the least shadow of any such appearance did I ever see in her.

Mother and the Elders never spared any pains in teaching and instructing the believers in every good work. They often told us that if we would be faithful, we would be "blessed in our outgoings and our incomings, in our basket, and in our store," both in things temporal and spiritual. These promises we have found verily fulfilled, even beyond all our expectations.

Elder James Whittaker, who succeeded Mother in the Ministry, was boundless in charity, as well as Mother and Elder William. He was very faithful in building up what Mother had planted; in purging out evil, in supporting and encouraging the feeble, in strengthening the weak, and in preparing the people for that order in a church relation which was at hand. He often warned us to keep the testimony we had received from Mother, pure and unspotted. He would often say, "We have given you the gospel;—see to it, that you keep it, and make a good use of it." He was a bright example of love and kindness, meekness and innocence: he was indeed like an angel before the people. He often spoke of the gathering of the Church, and exhorted each one to stand faithful. Sometimes he would exclaim, "O, the glory of Zion! When you see Zion flourish and bring forth fruit, then know ye that the root is holy."

This might be sufficient evidence to the world, if they had no other. The evident prosperity of this Society, both in things spiritual and temporal, is enough to show

that it is not built on a false foundation. Yet every malicious slander, and all manner of evil is continually published and circulated against the Society without a cause. Now I would ask the candid reader, what more striking evidence can we have to prove that Mother Ann was really anointed of God to usher in the latter day of glory, and bring in the kingdom of righteousness and peace, and make an end of sin, than the abusive slanders and base calumnies that are so incessantly poured out against her and her faithful followers? For Jesus Christ said, "If they call the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?" He was called "a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners," and all manner of evil was spoken against him falsely. This was, and still is considered as an evidence that *he was not of the world, and therefore the world hated him.*

What then shall we say of Mother Ann, who has been called a drunkard, and a lewd woman? By whom is she slandered? By whom is she hated? By whom is all manner of evil constantly alledged against her? She is slandered by the wicked; not by the righteous—she is hated by those who hate the cross and love iniquity; not by those who love the way of righteousness and peace—not by the wise and good; but by those who delight in slander—by those who delight to feast on the iniquities of the righteous, and who hunt for iniquity in the followers of Christ, as the raven and the vulture seek after the dead carcasses of those who fall in battle.

RICHARD TREAT.

*New-Lebanon, July 25th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF ANNE MATHEWSON.

My father's name was Philip Mathewson; I was born at Providence, in Rhode-Island, June 24th, 1763. In my childhood and youth I was instructed by my parents in the principles of morality and religion. In my youthful days I had a feeling sense of my lost state, and became greatly awakened and exercised in my mind about religion. My earnest desire was to find some way of

deliverance from sin—some religion which I could depend on for salvation.

In the former part of the year 1780, I joined the Baptist church in Ashfield, (as I then lived in that neighborhood,) and continued in communion with it one year. But I could not rest there; because I could not find that godliness which I had so earnestly desired; nor could I obtain power and victory over sin. I still found myself destitute of Christ, and felt my soul reaching forward to find something that I could rest upon—something that would feel like an enduring substance.

When I heard of Mother Ann and the Elders, from the very nature of the report, I fully believed them to be the true followers of Christ, and from the operation of the Divine Spirit in my soul I was fully confirmed in it, and felt a great desire to go and see them. In February, 1782, I visited them for the first time, at Harvard, being then in my 19th year. The first night after my arrival, I lodged in the same room with Mother. She received me with kindness, and taught me the way of God. I felt full confidence in her testimony, and had a privilege to confess my sins. This I did in the sincerity of my soul, as doing it to God, in the presence of his witnesses, and found great releasement of mind by it. I then felt a full assurance of salvation, provided I kept my faith and obedience, which, through the mercy of God, I have never lost to this day.

Some time in March following, Mother and the Elders visited Ashfield, and took up their residence at Asa Bacon's, not far from my father's, where they tarried about two months. While they were there I was with them most of the time. When they left Ashfield in May, to return to Harvard, I returned to my father's. The next fall they came to Ashfield again, and tarried till the spring following. Here again, I spent most of my time with them. In the fall of 1783, I went to Watervliet, and lived with Mother Ann till her decease, in September, 1784. So that, taking the time all together, I lived in the house with her about a year and a half. Part of the time I lodged in the same room with her, and eat at the same table, and was subject and obedient to her in all things as a child. Indeed I felt myself as a child blest with the best

of mothers. Yea, I loved and feared her; because I found that the spirit of Christ dwelt in her, and her life was a life of purity. She taught me the way of God, and how to walk in it. She taught me to take up my cross against my own carnal nature and all its propensities, and to forsake every sinful way and follow Christ in righteousness; and she promised that, in so doing, I should find full power and victory over sin; which I have found to be true.

There have been many false and scandalous reports published and circulated abroad in the world concerning Mother Ann; but I certainly know for myself, that she was not such a person as her enemies have represented. So far from being addicted to intemperance, she was the most temperate woman I ever was acquainted with. So far from being a lewd or profane person, she was truly an example of chastity and godliness to all womankind. She was, in truth, a woman who feared the Lord and faithfully served him. These things I do know, for I was with her at all times and seasons, in public and in private, by day and by night, in her sorrows and sufferings, as well as in her joy and comfort; and if she, or the Elders with her, had been guilty of any such conduct as they have been accused of, I certainly should have known it; for it could not have been kept out of my sight.

Their conduct and conversation was at all times according to the gospel. I have enjoyed many precious privileges with them, and have received much heavenly instruction and much good and wholesome counsel from them, both in public and private. They were always faithful in their duty, at all times, "both in season and out of season." In teaching, admonishing, reproofing, encouraging and comforting, they spared no pains. Mother Ann, especially, was always alive in the work of God. Her spirit seemed wholly devoted to God. In reproofing sin and all manner of evil, she was like a flaming sword; yet she knew well how to separate between the precious and the vile. She would not indulge any evil propensity in herself nor in others; yet her charity to souls disposed to repent and turn to God, would often seem to melt her soul in tears. I cannot feel the least doubt or scruple of her being a chosen woman anointed of the Lord, any more than I can doubt her existence.

These things I can testify ; because I have seen and heard and felt them, and know them to be true. And I feel myself in duty bound, while I live in this world, to maintain the cause of justice and truth, and to stand as a witness against injustice and falsehood.

In times past I have had scarce a feeling to write ; because I thought there were so many that knew these things as well as I, and were much better able to bear witness of them ; therefore I have kept silence. But having of late heard and seen some of the most shameful slanders and base falsehoods that human depravity could invent against Mother Ann, I thought if I should hold my peace, *the stones might well cry out*. Mother Ann's spirit and testimony was a swift witness against all sin ; and this is the very reason why such a flood is cast out of the mouth of the dragon and his crew against her, to try, if possible, "to destroy the remnant of her seed ;" but "the earth will swallow up the flood." Balaam may come from the east and try to *curse* ; but the Lord will *bless*.

The present generation of people boast much of living in an enlightened age, and of being blessed with the bright effusions of the gospel of light ; and yet how few there are who appear to understand even the plain and simple comparisons which Jesus Christ made of the natural things of time and sense ! There are many who do not seem to understand that *a tree is known by its fruit* ; that a thorn-bush cannot bring forth grapes, nor figs grow on thistles. "O faithless and perverse generation !—How is it that ye do not understand ?" Many Bible Societies have been formed, and missionaries have been sent abroad with the professed object of spreading the sacred truths of the gospel of Christ, as recorded in the scriptures ; yet blindness and ignorance are so prevalent at home, that the people "are like the heath in the desert ;" they know not whence good cometh. It is indeed lamentable that darkness, depravity and loss, have so covered the earth—that such a vast portion of the human race are so involved in blindness that they do not know the day of their visitation. How evident it is that the Jews did not know, tho they were called God's chosen people : for if they had known that Christ was the Lord from Heaven, they would not have crucified him. (1 Cor.



ii. 8.) And did the Gentiles of that day know any better? Or do those of the present day know any better?

There are but few, in this day, who will pretend to deny the agency of the first woman in leading mankind into sin. Why then should it be thought incredible, that the agency of a woman should necessarily be first in leading the human race out of sin? Mother Ann's testimony and example, and all her fruits, evidently show that she was led by a spirit totally opposite to that which led and influenced the first woman. To the truth of this, all who have heard her testimony and seen her example, and faithfully followed it, can bear witness; because they have in reality, been led out of sin thereby; and they are able to testify that, "she taught as never *woman* taught before."

I was one of Mother's little family at the time of her decease, and attended her funeral. Many people from Albany and the neighborhood around us, attended with solemnity. Elder James Whittaker and others of the Believers addressed the Assembly, at her grave, with much feeling. Samuel Fitch said that, "the deceased had been one that had faithfully served the Lord; that she had been greatly persecuted by the wicked; that she had been more persecuted than any other person in his knowledge; and the reason was, she had more of God in her than any other person in his knowledge."

I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ in its first nor second appearance; for it has been "the power of God unto salvation" to me; and for it I feel to give thanks to God always. These things I have testified from my own knowledge and experience, and have written them with my own hand.

ANNE MATHEWSON.

*New-Lebanon, May 28th, 1826.*

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### TESTIMONY OF PRUDENCE HAMMOND.

In my youthful days I often felt greatly exercised in mind about a future state, and was very much afraid of going to hell. The exercises of my mind were more than

I could express to any one. I knew I daily lived in sin, and I could find no way out; and I often prayed to God as well as I knew how; but found no releasement. These exercises increased upon me as I grew older; so that at the age of nineteen, which was the time of the great revival in New-Lebanon, I was exceedingly wrought upon; but I could find no way out of sin; nor could I find any one that could help me or show me the way out. I could not even find one in whom I could place confidence as a christian leader; because I did not see any one who manifested by the works of righteousness, that the spirit of Christ was formed within; which I believed really necessary in order to be a christian. I kept house for my father at that time; and tho he was a professor of religion, I could find no help from him. Some would tell me I was converted and born of God, and try to persuade me to be baptized and join the church: but all this availed nothing; it would not ease my troubled conscience. I felt myself a child of wrath, and greatly feared the judgments of God.

I had been in this troubled state of mind about three years when I first saw Mother Ann and the Elders. I visited them in June, 1780, being then twenty years of age. Mother asked me if I was sick of sin. I told her I saw no way out of sin. She repeated the question, "Are you sick of sin?" I knew not what to say. She turned to some who were present and said, "This young woman is sick of sin." Then turning to me, she said, "You can find no way out of sin till you confess your sins." She then told me of some circumstances, and mentioned a number of the transactions of my childhood and youth, which I knew it impossible for her to know but by divine inspiration. I said within myself, "Is not this the anointed?" Here I felt that I had found somebody that could help me, and show me the way out of sin: and truly it proved so. I found no deception nor witchcraft here—nothing but the plain and honest truth, and my conscience bore witness to it. Here I found, for the first time, the image of Christ displayed in his followers; a people who manifested true godliness in all their deportment. Here I was taught to confess and forsake all my sins, as the fruits of the only true repentance

which is acceptable in the sight of God ; and to take up a full cross against every carnal indulgence, and deny myself of all ungodliness and every worldly lust, and live a pure and chaste life. I confessed my sins, and felt as tho I was confessing them to God in the presence of his witnesses ; and I found great releasement of soul by it.

Having lost my mother in my childhood, I was placed by my father in a distant family, where I was much abused. Once I was struck by the man of the house, on the side of my head, so severely, that it occasioned a gathering in my head, and a running sore, which caused deafness in one ear, and I had never been able to find any help for it. This circumstance I mentioned to Mother. She bid me take faith in the power of God, and said it would be unto me according to my faith. She said If I would be faithful and obedient, I should never want for bread ; “not natural bread,” said she, “I mean the bread of life.” I returned home with full confidence in her testimony, and a settled determination to maintain it. My head was restored, and my ear came to its hearing, and has ever remained as good as the other.

At another time I visited them at Watervliet, when Mother told me the state of my own mind and feelings, just as they were, without any information from me whatever. These things were, at that early age of my faith, a sufficient confirmation to me of her spiritual sight and discernment, if I had never received any further evidence; but I have since felt too much evidence in my own soul, and had too great experience of such divine manifestations ever to have a moment's doubt. Mother was always meek and harmless in her manners, and manifested a pure and unspotted life in all her movements. Great numbers of people came to visit them, and as their house was not large, nor had they beds sufficient to accommodate so many, I have seen Mother take her lodging on the floor, with very little to cover her, and give up her bed to others. This, to me, was truly an example of humility.

I visited Mother at Ashfield, at a time when there was a great concourse of people there, from various parts of the country, and much work to be done, especially on the part of the sisters. Mother sent to me one day to know

whether I could wash. A little time before this I had the bone of one of my fingers broken, and it was very much swelled, so that I could not use that hand. I mentioned this circumstance. Mother again sent word, that if I had faith in the power of God, I might be healed. I immediately unbound my hand, and went and washed two days, without any inconvenience; my hand was well, and remained so.

When Mother was taken from George Darrow's by the mob, and was so cruelly abused, I was there. By her direction I followed the carriage, and kept close by the side of it, all the way to Grant's. Some of the wicked tried to beat me off and ride over me, but were not able. Mother often encouraged me to keep up, and not let my faith fail, and said, "You will not be hurt." When she arrived at Grant's, the mob crowded around her. She requested them to stand off; but they refused. One man, in particular, was very rude and insolent. Hannah Kendall, who was with Mother, from a sudden impulse of feeling, (tho the man was a stranger to her,) spoke with considerable energy, and said, "Go off—you are a thief and a robber." This greatly offended the man, and he swore she should prove it. Mother instantly called out, "Where is that Hammond girl?" I stepped up to her—"Here," said she, "Hannah has called this man a thief and a robber, and he says she shall prove it." I replied, "It is the truth of God, Mother—he broke into my father's house, and stole a large sum of money." This I spoke from the immediate impulse of my feelings; for I did not know the man. But he was highly offended and struck me; and I found him to be the very man who, some time before, actually broke into my father's house, one night, and took a considerable sum of money; but was soon after detected and brought to justice. His comrades, who knew the truth of this charge, laughed at him on the spot; and the guilty culprit soon sneaked off, and we saw him no more.

Through all the violent and abusive transactions of this day, Mother remained firm and composed; and tho she was shamefully abused, and treated with savage cruelty, she bore it with patience.

During Mother's ministration, I had opportunities of seeing her, and being with her a great deal. A little before she left this world I was with her a great part of the time, day and night, for a number of weeks; and I can testify before all people, that she was the most godly person I ever saw, in all her manners and deportment. She bore a powerful and swift testimony against all pride, lust, covetousness, idleness, extravagance, intemperance, drunkenness and every kind of excess. She taught us that all these things, and evil of every kind must be done away; that nothing could be saved but what was of God; and she always confirmed her precepts by her own example in all things. And I can truly say, I never saw any thing in her conversation and conduct, from the first day I saw her till she left this world, but what bore witness that she was led and governed by a spirit of pure godliness. One might as well try to convince me that there is no day nor night, as to alter my faith concerning Mother. I know of a truth that Christ was manifested in her; because I know that I received the spirit of Christ through her ministration. I have obeyed her testimony almost forty-six years, and I have ever found the same spirit in all her successors, down to the present day.

PRUDENCE HAMMOND.

*New-Lebanon, June, 1826.*

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### TESTIMONY OF ZIPPORAH CORY.

I was born in Plainfield, Connecticut, April 4th, 1765. When I was about eleven years of age, I had very serious reflections concerning the salvation of my soul, and often retired alone to cry and pray to God in the best manner I was able. I greatly feared going to hell, and often thought that if I had lived when Jesus Christ was upon earth, I should then have known how to be good. When I was twelve, my parents moved up into Cheshire, Massachusetts. At the age of fourteen I began to go into young company, and by that means wore off my conviction; but in about two years it returned upon me heavier than ever. In this state of mind I was naturally led to look

around upon the professors of religion, to see if they lived any better than I did ; but I could not see any that I had any confidence in : for they would allow themselves in that which I knew was wicked. I used to tell some of the young people who professed to be christians, that they were no better than I was, and I did not profess any religion.

In the spring of 1781, being then sixteen years of age, I went with a number of young people, to attend a meeting of the Believers at 'Squire Bennett's, in Cheshire, whose family were all in the faith. My mother had visited them before, and had received faith ; but my father was a great opposer. By what I saw and heard of their doctrine, worship and manner of life, I was soon convinced that they were of God. While they were in meeting dancing in the worship of God, I saw Joanna Sales in the worship, with an infant in her arms. I stepped out towards her and offered to take the child—she gave it to me, and I held it till the dancing ceased. She then came to take the child ; I observed that her countenance was very solemn, and she wept. This sunk deep into my heart. I believed them to be the people of God, and thought I was left to be lost with the wicked. On our return home, some of my companions were very carnal and rude, and mocked the exercises they had seen. I desired them not to do so ; for I really believed they were the people of God.

But when I got home, and came to consider the matter, I did not feel as though I could take up my cross and deny myself, as I knew I must, in order to be one with them. I thought I would try to stifle my conviction, if it was possible ; and strove to do it in every way and manner I could think of ; but I felt very serious reflections within. I heard my mother say she believed they were the people of God. " O mother, how can you think so ?" said I, and then mentioned the conduct of a certain person who had been disorderly, and who afterwards left the Society. My mind, at that time, was in a situation to seize upon any occasion that might seem to operate against the faith of the Society, and prove their religion false ; but I soon found it was all in vain. I continued, however, to strive

against my conviction more than a year; tho I visited the people twice during that time.

In the spring of 1782, I attended their meeting at 'Squire Bennett's. At this time I saw Lucy Bennett, his daughter-in-law, laboring in the dance with her infant child in her arms. I went up to her and took the child, and held it till the dancing ceased. She then came and took the child. I observed her countenance was solemn and serene, while the tears were running down her cheeks. This filled me with the most serious impressions; and I thought surely such solemnity and sincerity as I saw among these people, was certainly of God. But I went home fully determined, if possible, to *kill* my conscience. I went on as light and carnal as I was able; so that it was observed by my friends, that they never saw me so light and airy before. And tho at times, when I was alone, I was obliged to give way to a flood of tears; yet I was determined to stifle all conviction, if possible; but I found I could not do it; for the spirit of God was evidently at work with me, and I plainly saw that I must yield at last: thus I went on fighting against my own conviction, and feeling the smart of it.

In October following, I went again, in company with Diana Martin, and attended their meeting at the same place. While they were worshipping in the dance, Diana fell in and united with them. This struck me very forcibly, and these words rushed into my mind: "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left." (See Matt. xxiv. 41.) I felt as tho I was left, sure enough.

About two weeks after this, I attended their meeting again on the Sabbath. At this time Mother and the Elders were at 'Squire Bennett's. Elder James Whittaker delivered a lengthy discourse, which sunk deep into my heart. At this time I was fully determined to confess my sins before I returned home. I kept with the Believers all day; but felt so diffident that I had not resolution enough to speak to them and tell them what I wanted. In the evening I happened to be sitting by myself in the same room where Mother was. She was sitting alone in the further part of the room; tho I did not then know who she was. Calvin Harlow soon came into the room,

and advanced towards Mother, as tho he was going to speak to her ; but seeing me sitting by myself, he turned to me and asked me if I loved the Believers. I answered yes. He asked if I had confessed my sins. I told him I had not. He then went out. In a few minutes Mother rose and came and took me by the hand, and led me out of the house to another building, singing all the way as we went, and led me into a room where Elder John Hocknell was. "Here (said she) is a young woman who wants to open her mind, and you must hear her"—and then left me with him. I then confessed my sins freely and heartily, and was glad of such a privilege, and felt greatly released by it. He counselled me to forsake sin and turn to God with my whole heart ; to leave my pride and vanity, and pray to God for his protection ; to kneel in prayer before lying down at night, and after rising in the morning ; and also before and after eating. I tarried until the next day, and was instructed how to live a godly life, and conduct myself in a godly manner.

I was at that time engaged in work at the house of a Quaker preacher. When I returned there, the people of the house discovered an alteration in me, and thought I was sick. As I was very bashful and diffident, I felt as if I could not take up my cross and kneel before them ; and for this reason I went without my supper and breakfast. But I went to my work ; and while I was spinning at my wheel, the power of God came upon me and suddenly brought me upon my knees. The family then discovered that I was a Shaker, and all my acquaintance soon fell upon me, to try to reclaim me, by their exhortations and warnings against delusion. People of different sects beset me with persuasions and flatteries, to join their respective churches and societies.

Stephen Carpenter, a deacon of the Baptist church, used his utmost endeavors to convince me that I was deluded with a false religion ; till his talk became very wearisome. At last I told him that if he had seen me in the act of prostitution, or any thing that was ever so bad, I did not believe he would have tried to reclaim me, or teach me any better. But now, because I had set out to forsake every thing that was sinful, and live to God, he seemed to have a great concern for me. "Ah, (said he)



you seem to be part Ashdod; sometimes you talk good, and sometimes bad." He then went off and left me, and I was not troubled with the Baptist deacon any more.

I finished my work at this place as soon as I could, and went home. There I found still greater troubles to encounter. My father was like a mad man, and my oldest brother was not much better. My father abused my mother very much, because of her faith; and I was so persecuted by them that I really stood in fear of my life. Many times, when I lay down at night, I did not expect to see the light of another day. At one time my fears were so great on account of their extreme abuse to me and my mother, that for six weeks I never took my clothes off, except to change them for washing. I often went out into the woods and cried to God in my extreme sorrow. All this persecution I suffered, because I had set out to forsake sin and live a godly life. Before this, I was beloved by the family and neighbors, and suffered no persecution.

My parents had a child of five years old, that could not speak a word, nor help himself any more than an infant three months old. One day, feeling great sorrow of soul, I kneeled down in prayer to God, near where this child was sitting on the floor. While I was on my knees, the child suddenly rose up and stood on his feet, which he had never done before, and spoke distinctly, saying, *Lord God*, three times over, and then sat down again. He never spoke before, nor afterwards, to my knowledge. This alarmed my father very much. "The dumb speaks to me," said he; and it convicted him so much, that he went and confessed his sins. But in about a month, he was as bad or worse than ever. In all my afflictions, persecutions, sorrows and troubles, I felt a rejoicing within, that I had found a way to escape the horrors of a guilty conscience. I felt strong in my faith, and was determined to maintain it, if I had to give up my life for it. I went to meeting every Sabbath, on foot, to Joseph Bennett's, which was six miles to go by the public road, and four and a half across the fields, the way I generally went. By this means I gained strength of soul, and was more and more confirmed in my faith and understanding.

I lived with my parents about two years and a half after I embraced the gospel: they then moved back into Connecticut. I was then nearly 20 years of age, and had my freedom and enjoyed my faith undisturbed. My mother had faith, and would gladly have enjoyed a privilege with Believers; but could not on account of my father's opposition. I was taken into the family of Joseph Bennett, jun. a respectable family and faithful Believers. I lived there till the Church was gathered at New-Lebanon, in 1788, when I was gathered with the rest of Joseph Bennett's family, where I have lived ever since.

Though I was a poor girl, and of poor parentage, yet I have never seen any difference made on that account; but I have always fared as well among Believers as the daughters of the rich.

In all the opportunities and privileges I have had with Mother and the Elders, I can truly testify that I never saw the least imperfection in them. They taught me to live a life of purity and godliness; and I always found an example of it in them. They were truly an upright and godly people in all things. As to the charges of intemperance, I never saw the least thing of the kind in them; but always considered them very temperate in all things; and they always taught us temperance. My father was a downright drunkard, which was the cause of great affliction and tribulation to my mother, and (as I suppose) was the cause of producing in me a constitutional antipathy to ardent spirits: for even the very smell of rum has ever been nauseous and disgusting to me from my earliest infancy; and no object ever appeared so odious in my sight as a drunken person, whether male or female. But I never saw any ardent spirits where Mother Ann was, nor did I ever smell any there; and I am confident I should have smelt it if any had been there. And had Mother or the Elders been given to intoxication, I should most certainly have discovered it, and should have quit them at once. I feel confident that the spirit of God which Mother Ann possessed, could never abide in the soul of a drunkard.

Mother's spirit was directly opposed to intemperance of every kind, and her testimony was a powerful and swift witness against every such practice. I certainly

know by the evidence of divine truth in my own soul, that she was chosen and anointed of God, and that the spirit of Christ was revealed through her ministration. I have lived in obedience to her testimony nearly forty-four years, and have always found that it does save me from all sin. And I feel thankful that I am now able to bear witness to the purity of that gospel which I received through her ministration, and in which I have found peace and solid rest. I feel myself to be the seed of the free woman, and an heir to the promised inheritance. I have no natural relations with me; but I have spiritual relations, elders, brethren and sisters, who are dearer to me than any of my natural kindred ever were. In these I can confide, and with these I can unite and partake of the true bread of life, and drink of the pure waters of life, and enjoy, in heavenly harmony, one Lord, one faith and one baptism.

ZIPPORAH CORY.

*New-Lebanon, June 12th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF ZERUAH CLARK.

My native place was Norwich, in Connecticut. I was born June 15th, 1755. My father, Peabody Mosely, was a Baptist Elder, and a very religious man in that order. He was very punctual in teaching his family the principles of morality and religion, according to his knowledge and understanding; and, at times, he appeared to be in great exercise of mind for the spiritual welfare of his children. In his labors to impress their minds with a sense of his religious instructions, he would often weep over them with great tenderness of feeling. This often affected my mind with very serious impressions, and occasioned in me much concern for the welfare of my soul. But being young, these impressions could not be very durable amid the snares and allurements of the world. Hence the natural growth of youthful pride and vanity gained the ascendancy over me as I grew up.

At length, however, conviction seized me, and I began to be greatly exercised in mind about religion, and my

trouble increased upon me so that I was unable to conceal it, and I acquainted my father and others with my feelings. They judged that I had been converted, and thought it expedient for me to be baptized; accordingly I was baptized and joined the church. At the age of twenty I was married to Rufus Clark, who belonged to the same church, and had been baptized at the same time I was. We were in prosperous circumstances, and were accounted good church members. I had three children, and a kind husband who provided well for his family; so that I was in as good a situation to take comfort in the world as any body. But all this did not make me happy; I felt my soul as destitute of God as ever. I had not yet obtained salvation from sin; and I found my conscience bearing witness against me. I felt the nature of sin still growing stronger and stronger in me: and I cried out, Alas! what shall I do? where shall I go? or where shall I look for relief? I could not see any who I thought lived according to the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, as laid down in the New-Testament. I still cried to God in the best manner I was able, that he would open some way for my salvation; but instead of finding relief, my trouble and distress of mind still kept increasing upon me.

In the month of May, 1780, we heard of a very singular and remarkable people, living a few miles above Albany, who had a new kind of religion. The account given of their religion greatly affected me, and I felt a desire to visit them. In this state of mind Rufus and I set out together to go and see them, and took our infant child along with us. Here, for the first time, I found a people professing the religion of Christ, who did not “daub with untempered mortar,” and cry *peace and safety* where there was none. Here I heard that soul-quickenng word of God which I had never heard before, and felt the force of that divine light and heart-searching power which I had never experienced before. I felt myself as in the presence of God, and saw my wicked life open before me as a book.

Mother Ann told us we could not serve God in our sins, and said we must confess our sins. Elder William asked me if I was willing to confess my sins. I answered in the

affirmative. "Remember, (said he,) if you confess your sins, you confess them before God and the holy angels, and we are his witnesses." Rufus confessed his sins first; I then confessed mine, one by one, as in the presence of God and before his witnesses, and then returned to the room where Mother was. She appeared satisfied with us, and said, "Now you may return home and serve God: you could not serve God in your sins." They gave us much good counsel and instruction concerning our future conduct. They told Rufus that he must be kind to me and the children, and said I must be subject and obedient to my husband, and bring up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Mother said, "If you will be obedient to what we have taught you, the promise of God is to you and your children: yea, if you continue in obedience, sin will appear hateful to you; and you will have no more feeling for such works as you have confessed, than the babe you have in your arms."

Soon after Mother and the Elders went to Harvard, Rufus and I went there to see them. While we were there, Mother one day called us into a room where she was engaged in labors with some elderly people who had been followers of Shadrach Ireland; and tho they had embraced the present testimony of the gospel, they still retained their faith in some of his peculiar principles; one of which was, that the bodies of the faithful would never die. Mother seemed to be in great trouble for them, and labored hard to show them the darkness they were under, and the inconsistency of such a principle. "You are now old people, (said she,) and yet you think you shall never die! One is dropping away here, and another there, among you; yet you lay it to some secret cause—to something which they have done. That is to say, if they had been faithful, it would not have been so. Look at yourselves; you carry about you all the marks of mortality that are on other people. Your skins are wrinkled; your hair is turning white and falling from your heads; your eye-sight is failing; you are losing your teeth, and your bodies are growing decrepid. How inconsistent it is for you to think you shall never die! These natural bodies must all die and turn to dust."

Mother's instruction to me and to others was, that we should take up a full cross against all manner of sin, all manner of deceit and falsehood, and the whole train of evils that proceed from a selfish and sinful nature. She taught us the necessity of crucifying the flesh with all its affections and lusts, and of righting all our wrongs, by making restitution to those whom we had wronged in any manner whatever. She taught us to be neat, cleanly, prudent and industrious. I once asked her counsel about some articles of fashionable clothing which I had on hand; and was at a loss to know how I ought to dispose of them. Without making any direct reply to my question, she said, "You ought not to dress yourselves in rich and costly apparel; but dress in that which is decent and modest, as becomes holy women of God." She taught us to love God and serve him faithfully, and to live holily, righteously and godly in this world. I am confident that she was endowed with the spirit of wisdom from God; for she taught as never woman taught before. And shall we presume to say her teaching is not to be regarded?

Jesus Christ said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." (John viii. 24.) The wicked not only refused to believe him, but rejected him, and spake evil of him: they called him "A gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners;" and through malice, and by the influence of false witness, they put him to an ignominious death. "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?" (Matt. x. 25.) What charges of debauchery and excess,—what ignominious names and titles of disgrace have they not palmed upon Mother Ann! Some, through ignorance of the real cause, may think it strange that so many evil reports should be circulated concerning her, if she was a truly pious woman. But I consider these evil reports the best evidence to those who never saw her, that she did truly belong to the household of Christ. Had she been of the world, and lived in all those abominations of which she has been accused, the wicked never would have troubled her, nor themselves on her account—they never would have slandered her, nor published a single line against her.

But she was not of the world; for God had chosen her out of the world; and because she bore testimony against their evil works, they hated her while living, they calumniated her after her decease, and they hate her testimony and despise her followers to this day. According to the testimony of Jesus Christ; "I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

I know for one, that Mother Ann was a woman chosen of God, and endowed with the spirit of Christ, beyond any woman I ever saw. And so far was she from being given to intoxication or lewdness, or any thing contrary to the pure gospel of Christ, that I never once suspected any such thing of her. From my first acquaintance with her, (and I had much opportunity with her,) I ever had reason to esteem her as the first of women in this latter day; and any person may as well attempt to blow out the light of the sun as try to destroy my confidence in Mother Ann, or to overthrow the work of God which she has planted in this land. I have had ~~too many~~ and too powerful evidences of her divine mission and authority, not only during her residence with us, but since her decease, to entertain a moment's doubt concerning her character. And I know she has planted that living gospel faith, and established that work of true christian righteousness on earth, that all the powers of earth and hell can never destroy; much less can the malicious struggles of a few envious and disaffected slanderers do it.

I have heard much said about delusion, ignorance and bondage, as tho the Society was governed by tyrannical power, and kept in blindness and ignorance by the Elders and leading characters of the Society. And I find these reports are so current at a distance, among those who know nothing about the Society, that many people really believe them to be true. But such people might easily be undeceived, if they would but come and see, and candidly enquire for themselves. It is now nearly forty-six years since I set out to obey the testimony of the gospel which I received through Mother Ann; and I can say with confidence, that I have been faithful, according to my understanding and abilities; and I have had every opportunity to know, if such reports had been true. I have never found any bondage, nor have I ever seen any in

the order of the gospel. I consider the greatest bondage to be the bondage of sin, under which all the wicked are bound; and none more strongly than those who bring these charges against the Society.

Before I found this gospel, I was in bondage to my wicked nature, and found deliverance from it by confessing and forsaking my sins; and I have never felt myself under any bondage from that day to this, excepting the bondage of my faith and conscience, (if that may be called bondage,) which binds me to Christ and his gospel, and in this I act freely; therefore I consider myself a free woman in Christ.

As to delusion, I know of no greater delusion than sin and wickedness; nor do I know of any people more deluded than those who live in it, and yet flatter themselves that they are regenerated and born of God; forgetting the testimony of the apostle John, the beloved disciple of Christ: "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin;"—and, "He that committeth sin is of the devil." As to being kept in ignorance, I think those who are ignorant of the way of life and salvation, are the most to be pitied for their ignorance of any people on earth: for I consider the knowledge of salvation superior to all other knowledge. That knowledge will increase forever, while all earthly and natural knowledge must fail and come to an end.

This is my testimony in favor of that gospel which I first received from Mother Ann, and which I know to be the gospel of Christ: it is that gospel by which I have lived, and for which I am willing to die.

ZERUAH CLARK.

*New-Lebanon, July 29th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF LUCY WIGHT.

When I was young I used to be much affected with reading about the sufferings and persecutions which Christ and his disciples endured from the wicked; and I often thought if I had lived in that day, I would have been one of Christ's disciples. When I was about nineteen



years old, I was taken very sick with a nervous fever; so that my life was despaired of, both by myself and others. In the time of this sickness I fell into a kind of trance, and thought I died. Finding myself alone in the world of spirits, as I thought, and no one to help me, I was in great trouble, and prayed that some one would come to my assistance, and conduct me to a place of happiness. And there appeared to me a very pure, bright looking man, who conducted me to a house, as it seemed, where I saw a number of people who looked so pure and clean that I began to feel greatly ashamed of myself. Among the rest I saw a man who seemed to be walking the floor, under the operations of the power of God.

The sight of such heavenly purity as these people seemed to possess, and the sense I felt of my own impurity and unfitness for such a place, brought excessive tribulation upon me, and I felt as tho I wanted to get away and hide myself. I told the people that when I was in the body, I thought when I died I should go to Heaven; but I could not find Heaven, because I had come there in my sins; and I asked them if there was not some place where I could go and repent of my sins and be saved, and not go to hell. They said there was; and I might go and repent.

About this time my father came to my bed-side and took hold of my hand, and I awoke from my trance. I asked him if he thought I was dying. He said he thought I was, and asked me if I did not think so. I answered, No. He asked me if I was willing to die. I replied that I was not; for I was yet in my sins; and if I should die in my sins, I could not be saved. My vision in this sickness greatly awakened my feelings, and led me to search for some way out of sin. In this search I continued for several years without success—no way appeared; but I did not then know the cause.

In the year 1779, there was a great revival of religion in New-Lebanon, in which I received a witness that the time of Christ's second appearance was near at hand; but in what manner it would take place I could not tell: for I believed his second appearance, like the first, would take place in a manner contrary to all human calculation.

And I was afraid I should be like the unbelieving Jews, and should oppose Christ in his coming.

In the spring of the following year, (1780,) there were various reports in circulation about a strange sort of people living up above Albany; and I felt a great anxiety to go and search them out, and see whether there was any thing good among them or not. Accordingly I set out with six or seven others to make them a visit. While on our journey, one of the company asked me if I was going to join them. I replied that I had searched a great deal after religion; but had never yet found any that had any solid foundation; and if their religion had no better foundation than any that I had ever found before, I should not join them: for, said I, "they cannot catch old birds with chaff."

We went to John Partington's and staid over night. The next morning, being Sabbath, we went on to the place where Mother and the Elders lived, and arrived there just before they began their morning worship, and attended their meeting, which was unspeakably powerful, solemn and striking. We also attended their afternoon meeting. The mighty power of God was evidently present in visible operations among the people. I was so affected with a sense of fear, guilt and shame, on account of my own wretched and lost state, and my unfitness to be with a people of such purity, that I drew back and kept out of sight as much as possible. Among other extraordinary manifestations of the power of God which I noticed, one of the Elders, while walking the floor under the visible operations of divine power suddenly extended his hand towards me, and came directly up to me, saying, "God knows what is there, and so do his servants." This struck me very forcibly; I fully believed what he said, and felt as tho all my sins were as plain and open to their view as they were to my own; and I felt as much tribulation as I was able to endure.

We again attended the evening meeting, when I again stepped in behind the people and sat down on a bench, in hopes of keeping out of sight. Elder James Whittaker soon came and sat down with me, and said, "Woman, what do you think of this great work of God?" I answered, "I know it is the work of God." "So you do; (said

he,) but you are like the Jews of old, who waited long for a Messiah; but when he came, he was too mean for them; so is this work of God too mean for you." I replied, that I did not think there was any way of God for me. Then Mother and the Elders came and knelt down before me; my head was bowed down into my lap, and I was unable to raise it up, or to help myself. Mother wept and cried for a few minutes, and then began to sing, and sung very melodiously. They then told me that there was a way of God for me, if I would confess and forsake my sins. This I fully believed, and in obedience to the faith I then received, I went immediately out and confessed my sins honestly before Mother; and I found her to be a Mother indeed. I found that releasement from the burden of sin which I had never felt before, and which I had never been able to find in any other way, tho I had long sought for it.

The vision which I had seen in my sickness, more than four years before, came fresh to my mind. Here was the house and the people. I remembered the guilt and confusion I had felt in my vision, and now I had realized it. The man who came to me with out-stretched hand, I found to be Elder John Hocknell; and I knew him to be the same man that I saw in my vision, walking the floor under the operations of divine power. All the scenes of that singular vision were this day realized to me in a very striking manner. I now felt as tho I had got upon a sure foundation, where I could safely stand. We continued there the following day; during this time Mother faithfully instructed us in the way of God. On Tuesday morning we took our leave of them and returned home, greatly satisfied with our visit. When I got home, I told my father I had found the people I saw in my vision; and I knew Elder John Hocknell to be the same man I saw walking the floor under the power of God; and my father recollected the vision.

When we first heard of Mother and the Elders, we found by the report of their neighbors, of whom enquiry was made, that they were considered as a peaceable, honest and industrious people, having a good name among their neighbors, who were plain, honest, Dutch people, and did not meddle with the religion of other people, and

of course had no prejudice against the Shakers on that account. But when we came to hear and embrace their testimony, and to receive a measure of the Spirit of Christ through their ministration, and walk according to it; then it was that evil reports began to spread over the country: so that in a short time Mother was charged with every kind of wickedness that the tongue of slander could express. But so far from weakening my faith, these reports strengthened it the more; because the great similarity between the accusations against the Lord Jesus and Mother Ann, was thereby made to appear more striking and evident.

It was not long after I embraced this testimony, that Mother and the Elders were imprisoned in Albany, as were also most of the leading characters of the work in New-Lebanon. When the wicked took Mother and the Elders to convey them to prison, they made their boasts that if they could confine them, and get away the principal members of the Society from New-Lebanon, they could easily overthrow the rest, and put a stop to the work. Accordingly they seized and committed them all to prison; and we, poor children, were left like sheep without a shepherd. Yet through our humble prayers to God, day and night, we were protected and strengthened in our faith, and our persecutors failed in their object, and were not able to destroy the work of God.

While the Elders were in prison, I visited them once; but the wicked had conveyed Mother down the river, and confined her in Poughkeepsie jail; so that I did not see her. The winter following, she returned home, and I visited her soon afterwards. I visited her again at Harvard, in a time of great persecution. I also visited her twice at Ashfield; both of these times her meetings were attended with the most remarkable manifestations of divine power. I was with her when she visited Hancock and New-Lebanon, where persecution raged without control. In these persecutions she appeared perfectly undaunted, and boldly reprov'd the wicked for their ungodly conduct. They sometimes accused her, on such occasions, of being drunk or mad; but I never saw her drunk nor mad at any time. She spoke as she was influenced by the Spirit and power of God, and was no more

mad nor drunk than Jesus was when he exclaimed to the wicked, in his day, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers; how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (See Matt. xxiii. 33.) But however great or severe their persecutions, Mother and the Elders always bore their sufferings and abuses with meekness and humility.

In all my acquaintance with them, under all circumstances, I never discovered any thing in any of their conversation or deportment, either public or private, that was in anywise contrary to the pure gospel of Christ, of which they evidently possessed a very large portion. When we had visited them, and were about to return home, in taking our leave of Mother, we never failed to receive her parting blessing in some virtuous and wholesome counsel or instruction, either of a spiritual or temporal nature, and generally both. She would sometimes say, "Go home and put your hands to work and your hearts to God; pay all your just debts, and right all your wrongs. Remember the poor; if you have but little to spare, give to them that need. Be neat and clean, and keep the fear of God in all your goings forth."

Tho my father and most of his family embraced the testimony and faithfully kept it; yet we found many trials to pass through, and much opposition to encounter. My mother died while I was quite young; and tho I had a kind father, yet I knew not the value and importance of a mother till I found Mother Ann. But in all our trials and sufferings from the opposition of the wicked, since we embraced the gospel, the promise of Christ has ever been verified towards us: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." In all my tribulation I have found comfort in the gospel. My faith has been my treasure; and my obedience to Mother Ann's testimony has always afforded peace and comfort to my soul. I feel my faith firmly fixed and grounded on a sure foundation; nor have I any more doubt of Mother's divine mission, or of the truth of her testimony, than I have of that of Jesus Christ and his apostles: for it has kept me from all sin and all manner of evil; and is, to this day, like the bread of life to my soul. This I have experienced for nearly forty-six years;

and by this I know it is no vain imagination ; therefore I can say with confidence, that I have not been deceived nor led blindfold by my faith.

Altho it is now nearly forty-two years since Mother Ann's decease ; yet that same testimony which I first received from her, still remains like a living witness in my soul ; and in obedience to its teaching, I have received many blessed gifts of God, and many precious seasons of heavenly joy and comfort. I have enjoyed many feeling sensations of Mother's spirit and presence since she left the body. In times of tribulation, I have often felt her present with me, to comfort me. These things are not fanciful dreams of the imagination ; but as real as the light of the sun in a clear day. Could I believe the charges of the wicked against Mother, I must believe that a corrupt tree can bring forth good fruit : for I know I have received much good and heavenly fruit from her ; and I never received any thing from her but what was good ; nor did I ever see any thing but goodness in her, from the first day I saw her to the day of her decease.

LUCY WIGHT.

*New-Lebanon, June 10th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF DANIEL MOSELEY.

Being a well-wisher to the peace and happiness of all the human family, whom I consider as my brethren and sisters according to the order of nature in the old creation ; and believing that the time is coming, and is now begun, in which every individual soul of all the human race that ever existed on earth, will be waked up by the resurrection power of God, and come forth to receive their reward, according to their works, either in mercy or judgment, as they obey or disobey the will of God ; I therefore feel it my duty to bear testimony to that blessed way of God which is dearer to me than life, and which I have proved by long experience to be the way of salvation from sin, having been thereby saved from the pollutions that are in the world, and in which mankind

are sunk and lost from God, through the lusts of the flesh.

Some time in July, 1780, (being then in the twenty-first year of my age,) I went to Watervliet, to visit the little family of people who had then begun to be greatly "wondered at" by the world around them, on account of their wonderful and strange religion. I went well guarded, as I supposed, against deception, having already seen enough of that among professors, to put me on the watch. I had likewise experienced much of what is commonly called religion; having had great convictions of sin, and passed through many scenes of religious exercise of mind. In the fifteenth year of my age, I had joined a society of very zealous New-Light Baptists, and for six years had supported the name and character of a christian without reproach or rebuke from the society, or from any other quarter, except my own conscience. During this period, I had been sufficiently acquainted with people who made a great profession of religion, and who, I knew, lived in wickedness more than people in general who made no profession; and therefore I thought it necessary to be on my guard. But when I came there, I found my fears were groundless: for I found as much difference between the professors I had formerly been acquainted with and these people, as to the nature of their religion, as there is between dead carcasses and living souls; and the power of their testimony differed as much from that of the former, as flames of fire differ from the stagnant waters of a muddy pond. The fire soon began to scorch and burn my carnal nature, of which I was as full as a pine knot is of pitch, and I cried out like the prophet Malachi, "Who can abide the day of his coming?" I found that it was indeed, "like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap." I was searched, like "Jerusalem, with candles," and all my dark works, which had before been hid from my own sight, were brought out of their secret hiding places, and exposed naked before the Lord and before the eyes of his people.

Lord what is man! A lump of pride, lust and vanity: for such I found myself when I was uncovered by the light of divine truth, and exposed naked to my own view. The serpent was no longer able to hide; my pride was

horribly stained ; my lust was shockingly mortified, my vanity was blown away like the smoke of a dunghill ; and my good christian name, which I had cherished so dearly, alas ! it was like chaff before the wind, or a dry brush-heap before a flaming fire ; it was consumed by the fire of truth, and all my religious notions and imaginations were blown away at once. Then, for the first time, I began to understand the words of the prophet Isaiah : “The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down ; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.” And also of the prophet Malachi : “Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven ; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, (whether professor or profane,) shall be as stubble ; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” Such was the spirit and power of that gospel which Mother Ann preached ; it exalted the work of Christ alone, and swept away the corrupted religion of Antichrist, and the religious inventions of fallen man.

The way being thus prepared, my soul began to be baptized into the spirit of the gospel, and to receive the pure and heavenly gifts of God. Then I was able to say in truth, and testify with confidence and boldness before all men, that I knew it to be the way of God ; because it purged me from my sins—that I knew it to be the power of the resurrection ; because it raised my soul from the death of sin to a life of righteousness. This I have proved above forty-six years ; therefore I can have no doubt of it. And I can say, in the sincerity of my soul, I feel thankful to God that I have lived to see the day in which I have the privilege to testify these things for the benefit of my successors in the gospel, and of all honest enquirers after truth.

Some people who visited Mother and the Elders, and heard their testimony against all sin, and especially against the lust of the flesh, went and spread a report that these people forbid to marry, and applied to them all the hard names and heavy charges contained in the first epistle to Timothy against apostates, chap. iv. 1, 2, 3. Mother therefore told me not to go and report that they forbid to marry ; “for (said she) we do not. But all that can-



“not or will not take up their crosses for the Kingdom of Christ’s sake, and that only, (continued she,) I would advise them to marry and live after the flesh, in a lawful manner, and be servants to their families: for that is natural, and less sinful in the sight of God than any other way of gratifying that nature.” As to temperance, regularity and good order in the management of their affairs, these people exceeded all that I had ever seen. I was brought up in New-England, among good farmers; but such neatness and good economy as was here displayed in the wilderness I never saw before.

After spending two days with them, I returned home to Pittstown, where my parents then lived, and I saw Mother no more till after her return from Poughkeepsie jail. I then visited her again, and found the same godliness and purity, with an increasing testimony against all sin; but I saw nothing of that intemperance and obscenity about which I have heard such a great cry among those who delight to live in such things. I heard a powerful testimony against all such practices; and I saw nothing but what was every way perfectly consistent with modesty and chastity; indeed quite too much so to suit the feelings of a carnal nature. This was the great *stumbling-stone and rock of offence*, and the mighty cause of contention between “Michael and his angels, and the Dragon and his angels.” I visited her again soon after; and always found in her the same powerful testimony against all unrighteousness and every evil work, and a corresponding example of godliness and purity.

I also visited her after she went to Harvard. Her appearance there seemed to me more heavenly than I had ever seen it before. Her soul was filled with love and joy, peace and purity; and the gifts and power of God, through her, to all that believed and took up their crosses, were ministered in great abundance. I was then but a babe in Christ; yet I had my little measure full, which raised me above the carnal delights of the flesh and the mind. I could never feel the least sensation of impurity from her; but all she said and did, seemed to come from a spirit of perfect purity. Yet even in that day, there was a report circulated that she was a *camp-woman*, or in other words, a *prostitute*. But this I can say of a

truth; if she belonged to a camp of any kind, it must be *the camp of the saints*, not a camp of sinners; and her enrolment was with the Lamb on Mount Zion, where souls are redeemed "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit."

I visited Mother and the Elders three times while they were at Harvard. I also visited them at Ashfield, Richmond and Hancock, and always found in them the same spirit of meekness, temperance, kindness and charity; and they always maintained the same powerful testimony against all sin and every evil work. Mother, indeed, always abounded in the gifts of God, wherever she went. She gave the people much good instruction in things spiritual and temporal—exhorted them to put their hands to work and their hearts to God—to pay all their just debts and rectify all their wrongs, and to be kind and charitable to the poor. She instructed the sisters in their duty—to manage their family affairs with prudence, neatness and good economy—to bring up their children in the fear of God, and set good examples before them—to dress and prepare their victuals in good order; that when their brethren came in from their hard work, they might bless them, and be able to kneel down together and give thanks to God.

Great multitudes of Believers assembled in all the places where Mother and the Elders visited, and were taught and instructed by them; while many of the wicked gathered round, full of persecuting venom, stirring up "lewd fellows of the baser sort," to beat and abuse them for their faith, and belch out their horrid oaths and blasphemies against Mother and the Elders, and accuse them of drunkenness, witchcraft and all manner of evil. These afflictions they had to suffer, more or less, in most of the places where they went to visit those who had embraced their testimony; but they always bore them patiently, and often kneeled down and prayed for their persecutors, that God would forgive them; because they knew not what they were doing.

When Mother and the Elders first arrived in New-Lebanon, from Hancock, they stopped at John Bishop's, where they tarried from Saturday till Monday. Here they spent the Sabbath and held a public meeting; and

the assembly of Believers and strangers was so great that the meeting was held in the orchard. Elder James delivered a very powerful and solemn discourse on the subject of humiliation. He was followed by Elder Joseph Meacham, Calvin Harlow and others, who spoke with great power of God. After speaking, the Believers went forth and worshipped God in singing and dancing. The exercises were solemn and powerful, and the numerous company of spectators were very attentive, and went away peaceably, without committing any act of outrage.

Mother spent more than a week in New-Lebanon and Stephentown. During this time she visited a number of families of the Believers, who received much good instruction from her, and enjoyed many opportunities with her in worshipping and praising God. But the wicked, who were continually plotting mischief, at length raised a great mob and dragged her before Eleazer Grant, under a pretence of trial for disturbance. This was a mere mock-trial, instigated by the spirit of persecution, and in which cruel abuse was the *dis*-order of the day, and it was carried to a shameful extent, without any color of law. I was an eye witness of the horrid scenes of that day, and saw the transactions of the mob, from beginning to end. Mother was shamefully and shockingly abused. Elder James had several of his ribs broken, and many of the Believers suffered badly. But as others have given a particular and correct account of these transactions, I shall pass them over, by only remarking that the spite and malice of the wicked seemed to be levelled against Mother, whom they falsely charged with drunkenness and all manner of evil.

But I had sufficient opportunity to find out the character of Mother and the Elders, not only from my own personal knowledge and observation, but from the constant intercourse kept up with them by great numbers of my friends and acquaintance for more than four years; yet I have no knowledge that any appearance of intoxication or intemperance, or any other kind of evil was ever discovered in them, or even suspected, by any honest Believer, from first to last; and I am confident that I should have found it out, if that had been the case. The fact is, all these stories came from the enemies of the cross, who

were continually watching for evil, and seeking after something to accuse them of; and as they could not find any evil in them, they could easily commit it themselves, and then falsely charge their own abominations upon Mother and the Elders. But they may as well try to persuade me that the saints in Heaven live in drunkenness and whoredom, as to make me believe that Mother and the Elders lived in these things.

After Mother and the Elders left New-Lebanon, I visited them several times at Watervliet; and I always found the same powerful testimony against all wickedness, and the same upright and godly example in all their conduct. The truth is, Mother Ann had the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ given her to search out all the crooked windings of the serpent, and all the deceit of the devil, which has been so craftily diffused into the nature of man; and she was thereby able to rend that glossy covering which, like a mantle, they have spread over their works of concupiscence. By this means she was enabled to unmask all the base and unclean desires and deceitful wantonness of both male and female, and detect all those alluring charms of lust by which they entice and deceive each other. She exposed the subtle craftiness of that filthy nature in the males, by which they seek to seduce and debauch the females; and all the enticing arts of the females to ensnare and bewitch the males, and draw them into their wanton embraces.

She declared these filthy and shameful gratifications to be the cause of all those base and wicked abominations which corrupted the human race, and filled the earth with deceit, hypocrisy, fraud, knavery, covetousness, injustice, theft, robbery, dissipation, idleness, contention and strife; and from whence proceed hatred, envy, jealousy and murder among individuals, and war and bloodshed, destruction and rapine among nations. "These things (said she) are the fruits of the filthy gratifications of the flesh, which bring distress and poverty, shame and disgrace upon families and individuals, and fill the earth with wretchedness and misery." And, according to her testimony, they are doomed to everlasting condemnation. But those who willingly bear the cross of Christ, and endure the purifying fire of Zion, which pu-

rises the soul from all these things, will be crowned with everlasting salvation.

The wicked hated that testimony, which struck so powerfully against all their iniquitous practices and filthy abominations;—they could not endure it. Indeed Mother's testimony was often so powerful as to make sinners tremble in her presence, like a leaf in the wind. Yet the wicked would belie her most shamefully, as tho she had been guilty of their own abominations, and they had lived in innocence! But I say, if any are able to believe that pure streams of water can flow from a corrupt and filthy fountain—that a poisonous tree can yield good and wholesome fruit, or that grapes are the natural fruit of thorn-bushes, and figs grow on thistles, then they are welcome to believe all the ridiculous and inconsistent reports that are abroad in the world concerning Mother Ann and her companions and followers. All who are acquainted with this Society will readily admit that the fruits of it are good, and that we appear to be firmly established in good works; and yet many will insist, and affect to believe, that its principles are wrong—that they originated in error, and of course that we are built on a false foundation. But how unreasonable and inconsistent, not to say downright foolish, such opinions must appear to every rational and reflecting mind! Is not every tree known by its fruit? and are not good grapes the best proof in favor of the good vine that bore them? and when the branches flourish and yield good fruit, then we know the root is sound and good.

DANIEL MOSELEY.

*New-Lebanon, August 12th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF JETHRO TURNER.

In the spring of the year 1780, we heard of a religious people residing in the wilderness, about seven miles northwest of Albany, who were different from all other sects known in the world. During the preceding year, there had been a great out-pouring of the spirit of conviction, which produced a remarkable revival of religion

in and about New-Lebanon. The subjects of this revival felt assured by the spirit of prophecy which attended it, that the commencement of the latter day of glory was approaching, and very near at hand, and were therefore anxiously looking for it. But knowing that the world was full of professions, and that false religion greatly abounded, they were determined not to be imposed upon by any religious pretensions which did not save the soul from sin, and afford that enduring substance of spiritual life which could not die away.

With these impressions, some of the leading characters of the late revival, at the solicitation of the people, went to see these strangers, to inquire into the nature of their religion. After a close and careful examination, they were fully satisfied, and on their return made a favorable report, and advised the people to go and see, and judge for themselves. Soon after this, many of the inhabitants of New-Lebanon and the neighboring towns, went to visit these singular people and satisfy themselves; and they were soon convinced that this little family, who dwelt in the wilderness, retired from all the rest of the world, were the people of the living God, and possessed the gospel of salvation.

In June following, I went, in company with my father, to see them, being then nearly sixteen years of age. We were kindly received by Mother Ann Lee and her little family. Several young people of my acquaintance were there at the time; and the weather being warm, Mother Ann came out and sat on a seat in the shade of the house; and we soon gathered round her to see how she looked, and what she would say to us. She spoke to us in the following manner: "They that are wise will consider their latter end before it be too late. It is a beautiful sight to see young people set out to follow Christ in the regeneration, before the evil days come on." I asked, "How shall we follow Christ?" She said, "There is no one that can follow Christ short of confessing and forsaking all their sins." She also spoke in substance as follows: "They that are young, who make it their abiding choice to follow Christ in the regeneration, will find it much easier to travel into the gifts of God, in the union of the spirit, than those that have lived

“ many years in the works of the flesh : for every work  
 “ of the flesh is death to the soul.”

There were several young people present who had already confessed their sins, and had received the power of God, which was manifested in various and marvellous operations, in signs and visions, in speaking with tongues and prophesying. But these gifts of the Spirit, tho marvellous and striking, did not operate so effectually upon my feelings, as the heart-searching power of Mother's labors with me the next morning. Here she wrought upon my sensibility, and made me feel the force of the cross to some purpose. Nothing in nature—nothing short of Divine Power could have given me such a feeling and powerful sense of the cross of Christ against a carnal nature, as her labors at this time. I had, the day before, manifested a state of mind by no means consistent with the demeanor of a humble penitent seeking the mercy of God, and meekly subjecting to the cross of Christ for salvation ; but had rather affected to consider the cross as no very weighty matter with me. I was therefore fully convinced that this powerful and weighty sensation of the cross was laid upon my spirit, to show me that I could not treat the cross as a trifling matter, without being brought to feel its weight. Here I received the first planting of the gospel of Christ in my soul; and here was the beginning of my obedience to my gospel parents.

After Mother Ann had given my father some counsel concerning his family, and taught us our duty in the path of righteousness, we returned home. In about two or three weeks from this time, I went again to see Mother and the Elders at Watervliet, where, after opening my mind, I found much comfort and releasement. At this time they were greatly thronged with people from different places, who came to see the work of God. The testimony of the gospel was strong and powerful against the man of sin, and all that was of the world—“ the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life.” Believers daily increased in numbers, and grew in the knowledge of the gospel, and in the gifts of God. But the more Believers increased in number, and in the power and gifts of the Spirit, so much the more did the enmity of

the wicked rage against the work of God ; which was vented out in malignant slanders and lying accusations against Mother and the Elders. They were charged with drunkenness, whoredom, witchcraft and all kinds of wickedness ; so that in a short time, these slanderous reports were spread through the country and passed current for truth.

But honest believers, who knew these reports to be false, were the more strengthened and confirmed in their faith thereby ; because they bore such a striking analogy to the false accusations brought against Jesus Christ by the unbelieving Jews. They believed the accusations of the Jews to be false ; because they read so in the scriptures, which were universally acknowledged to be true ; but for themselves they could not know the certainty of those things only by divine revelation. But the accusations brought against Mother Ann they knew to be false ; because they were personally and intimately acquainted with her, having been, more or less of them, continually with her, by day and by night, from the time the people in this country began to embrace her testimony till she left this world ; except when she was in prison at Poughkeepsie ; and even there she was several times visited by them. So that they well knew, and were fully able to bear witness to the purity of her life and character, and could easily see from what spirit such accusations proceeded.

After Mother and the Elders were imprisoned in Albany, I went to see them again, and was permitted to enter the prison where they were, and staid with them some time. Their spirits were clothed with meekness and innocence ; and tho their bodies were confined within the walls of a prison ; yet their souls were not bound. Here they worshipped God, and sung his praise in heavenly songs. Nor was the word of God bound : for they preached the gospel of salvation through the grates of their prison, to multitudes of people ; and many there embraced it, and set out thenceforth in the way of eternal life.

I was frequently with them from the time I first found them till they left this world. And in all my acquaintance with Mother Ann, in all places, I never saw any thing in



her but the image and spirit of Christ. Her temperance in eating and drinking; her patience and resignation in tribulation and sufferings; her firmness, meekness and humility in times of persecution and affliction, all bore incontestible evidence of the spirit of Christ, with which her soul was abundantly filled. The same remarks will apply to Elders William Lee and James Whittaker, who were her companions in tribulation, and helpers in the ministration of the gospel. Their unbounded love to the souls of men—their kindness and charity to the poor, and their exemplary lives and manners in all things, were evident manifestations of that heavenly spirit which dwelt in them.

When we first visited Mother Ann, and heard her testimony, we found that the first thing required of a convicted soul, in order to gain her favor and obtain admittance into her society, was to make an honest confession to God, in the presence of one or more of his witnesses, of every sin we had ever committed in our lives, whether secret or open, and to forsake them forever. By actually doing this, we gained her union, and felt the boundless love of Christ flow from her into our souls.

The next thing required was, in case we had injured any of our fellow creatures, in person or property, by theft, or fraud or violence, or wronged any one, in any way or manner whatever, we must make confession and restitution, to the satisfaction of the injured party. By doing these things we found forgiveness of God, and felt his blessed power and gifts flow in upon us, in various ways and manners, blessing all our undertakings, both in things spiritual and temporal.

As many of us were poor, the next requirement was, to put our hands to labor and our hearts to God, and pay all our just debts. “In so doing, (said Mother,) God will “bless you in your basket and in your store; and you “will soon be able to pay your debts, and have a sufficiency to support your families, and to help the poor and “needy, the widow and the fatherless of this world.”

Such were the instructions we received from Mother Ann; and we to whom these instructions were given, have proved and realized these things by obedience.

Many among us were, at that time, deeply involved in debt, and knew of no way to clear ourselves; yet the blessing of God attended our obedience to Mother's counsel, and we were soon able to discharge our debts to the full satisfaction of our creditors, and to assist the poor and needy with a charitable heart and hand: and our Society is at this day, a standing monument of the truth of these things. It is admitted by all, that the fruit of any tree is the best evidence of the nature of the tree which produced it. And if Mother Ann's ministration has been productive of good effects on those who received it; then it must certainly have been a good ministration, and must have proceeded from a good source.

We know, and can bear witness, that Mother did effect a work of righteousness, which no earthly power—no human wisdom ever did or ever could effect. That spirit which she administered to us, has turned many souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. It has caused the dishonest, the knavish and the fraudulent, to become honest and upright. It has caused the thief to restore his stolen property, and pursue an honest calling for his support. It has caused the idle to become industrious, the prodigal to be prudent, the covetous to be liberal, the liar to speak the truth, the proud and haughty to be meek and humble, the contentious and quarrelsome to become peace-makers, the glutton and the drunkard to become temperate, and the lewd and wanton to become chaste and honest. In short, it has caused "the wicked to forsake their ways, and the unrighteous their thoughts, and turn to the Lord who has had mercy on them, and to God who has forgiven them." These things we know to be true: and now, "either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit." (Matt. xii. 33.)

It is more than forty-six years since I first saw Mother Ann, and heard her testimony of the gospel of Christ; and I can now testify that, by careful obedience to her instructions, and by following her footsteps, I have been saved from the lusts and corruptions that are in the world, and from all sin, in my knowledge, for many years; so

that I know of a certainty that the way she taught, and in which she walked, is the way of salvation.

JETHRO TURNER.

*New-Lebanon, August 5th, 1826.*

### TESTIMONY OF AMOS STOWER.

In my childhood I was instructed by my parents in the principles of the Protestant religion; by which means I received impressions of mind concerning a future state of rewards and punishments at a very early age. Hence I became greatly concerned lest I should not be of that chosen number who would be happy after death. The thoughts of being forever miserable after death, often made such a deep impression on my feelings, that I would endeavor to gain the favor of God by confessing my sins in secret, one by one, and pray that they might be forgiven. Thus I went on, sometimes praying and crying for mercy, at other times sinning, until I arrived at the age of fourteen, which was in the year 1779.

At this time there was a remarkable awakening among the people in New-Lebanon and the adjacent towns. This work was attended with such mighty power of God, that I have seen rugged, stout-hearted young men, who came merely as spectators, fall like men wounded in battle, and screaming so that they might be heard at a great distance. I was much exercised in mind, and greatly desirous to find something that I could depend on for salvation; for the testimony of this revival was, that Christ was about to make his second appearance. After the visible operations of the power of God had mostly ceased, myself and a number of others were baptized and called christians of the Baptist church. But I did not feel satisfied in my mind with regard to the state and situation of my soul.

In the spring of the following year, (1780,) there was a report in circulation concerning a singular people who lived above Albany. Some people from our neighborhood went to see them, and received a measure of faith in their testimony, believing they were the people of God and the

true followers of Christ. About the middle of June, I went also to see them, and found them kind and hospitable. Their testimony was plain and pointed against all manner of sin and every kind of defilement. They appeared to me like heaven-born souls. Their worship was attended with great operations of Divine Power, and their songs were melodious and heavenly. They did not appear to belong to the gross inhabitants of this earth. Their singing, tho' not according to any form with which I had been acquainted, seemed to reach the very heavens. Their testimony completely destroyed that deceptive covering of false religion by which Antichrist had endeavored to persuade me that I was born again. I sensibly felt the inconsistency of a person's pretending to be born of the Spirit, while living in the gratification of the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

In obedience to their doctrine, I confessed my sins to God in the presence of the Elders; and by them I was taught obedience to my parents, and faithfulness in all things; and their instructions felt like the word of God to me. By continuing in obedience to that word, I have proved it to be the word of God in very deed: for by it I obtained the power of salvation from sin. Hence I know of a certainty that the testimony which I received from these parents in the gospel, is the power of God unto salvation, and must of necessity come from God through their ministration.

Their doctrine is indeed crossing to the elements of an evil nature in every soul that receives it; which is a further proof that it proceeds not from an evil source, but from the source of all goodness. And the effect it produces in every faithful soul, is a full confirmation that it is indeed the true doctrine of Christ; because it makes such souls the real heirs and possessors of those blessings which he promised to his faithful followers. It makes them poor in spirit; it makes them hunger and thirst after righteousness; it makes them peace-makers, and the like. It also saves them from the corruptions of the flesh through lust; from evil surmising and jealousy; from envying and strife; from hatred and malice; from evil speaking and all intemperate language; from intem-

perance in eating and drinking; and from every thing which is contrary to the law of Christ.

The gospel of Christ which we have received from Mother Ann Lee and those with her, as well as from their successors in the ministry, is in truth and reality, our only hope of eternal life. And this gospel is a durable and abiding treasure in every faithful Believer. It is "a well of water springing up to everlasting life," which continually nourishes and supports the soul in those scenes of trial and tribulation which it must pass through in the work of regeneration.

We were instructed in the beginning of our faith, to prove the way of God for ourselves; that we might have rejoicing in ourselves, and not in another. This I have done, and have found the benefit of it. We were told that when we came to see the branches flourish, we might then know that the root is holy. And truly, when we see the branches grow and flourish in righteousness, from such a small and humble beginning, we must know, for ourselves, that the foundation was righteous, and in righteousness hath the hand of God planted it. We were also told that, if we would hearken to the voice of the Lord our God, and do whatsoever we were taught, we should be protected.

These promises have been amply fulfilled in every faithful soul who has travelled in reconciliation to the cross of Christ, revealed through Mother Ann and her successors in the gospel. And their preaching and labors in the vineyard of Christ have not been in vain: for we have thereby "tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come." And this has been an abiding substance with every true and faithful Believer, by day and by night, from the first of our faith.

I had many privileges and opportunities of seeing Mother Ann and the Elders. They faithfully taught us the necessity of becoming righteous, and of living a godly life; and instructed us how to do it. They were, in truth, the ministers of the living God, who taught us the way of life and salvation; and all their deportment, in conduct and conversation, corresponded with their calling.

It evidently appears that the false and slanderous reports against Mother and the Elders, were fabricated for the purpose of a refuge to the fabricators, that they might hide themselves from the piercing rays of that light which is in the Church of Christ, which is as a city set on a hill, where all the evil actions, done in the dark, must be brought to the light. But in the event, the true children of the resurrection will receive the reward of their labors. And those that "have hated instruction and despised reproof," will find themselves awfully disappointed in their expectations. After exalting themselves in a false religion, and trusting in a form of godliness, but denying the only true gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, they will then find their reward to be according to their works; they will then see and feel the truth of those doctrines revealed by the Spirit of Christ, in his second coming, through the testimony of Mother Ann Lee, and the Elders, who are God's witnesses to us.

AMOS STOWER.

*New-Lebanon, July 17th, 1826.*

### TESTIMONY OF ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

I was born and brought up in Durham, Connecticut. In my youthful days I became convicted of sin, and felt the need of salvation, and, at the age of twenty, I made a profession of religion, in hopes thereby to find some way of God to save my soul from sin. But I could find no power to keep myself from sin, tho I sought earnestly for it; of course I often fell into those sins which brought me under severe condemnation of conscience. At the age of twenty-four, I was married to Samuel Johnson, who was brought up in the same town, and was then settled as a Presbyterian preacher in New-Lebanon. I was in hopes, by marrying a christian minister, (as I considered him to be,) I should be able to live nearer to God, and enjoy more of the spirit of religion; but I soon found myself disappointed in this expectation. Instead of living more as I believed a christian ought to live, I found the cares and concerns of a family, and the things of the

world increased upon me, and my soul grew darker and darker, and became more and more separated from God.

In this situation I continued till the year 1779, when a great revival of religion broke out in New-Lebanon and the adjacent towns. We then lived in West-Stockbridge. We frequently attended the meetings of the subjects of this work, in the several towns around us. They appeared to be greatly awakened concerning the things of God, and we both became much exercised in mind, and felt deeply interested in this revival. The great manifestations of the Spirit and gifts of God which attended this work, far exceeded any thing of the kind I had ever known before. The signs and operations, and the prophetic spirit which prevailed in these meetings, clearly intimated that Christ was about to "appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." This was the general testimony of those who felt the spirit of the work, and it felt like divine truth. I fully united with it, and received a good measure of the power of God; and my soul became awakened to such a degree that, for some time, days and nights seemed all alike to me. I felt a sure manifestation in my soul that Christ was near at hand. But alas! this power left me, and behold, I was enveloped in darkness, and all in my sins! This caused me great tribulation of soul, and I cried to God, day and night, for some way of deliverance; but none could I find.

I continued in this situation until the spring of 1780, when Tallmadge Bishop, of New-Lebanon, came to Stockbridge to see us, and gave us a particular account of a very singular people, living in the wilderness above Albany. I listened to this account with great attention. It appeared evident to me, that these strangers had gained greater light of God than any people I had ever heard of before, or at least, greater than I had ever received. I felt at this time, a great sense of my loss from God; indeed I felt myself a very corrupt creature, and cried earnestly to God for his mercy. After hearing this account, my husband and I both set out, there and then, to take up our crosses, according to the testimony of these strangers, as far as we could understand what it was.

Shortly after this, my husband went to see these people, and embraced their faith, and received great power

of God, and returned to New-Lebanon. On hearing that he was at New-Lebanon, I felt such anxiety to see him and hear from Mother and the Elders, that I agreed with David Mudge, one of our neighbors, to go and see him. But when David came where he was, the power of God operated so mightily upon him that David durst not speak to him. However, he returned home with David; but was still under such powerful operations that the neighbors gathered in to see him. They felt much opposed to that power; but I was fully satisfied that it was from God, and felt sensible that my soul needed a share in it.

Soon after this, Mother and the Elders were imprisoned in Albany, and the Believers were brought into great tribulation, and I had no small portion of it to bear. Samuel and I came up from Stockbridge to New-Lebanon, and brought our three children with us. We attended meeting on the Sabbath, at Dr. Isaac Harlow's. While the Believers were in meeting, and on their knees in prayer to God, and in great tribulation of soul, on account of the persecuting cruelty of their enemies, a mob gathered round the house, broke in upon us, and seized my husband, and dragged him off to Samuel Jones's, where they kept him till the next morning. They then took him off to Albany, accused him of being an enemy to his country, and had him confined in prison.

Thus was I left, with three young children, in a delicate situation, and under as much tribulation as I was able to endure. By the advice of my friends I went to Albany, to see if there was no possible way to obtain my husband's releasement from prison. I saw the Elders, who were in the prison of the old fort; but Mother Ann had, the day before, been sent down the river and imprisoned in Poughkeepsie jail. The Elders advised me to make application to the commissioners in Albany, and, if possible, prevail on them to release my husband, who was confined in the jail of the old City-Hall. I was alone; for no man dared to assist me, or appear in behalf of my husband; and my tribulation can be more easily conceived than described.

I called on the commissioners, made known my distressed situation, and earnestly entreated them to release



my husband ; but all in vain. He was accused of saying that, "The followers of Christ have nothing to do with wars and fightings." The commissioners said that, as the nation was involved in war, and the enemy was threatening them on every side, they could not suffer a man to be at large, who maintained doctrines so dangerous to the protection and defence of the country. I was therefore under the painful necessity of returning home and leaving my husband in prison. But his brother afterwards obtained his releasement upon a plea of insanity, and by producing evidence that he had before been a warm advocate of his country's cause.

Some time in February following, after Mother and the Elders were released from prison, I visited them at Watervliet. Here I saw Mother for the first time. She came singing into the room where I was sitting, and I felt an inward evidence that her singing was in the gift and power of God. She came and sat down by my side, and put her hand upon my arm. Instantly I felt the power of God flow from her and run through my whole body. I was then convinced beyond a doubt that she had the power of God, and that I received it from her. She did not flatter me, nor daub me with "untempered mortar;" but told me I might confess my sins. I felt ashamed of myself; but I went out with her, and honestly confessed my sins to God, in her presence. I was fully convinced, by what I saw and felt, that she had the discerning power of God, so that she could discern the state and situation of my mind, as easily as I could behold my face in a glass. I sensibly felt that I had come to judgment, and that all the sins I had ever committed in my life must be laid open before God, just as I had committed them, or I could never be saved. I confessed my sins, with a full determination to leave them off forever. And in obedience to Mother's teaching, I found that power which enabled me to keep myself from all sin in my knowledge.

After this I had many opportunities with Mother and the Elders. I saw them at Harvard, Ashfield, Stonington, Richmond, Stockbridge and New-Lebanon. I have seen Mother Ann in many different places, and under various circumstances. I have seen her under sufferings and tribulation, in persecution and affliction, in joy and

rejoicing under the influence of divine manifestations, in weeping and supplications for the mercy and favor of God, in care and anxiety for the increase of the gospel, and the protection and salvation of souls. But I never saw in her any thing immoral or unbecoming, in word or deed ; but in all things she was an example of godliness, and a pattern of piety worthy of true christian imitation, and a faithful teacher of every christian virtue. She taught industry, prudence, temperance and good economy; and she was faithful to practise what she taught to others. She was a powerful and swift witness against all unrighteousness and every evil work.

I have often heard Mother and the Elders speak under the influence of divine power, and have heard them declare many truths by the spirit of prophecy ; and I never knew their words to fail in any one instance. I had full confidence in her divine mission ; because I have proved the truth of her testimony by my own experience. I know that Christ was in her for salvation ; because I have had too great a proof of it to have even a moment's doubt. It would be needless to attempt to describe the evidences of my faith ; for they are spiritual, and cannot be fully described on paper ; and as the apostle says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.) This I know by experience.

But I can say with confidence, (and I bless God that I am able to say it,) I did really love Mother Ann with that heavenly love which my tongue cannot express, nor my pen describe. And truly I had good reason ; for I received my love from her. I have received many precious and heavenly gifts of God from her ; and they have felt like the bread of life and the waters of life to my soul. And I can testify with confidence before all mankind, that I never saw the least unrighteous action in her ; nor did I ever hear an unrighteous word from her lips. And I can say the same of Elder William and Elder James. I know for myself that they lived pure and holy lives ; for their fruits have sufficiently proved it. And I know that by my obedience to their testimony, I received that power of God that has saved me from all sin ; and that power

has never left me from that day to this ; but has ever been increasing in my soul, and enlightening my understanding in divine things. And tho I am now far advanced in years, and my bodily strength is decaying ; yet that heavenly faith and power which I received from Mother Ann, is still living in my soul.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.

*New-Lebanon, Jan. 9th, 1827.*



### TESTIMONY OF THANKFUL BARCE.

When I was young, I was in great trouble of mind about my sinful state, and was much concerned to know how I should find peace with God ; for I often read in the scriptures that there was *no peace for the wicked*. While in these exercises of mind ; one night, on my bed, I saw a very admirable woman. As she advanced along, I saw a very large flock of sheep following her. They appeared to be the most beautiful flock I ever saw, and were clothed with the cleanest and whitest wool that ever my eyes beheld. The woman advanced forward till she came to a large plain, where she halted ; and I saw her bait the sheep with something that was in her hand ; to my view it resembled salt. The sheep all seemed to gather round her and eat. I did not hear a word spoken by the woman ; nor did I speak to her ; but I viewed her very attentively, and wondered what it could mean : for the scene appeared very solemn.

In the spring of 1780, I heard of a strange people living above Albany, who said they served God day and night, and did not commit sin. I thought if there was such a people on earth, they must be the people of God. I did not believe the professors of christianity around me had this power : for they said they lived in sin, and I believed it ; and I knew I had not found any thing that saved *me* from sin. Under these considerations, I went to see these remarkable strangers ; for I was determined to see and know for myself what sort of people they were. When I arrived, Mother Ann met me at the door, took hold of my hand and led me into the house. Her

first salutation to me was in these words: "Being a daughter of Zion, how camest thou hither without a cap on thy head?" She sat down in a chair, and I sat down by her side. Her eyes were shut, and it appeared that her sense was withdrawn from the things of time. She sung very melodiously, and appeared very beautiful. Her countenance appeared bright and shining, like an angel of glory, and she seemed to be overshadowed with the glory of God. The graceful motion of her hands, the beautiful appearance of her countenance, and the heavenly melody of her voice, made her seem like a glorious inhabitant of the heavenly world, singing praises to God.

As I sat by the side of her, one of her hands, while in motion, frequently touched my arm; and at every touch of her hand, I instantly felt the power of God run through my whole body. I then knew she possessed the power of God, and I saw that she was the very same woman I had seen in my night vision, several years before. Could I then dispute the work of God in this woman? Nay, in no wise; I could not but acknowledge God in her; for God was in her of a truth.

Mother and the Elders always maintained a strong testimony against all sin. They taught us to abstain from "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life;"—to take up our crosses against deceit and lies—against all fraud, theft and intemperance—against wars and fightings, and every kind of evil. They taught us to confess and forsake our sins; and if we had wronged or injured any of our fellow creatures, to go and make restitution to the full satisfaction of the injured party, and thus fulfil the strict demands of the moral law; and follow Christ in the regeneration, by a daily cross against the nature of evil.

By becoming personally and intimately acquainted with them, I found their lives and conversation to correspond with their testimony. According to their teaching, I confessed my sins to God, and told these his faithful witnesses what I had done: for I fully believed that in the *communion of saints*, there was *forgiveness of sins*. By faithful obedience to what I was taught, I received the gifts of God, and found that power over my own sinful

passions, that I was never able to find before, and which gave me peace and justification. I visited Mother Ann at different times, and in different places; and I never saw any thing in her or the Elders, as far as respected their christian precepts and examples, but displayed a spirit of love and peace, gentleness and meekness, forbearance and long suffering. And tho their testimony was sharp and powerful against the fallen nature of man; yet they were kind and merciful to the humble and penitent soul that was convicted of sin, and sought the mercy of God. If I ever saw the image of Christ displayed in human clay, I saw it in Mother Ann. I considered her a perfect pattern of piety to all who saw her.

When the wicked came to take Mother and the Elders to prison, I was present, and was an eye witness to the scene; and to us it was truly a mournful scene. She prayed earnestly that they might be able to endure with patience all that should come upon them. She often prayed for her persecutors, when they came to abuse her, in these words: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." I feel under no necessity of asking those who seldom or never saw Mother Ann, what kind of person she was; because I know for myself. I was with Mother and the Elders several weeks at Hancock and Richmond; and was knowing to their being accused of swearing and blasphemy, drunkenness and fighting; but I saw none of these things among them. I there saw several mobs who came to take Mother; and I knew they were under the influence of *something* which made them act very inhumanly. Had she been a lewd woman, as they said, they never would have persecuted her as they did. It was the purity and innocence of her life, and the pointed plainness of her testimony against the sins and abominations in which they lived, that excited their enmity against her, and caused them to revile and persecute her.

I was with her, day and night, for weeks together; and I knew her purity and innocence too well to give credit to the false accusations of the wicked against her. I was with her at Ashfield, and saw the mighty power of God among the people, through her ministration. I have known her to search out sin, and expose the secret

thoughts of the heart, by the discerning power of God, and have seen sinners tremble before her heart-searching testimony. When she was at Nathan Goodrich's, in Hancock, I was there, and prepared victuals for her and the Elders, and took care of her room, and saw and knew every thing she had in the room, and had a fair opportunity to know that she had nothing to support drunkenness or any kind of intemperance. I know of a certainty that Christ did commence his second appearance in Mother Ann, "without sin unto salvation." And I am thankful to God that I have seen her and believed her testimony: for it has saved me from sin, and still affords me daily peace and consolation.

As every thing in nature brings forth its own likeness; so Mother Ann's gospel has always produced good fruits—the fruits of righteousness and peace, honesty, justice and truth. And by these good fruits I know it to be the gospel of Christ—the fountain of eternal life—a stream that is never dry; for such it has proved to my soul; it refreshes, strengthens and comforts me day and night. Many hundreds of souls have heard, received and obeyed Mother Ann's testimony, and confessed their sins, taken up their crosses and followed Christ in the regeneration; and I know that all such souls can witness to the truth of what I say.

The people of God, in ancient days, always had a lead to guide and direct them in the way of righteousness; and they still have a lead. Mother's ministry has ever been maintained by her successors, who have kept her testimony pure and uncorrupted to this day; and in obedience to their counsel and instruction, we can still feel the blessing of God upon our labors. I feel it my indispensable duty to bear witness to the truth; and I cannot be justified without it; for I know mankind have been greatly imposed upon by false reports and slanderous accusations. Our accusers say, the Elders have taken away our property, and we are kept in bondage by them; but I know this accusation to be false. We are all free that are in Christ; we act according to our own faith, and we receive the reward of our own labors, both in things spiritual and temporal.

The wicked accuse the people of God of all manner of evil ; and why is it so ? It is evidently because these accusers have not found a gospel which can save them from sin : for if they had found such a gospel, and were subject to it, we should hear no more of these accusations. But as they live in all manner of wickedness themselves, they judge us out of their own wicked hearts.

When I first heard of these strange people, I was asked what I thought of them. I replied that I was not able to judge ; that if the work they were in was of God, it would stand ; but if not, it would fall without any of my help. Many among mankind deprive themselves of a great blessing by speaking against this testimony : for I know by the revelation of God, that all souls that ever find salvation, must find it by obeying this gospel. This is my testimony, and I have written it in the fear of God, and can bear witness to it, in truth and soberness, before all my fellow creatures, in time and eternity.

THANKFUL BARCE.

*New-Lebanon, Jan. 13th, 1827.*



### TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH MAIN.

Being now in the 74th year of my age, and feeling my work in this life almost done, and having been one among the first of those who embraced the gospel of Christ's second appearing, I therefore feel it my duty to bear witness to this gospel, and to the godly character of those faithful witnesses of God from whom we first received it. A little sketch of my former experience and exercises in religion, may serve to show the reader that I was not a stranger to the operations of the Spirit of God, previous to my embracing this testimony.

In my early youth, even from childhood, I had powerful convictions of sin. When about twelve years of age, I was greatly awakened by hearing a preacher, in a religious revival, deliver a very powerful testimony against sin, and in favor of holiness, which wrought so forcibly upon my feelings, that it was as much as my youthful soul was able to endure. The very thoughts of hell felt awful

and dreadful to me. I endeavored to reform my life ; but having no one to lead me in the way of holiness, my convictions gradually wore away, tho not without frequent awakenings, which caused me much tribulation. In this manner I grew up to manhood. In a revival of religion which took place when I was about the age of twenty, I was again greatly awakened. I felt myself separated from God by wicked works, and was convinced that, unless I could find the mercy and favor of God, I must be forever ruined and lost.

My trouble of mind and conviction of my lost state increased upon me until I was borne down with the weight of excessive tribulation of soul. In my distress I betook myself to prayer, and made it my constant practice to go out into the woods, near by, and there kneel down and pray to God in the best manner I was able. I continued in this practice, and under this distress of soul, till my flesh wasted away, and my bodily strength diminished so much, that I was at last obliged to take to my bed, and felt no strength nor heart to perform any business ; but spent one part of my time in the woods, crying to God for his mercy, and the other part mourning and pining on my bed. I felt myself a condemned sinner, and knew I must go to hell, unless I could obtain the mercy of God. But the great depth of my loss from God, and the enmity of my fallen nature against him, were still unknown to me.

At length, while I was one day engaged in prayer, I had a complete view of myself, and saw plainly what I was in the sight of God ; and I found that there was nothing in me but what was as pointed arrows against God and against all good ; so that I could not compare myself to any thing but a devil. This view of myself so affected my feelings that I felt no confidence to look to God for mercy, or even to lift my eyes towards Heaven. I therefore went away dumb and unable to open my mouth. I felt myself in a most deplorable condition, and came near sinking into a state of absolute despair. After suffering awhile in this state, under the keenest anguish of soul, I again ventured to try what could be done by prayer, not knowing whether God would ever notice me or not. Accordingly I strug-



gled and exerted myself to pray, and continued to pray in the best manner I was able.

At length, one night, as I was praying in great agony of soul, I fell into a trance. Suddenly my senses were entirely withdrawn from the things of this world, and I was carried into the world of spirits, where I beheld an innumerable multitude of people, praising God in the highest strains of glory. They were all of one heart and one mind; and I was allowed to join with them. It was Heaven itself. My soul was filled with such love of God, and such transports of joy as I am not able to describe. How long I continued in that situation I know not; but when I awoke from my trance, I found myself upon my bed. This vision inspired me with hope. I believed that God had visited me in mercy, and I resolved to maintain his cause, and devote myself wholly to his service. I felt the burden of my sins taken away; and such was my deliverance from all sinful feelings, at that time, that I thought I should never more fall into any known sin.

I related my experience to the professors of religion in that revival, and was considered by them as a converted soul, and born of God. And upon their solicitation, I was baptized and received into the Baptist church, at Stonington, in Connecticut, where I then lived; and I felt determined to walk uprightly, and be faithful in my christian profession. While I kept this resolution, I was blessed with bright manifestations of the goodness of God. I was often in secret prayer, and could find and feel the notice of God in it. At one time, while kneeling before God in secret, and in great tribulation, fearing that God's spirit had departed from me, I saw myself entirely surrounded with a glorious circle, which resembled the beautiful colors of the rainbow. This I considered as an evident manifestation of the notice of God to me; and thus my tribulation was taken away, and my fears vanished at once. At another time, as I was sitting in the assembly, at the meeting-house, on the Sabbath, with my feelings looking to God, these words passed through my mind: "And the angels are pitching their tents round about thee." Suddenly a mighty shock of the power of God fell upon me, and in a moment all the things of time were struck from my senses. I then saw the angels of God

descending in long white robes, and pitching their tents round about me. I felt an inexpressible transport of joy, and my soul was filled with love and fervency in the cause of God.

Such were the notices of God to me, while under the veil of the flesh. Tho they were but temporary visitations of the Spirit of God ; yet so long as I took up my cross against sin, and did the best I knew, I was favored with these heavenly visitations. But whenever I gave way to any known sin, then these bright visions of heavenly things were withdrawn from me, and my soul was overwhelmed with darkness and tribulation. While I continued to walk in uprightness, and experience the divine manifestations of the Spirit of God, I felt no confidence in the flesh, and was entirely free from all carnal and impure desires and inclinations ; but through the carnal spirit and influence of those who belonged to the same church, and whom I considered as members in good standing, I was brought under the power and influence of the same spirit. This, together with the darkening influence of my own fleshly nature, so blinded my spiritual sight and sensation, that I concluded there was no other way in this world, but to live in those things, and thus “ fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind.” (Eph. ii. 3.)

But the more I turned my sense and feelings after carnal things, the more dim my spiritual lamp became, and the more my darkness increased, till I lost all spiritual life out of my soul. However, I still pursued my object, and entered into a matrimonial contract ; yet I was not at ease in my conscience—I felt trouble—something was not right ; but what it was I could not tell. I reasoned upon the subject—other christians marry—it is a common practice among christians—why is it not right for me to marry ? Why should I feel trouble about it ? I went to enquire of the Lord, to know his mind and will, and obtain his approbation. But I could get no answer—I felt conscious that the Spirit of God had departed from me—What could be the cause ? Why truly, I had taken my own way ; and instead of rightly seeking, in humble submission, to know and do the will of God, I was acting for myself, and doing my own will, and God had no hand in

it. Still I persisted in my pursuit, and strove to take all the comfort I could in the marriage state ; but to no purpose. My imaginary hopes of happiness were soon frustrated, and all my enjoyments ended in disappointment. I had turned my heart from God, and sought happiness in the flesh ; God had forsaken me, and my soul was in trouble.

After having lived in the marriage state about a year and a half, my tribulation of soul increased upon me to such a degree, that I knew not which way to turn, nor how to find deliverance. I felt conscious that I had nothing that could save my soul, and knew not how to obtain any thing. I looked back to the comfort of my former experience ; but it afforded me no relief—it was out of my reach—I could not recall it ; because I could not recall the state in which I stood when I enjoyed that comfort, and experienced those divine manifestations which then produced it. I strove hard to obtain something that would afford me the means or the hope of salvation, and ease my troubled soul ; but nothing could I find ; and it appeared to me, that under my then present state, I must go to hell ; for I could see no remedy.

While in this state of mind, I heard reports about a singular and strange people, who taught a new system of religion. The accounts given of them were various and very remarkable, and seemed to excite much attention among all classes of people. What to make of them I could not tell ; but it appeared evident that there was something wonderful among them, or they could not excite such general attention. I therefore determined to go and see for myself, whether they were really good or bad people, and to act accordingly. When I came there, I was still at a loss what to think of them. They were indeed a very singular people ; their religion was new and strange to me. I disputed them some ; but to no purpose ; they were able to comprehend and answer me. This confounded me still more. I concluded I had better stop and wait till I could discover what they were. And being in a great labor and concern of soul, I did not feel disposed to cavil about things which I could not understand. I tarried several days, and was truly in a serious and conscientious labor : for I felt my soul at stake. All

The spiritual sensations of my former experience had left me, and all my past hopes of salvation had failed. And tho I had made a public profession of the religion of Jesus Christ ; yet I was blinded with antichristian doctrines, corrupted by their practices, and deeply lost in sin ; like thousands of others in this day, who know not the pure gospel of salvation, nor the power of eternal life ; and I was convinced that if I could not find relief here, I must sink into despair.

At length, as I was passing through a room where Mother Ann was, I saw her sitting in a chair, and singing very melodiously, with her hands in motion ; and her whole soul and body seemed to be in exercise. I felt, as it were, a stream of divine power and love flow into my soul, and was convinced at once that it came from Heaven, the source and fountain of all good. I immediately acknowledged my faith, and went and confessed my sins, honestly and conscientiously. I could then say with the apostle, Sin appeared *exceeding sinful*, even beyond expression. Indeed it felt so loathsome and hateful to me, that I resolved at once never to commit another sin. After this I went and righted all my wrongs, and set out, once for all, with a determination to live a righteous life, according to the counsel of God through these strange people, whom I verily found to be his true witnesses. In so doing, I have ever found protection ; yea, in obedience to the counsel of God, through Mother Ann Lee, and the Elders with her, my soul has been saved from sin. This answers the very purpose for which Christ came into the world ; that is, "to save his people from their sins." I then received the gifts of God in very deed ; and they became an abiding treasure in my soul. I was greatly blessed of God, and received the gifts of vision, prophecy and revelation, and also the gift of healing. These gifts are sufficient to confirm the believer that this is the second appearing of Christ. But the greatest gift of all is, *salvation from sin*.

Concerning the evil reports which have been spread abroad in the world, respecting Mother and the Elders, I thank God that I am able, from personal knowledge and acquaintance, to bear witness of the purity of their lives and characters. I have been with them frequently, in

various places, at all times and seasons, by day and by night, and well knew the manner of life they lived; and I can freely testify before all men, that I never saw any thing in them, which gave me the least cause of jealousy that they indulged themselves in any thing contrary to the strictest principles of morality, purity and holiness. On the contrary, they always bore a powerful testimony against every evil, in word and deed. Their faithful labors were constantly employed in purging out sin and all manner of impurity from among the people, and in ministering the gifts of God, and teaching purity and holiness wherever they went. The unfaithful were reprov'd and admonish'd with the most heart-searching power; while the faithful were encouraged and filled with heavenly comfort and consolation.

Their testimony was so plain and pointed against the fallen and corrupt nature of man, that many who were determin'd not to take up their crosses, became the violent and bitter opposers of this testimony; and therefore levelled all the arrows of their spite and malice against the Mother of our redemption, unto whom was committed the oracles of God for the salvation of a lost world; and from whom I have received the gifts of God, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, as really as ever the apostles did at the day of Pentecost. From that same blessed Spirit in Mother Ann and her successors in the gospel, my soul has often been filled with heavenly blessings, even to overflowing. Thus have I drank of the waters of life, and been fed and nourished with the bread of life, for more than forty-six years.

These things are not the dreams of imagination, but substantial realities, which are well known to every faithful believer, who truly follows Christ in the regeneration, "who walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And all such can bear testimony to these things, according to the measure of their travail and experience in the work of the regeneration.

But however different the gifts and manifestations of Divine power to different individuals, (for each one receives according to the order of his creation,) yet the Spirit is one and the same in all; as saith the apostle:—"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit."

(1 Cor. xii. 4.) Every true believer is led and governed by the same Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ; and thus we become one with Christ, as he is one with the Father. As the blood, which is the life of the body, circulates through every member of the body; so the Spirit of Christ (which in scripture is sometimes called the blood of Christ,) circulates through every member of the body of Christ, and is *the life of his body*, which is the *Church*. Every true and faithful believer is a member of that body, and receives strength and nourishment from it.

These things being well known to us by living experience, and having been confirmed beyond the smallest shadow of a doubt, through a period of many years, we feel ourselves fully qualified to bear testimony thereof to our fellow creatures; and therefore they need not think it strange that we are able to do it with so much boldness and confidence: for the evidence of experience is the strongest proof that can be given of the truth of any principle whatever.

JOSEPH MAIN.

*New-Lebanon, Nov. 10th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF SAMUEL JOHNSON, SEN.

Having had considerable acquaintance with the religious principles, customs and manners generally known and practiced in this country; and having had experimental knowledge of the operations of the Divine Spirit upon the soul, not only during my connection with the professors of a popular religion, but also after receiving the glorious light of the gospel now revealed by the second coming of Christ; I feel it my indispensable duty to bear testimony in favor of this gospel, as the only means of salvation, the divine efficacy of which I have faithfully proved. And having been personally and intimately acquainted with those blessed witnesses of God who first ministered the gospel to us, I feel myself equally bound to testify to the purity of their lives, and to maintain the truth of their christian principles. But before I proceed any further, it

may not be improper to give the readers of this testimony a sketch of my own life and experience.

My native place was Durham, in Connecticut. My parents were members of the Presbyterian church, in good standing, and respectable in the world. I was brought up strictly, and carefully instructed in the principles of their religion. From a child, I was the subject of religious impressions, and had strong convictions of sin. When I was about six years of age, I well remember, while walking in the garden one day, my mind was turned to a serious consideration, that death was the common lot of all, and I knew not how soon it would be mine. These thoughts filled my mind with great concern about what would become of me if that should soon take place. I saw at that early period, that my nature was lost from God, and prone to evil. After this, I used to retire alone and pray to God the best way I was able, and sought religion according to the best of my understanding. I spent much time in secret prayer, when I was alone and exposed to danger or temptation; and was careful to kneel and pray to God for protection, before I went to sleep. I believed that if I indulged myself in any wickedness, I should never see God in peace, but should be banished from his presence, and sent to hell at last; the thoughts of which I could not endure. Still I could not subdue the carnal propensities of an inbred nature; and therefore I could not feel a justified conscience, nor find power over sin. On the contrary, I found my evil propensities grew stronger as I grew older; so that after all my labor, I found myself still lost from God, and destitute of the power of salvation.

But after coming to the age of maturity, my religious experience was considered sufficient to entitle me to membership in the Presbyterian church. And being strongly solicited, I became a member of that church, and made a public profession of that religion, was instructed in their doctrines of election, decrees of God, imputed righteousness, the resurrection of the natural body, and other doctrines maintained by that sect; and, like other professors, I endeavored to conform myself to all their rules of discipline, and, under the influence of those principles, for a time, thought myself a good christian.

In 1764, being about twenty-one years of age, I entered Yale College, where I pursued my studies with assiduity, and was zealous to bend the course of my literary attainments to theology, having a view to the ministry, according to the custom of the times. After spending one year in college, I was sent on a school mission, to teach the Indians of the Five Nations. Here I had many opportunities to learn the artless simplicity of unsophisticated nature, in these poor natives of the wilderness; and to contrast it with the sophistry, superficial pomp and artful dissimulation, so common in countries and among nations claiming the exalted benefits of civilization. This increased my views of the lost state of the world, where the displays of genius and the artful refinements of civilized man, in many cases, only tends to add corruption to a fallen nature.

After spending one year among the Indians, I returned to college; where I continued my studies three years longer, and was graduated in 1769, and two years after, received the degree of A. M. During my residence in college, my mind was greatly exercised respecting the Christian world, so called. It appeared to me that they were all far short of the order and power of the primitive Church. I enquired of the most learned and able divines; particularly of the celebrated Dr. Goodrich, of Durham, whether there was any regular succession of the order and power of the Divine Spirit, from the apostles to the ministry of the present day. I was informed that there was not; but as we had their example and precepts in the letter of the scriptures, we could do no better than to follow them. This put me in a great labor. I could not see how those who had not the Spirit of Christ, could be true ministers of the gospel. Nor could I see how there could be a Church of Christ without a transmission of the same power, in regular succession, down to it; because the churches, so called, must, in that case, be off from the primitive ground of the Church established by the apostles; and therefore could not be the true churches of Christ. Nor could I see any way for them to find the true ground on which the primitive Church was built, without a second manifestation of the same Spirit through some medium or other; since, according to the confessions



of the most learned divines, Christ must be absent from the churches which went by his name.

From this time, my mind was directed to look for the second coming of Christ. I enquired of the most eminent divines around, how long it would be, according to their calculations, before Christ would make his second appearance. They informed me that it was near at hand, and according to the best calculations that had been made, it would be about twenty years. I have since observed that this calculation brought the period very near to the time when the Church of the United Society began to gather into order. About this time, in passing through the burying ground at New-Haven, I felt my whole soul absorbed in prayer to God, that I might live to see the second appearing of Christ.

After I left college, I still felt strong religious impressions; but as I could not find any who could show, to my satisfaction, any greater light than that of the church to which I belonged, I concluded to continue my connection with it, and seek religion according to that system. And being fervent in spirit, I soon felt as tho I had a call to preach the gospel. After passing through a course of preparatory studies, under the instruction of Dr. Goodrich and others, the call was approved, and I was licensed to preach, by an association of ministers at Pittsfield, Massachusetts. For a time, I preached where opportunity offered. At length I received a call, and was ordained pastor of the Presbyterian Church in New-Lebanon, November, 1772. This was the first congregation ever formed in this town. I continued in this charge about three years and a half, and endeavored to discharge my duty according to the best of my understanding and abilities. But I could not find that spiritual substance which my soul craved; altho I felt a measure of justification in doing the best I could do in my situation. I still felt a great lack of the spirit and power of salvation, and could say, in the language of St. Paul, when speaking in the character of the natural man seeking after spiritual life, "With the mind I served the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." As I knew of no way out of the flesh, I conformed to the customs of the world, was married and had a family.

At the commencement of the revolutionary war, I was inspired with an ardent zeal in the cause of liberty; and in the station I held, contributed my best efforts to my country's cause. The disorganized state of the society where I was settled, occasioned by the war, induced me to seek a dismissal from my congregation; and I obtained an honorable discharge, with a recommendatory certificate from the association. Soon after this, I had another advantageous call; but I did not feel myself at liberty to comply with it; because my mind had begun to be awakened concerning that system of religion which I had hitherto professed and preached. I saw that it was on a false foundation, and that it did not and could not administer the power of salvation. This filled my soul with inexpressible tribulation.

I labored and cried earnestly to God that I might find something better, and more substantial than I had hitherto found in any scheme of religion, or among any of the professors of religion I had ever met with. I saw that they were all, or nearly all, more or less guilty of biting and devouring one another, and shedding each other's blood. I was led to see, and was fully convinced, that the spirit of war, according to the apostle's doctrine, proceeded from lust; and that people could not be the followers of Christ, and live in wars and fightings; because we were required, by the very spirit of christianity, to put away all contention and strife, and to "follow peace with all men." Hence I saw that war and bloodshed could not belong to the Kingdom of Christ; and that they who pursued this course of life, could not be led by his Spirit.

Some of the most eminent among the *Reverend Doctors* labored hard to bring me back to the old foundation, and to the traditions of our forefathers; but all to no purpose. I told them we were all lost and blinded by these things, and that the true nature and spirit of christianity was not among us. The labor and tribulation of my mind increased, till I was driven to the borders of despair; nor could I find any thing to afford consolation to my spirit, or alleviate the anguish of my soul; and I was only saved from distraction by the hope that I should live to see the second coming of Christ; without which I could

see no way of restoration from the corruptions of a fallen nature, nor any deliverance from the shackles of a false religion. I fasted and prayed to God, night and day, for a long time.

At length it pleased God to give an answer by his mighty power, which descended in divine operations, and struck a death blow upon all my natural powers, and paralyzed every propensity of my nature. It was then clearly manifested to me, by the visions of God and the spirit of prophecy, that the coming of Christ and his Kingdom were at hand, even at the door. These gifts of the Divine Spirit, I considered as the fruits of my being baptized into the spirit of that remarkable revival which took place in New-Lebanon, and the adjacent towns.

After despairing of ever finding the real work of salvation, upon the old ecclesiastical foundation, and hearing of this revival, I went to see whether I could find the work of God among them. I first attended a meeting in Hancock, among the subjects of this revival; I went, praying to God that I might know the truth, and be kept from error. I was soon convinced that the Divine Power attended this meeting; and here I first received it. I then requested the brethren "to come over and help us." They accordingly came to Stockbridge, where I then lived; and many there caught the spirit of this revival, and received the like spiritual gifts. The substance of all those gifts evidently tended to show that the second appearing of Christ was at hand; that a complete separation from all the creeds and systems of religion known among professors would then take place; and that the way of salvation from sin would then be made manifest to the people.

Altho the spirit of that revival soon ceased, I still maintained my confidence in the promises of God then given, and firmly believed I should soon see them fulfilled, and that the second coming of Christ would shortly be ushered in, by a clear and evident manifestation of his Divine Spirit. Nor was I disappointed in my expectations of this great event; tho the manner of it was beyond all human calculation. Its commencement was, indeed, "as a light shining in a dark place;" and the messengers who first proclaimed the glad tidings, were people "wondered at."

The first direct intelligence I had of them, was from Tallmadge Bishop, about the beginning of June, 1780. He was one of the first who had visited them from these parts. He came to see me at my house, in West-Stockbridge, and informed me that he had seen a people who had all the gifts of the apostolic church, and gave me a particular relation concerning them, which need not be here repeated. As I knew the man well, and had knowledge of his former labors in the revival, I fully believed his report, and he was indeed a welcome messenger to me. The next Sabbath I attended a meeting at New-Lebanon, where I saw Samuel Fitch, who had also been to see these strangers, and had united with them.—He had the power of God upon him, and was exercised in divers operations. I felt an evidence in my soul, by the sensible operations of Divine Power, that this was the fulfilment of my former prophecy, and was fully convinced that it was the beginning of the second appearing of Christ, and the setting up of his Kingdom on earth. Some years before this, I had been afflicted with a long course of the fever and ague, which finally settled in my legs, and produced a lameness that prevented me from walking much on foot. But when I received this confirmation of the glad tidings of the gospel, and saw and felt these wonderful operations of Divine Power, it produced such a miraculous effect upon my bodily powers, that I was enabled to set out immediately on foot, to go and visit these strange people. And tho I travelled about thirty miles the next day, I felt no inconvenience from it.

When I arrived at Watervliet, where they lived, I was received with great kindness. The leader of this people was *Ann Lee*, whom they called *Mother*; and truly she seemed like a mother. Her countenance, and the countenances of those who stood as witnesses with her, shone with brightness and glory, as evidently as the shining of the sun upon clear water. This confirmed me that the glory of God was upon them. The first words I recollect hearing from Mother Ann was, “James, take this man and let him open his mind.” This was just what I desired; and by this I perceived that she knew the state of my mind. I opened my mind and confessed my sins.

freely and honestly, before Elder James, as a witness of God.

I had frequently confessed my sins to God in secret, as many others do ; and in conformity to the practice of public preachers in Antichrist's kingdom, I had frequently, in public, confessed myself and the congregation to be great sinners. But in all this I brought nothing to light, nor did I find any abiding releasement of soul. The burden of my sins returned upon me, and condemnation still continued. I was therefore convinced that I did not confess to God's acceptance : for I read, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 10.) This promise I had never before found verified. But now, by bringing my deeds to the light, I found the promise of God fulfilled : for I felt entirely released from the burden of sin. All condemnation and despair were entirely taken away, and my soul was filled with heavenly peace and comfort, accompanied with a godly sorrow and repentance for sin.

I tarried about a week, and witnessed many beautiful displays of divine power and goodness, and heard many precious instructions and exhortations. Here my soul received the precious "unction of the Holy One," which is the baptism of the Spirit, and by which I knew the spiritual things of God, which cannot be understood nor discerned by the natural man. This produced in me many heavenly gifts, and many operations of Divine Power. Here I obtained the full answer of my former prayers ; for I had now lived to see the second coming of Christ, and the commencement of his Kingdom on earth. In this I was confirmed beyond a doubt.

I left them with great reluctance ; and nothing but my duty to my family, enjoined by Mother Ann's counsel, could have reconciled my feelings to retire from a place and a people so evidently filled with the Spirit of Christ, and so blessed with the Divine presence. I returned to my family, and felt myself blessed in my obedience to Mother Ann's testimony, and daily enjoyed the presence of God, and felt the powerful influences of his Spirit. And I have reason to bless God that my wife and children all embraced the same testimony of the gospel, and,

with the exception of one daughter, who died firm in the faith, they are all now living in the Society, and continue in faithful obedience to the gospel.

In September following, after Mother and the Elders, and a number of the leading brethren were imprisoned in Albany, I was attending a meeting on the Sabbath, at Dr. Isaac Harlow's, with my family and a considerable number of the brethren and sisters; and while we were on our knees, in prayer to God, a mob rushed into the house, headed by the very wretch who had stirred up the persecution against Mother and the Elders, and caused their imprisonment. They seized and dragged me out of the house, and carried me off to the house of their champion. The next morning they made a pretence of trying me before one Adgate, who had been a justice of the peace under the royal government. Here I was accused of speaking against the war; and it was also alleged that Mother and the Elders were British emissaries in disguise, who were exciting their hearers against the war. After this mock trial, (for I can call it nothing else,) I was hurried off to Albany, to be tried before the commissioners who composed the Board of War.

Here I was again charged with maintaining the principles of Ann Lee against the lawfulness of war. Such principles, they contended, were detrimental to the cause of the country, which was then engaged in the arduous struggle for liberty, against a powerful enemy, and forbid my preaching such doctrine. I replied, "I shall speak what God gives me to speak; for I feel it my duty to obey God rather than man. I did not receive the testimony against war from Ann Lee; but was taught by the revelation of God, before I ever saw Ann Lee, *that the followers of Christ could have nothing to do with wars and fightings.*" This declaration was so offensive to the commissioners, that they gave orders for my imprisonment, declaring at the same time, that the *Elect Lady* was going to be banished to the British army in New-York. I replied, "The *Elect Lady* she is, indeed and in truth; but whether she sinks or swims, I know the work is of God." They would not suffer me to be imprisoned with Mother and the Elders; I was therefore confined in the jail of the old City-Hall.

After ten days imprisonment, I was set at liberty through the intercession of my brother, who produced many certificates from respectable characters, of my former zeal in the cause of my country. From all the proceedings of these inveterate persecutors, it appeared evident that the clamorous charges of British emissaries and traitors to the country, which were raised against the leaders of the Society, were merely a pretext, under which they intended to effect the destruction of the Society, by securing the leaders and suppressing their testimony. But in this they were disappointed; for many who received intelligence of these things, flocked to hear the testimony of a people who were persecuted and imprisoned for the cause of righteousness and peace. So that in the event, the very means they had taken to prevent the spreading of the gospel, produced a far more extensive increase. Thus the over-ruling providence of God "caused the wrath of man to praise him."

Being now in the 84th year of my age, and on the verge of eternity, I feel it my duty to leave behind me a testimony of my experience, for the benefit of all who are seeking, as I once was, to find religion in the dark pages of ecclesiastical theology, written in the dark kingdom of Antichrist, by the blind guides of a bigoted priesthood. And as I feel a sense of my solemn responsibility to a just and holy God, I can have no possible wish nor motive to deceive my fellow creatures, in any manner whatever. I can therefore assure every candid enquirer after truth, that I could never find the work of salvation, nor the life and power of religion, which is the essence of the gospel, by all my labors and researches, until I found the present testimony of the gospel, which was brought to light by Mother Ann Lee. And concerning her testimony, I can truly say, it is "the power of God unto salvation:" for such it has proved itself by its effects. It has purified my soul from sin, and saved me from the corrupt propensities of an evil nature. It has afforded me justification and peace for nearly forty-seven years. Through this gospel I have received many precious gifts, and many divine manifestations.

When I first embraced this testimony, I was baptized with the spirit of humiliation, which brought me under

many mortifying and humiliating signs and operations, tending to mortify and crucify the pride of my nature, and show me the folly and vanity of relying on my literary and scientific acquirements to teach the way of salvation, or preach the gospel of Christ. These humiliating operations of the Spirit completely humbled the pride of my education, and prostrated in the dust my exalted station among men. I then felt, by actual experience, the force and power of the prophet's words: "The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." (Isa. ii. 17.) And this every exalted soul must yet feel and experience, before he can be prepared to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. By these humiliating scenes, the loftiness of my spirit was abased, and I was effectually brought down into a humble frame of mind; so that I could truly feel the meek and lowly Spirit of Christ, and profit by the simplicity of the gospel, which, according to the testimony of Jesus Christ, is received by babes, rather than by the learned Rabbins and great ones of the earth.

After this, my soul was blessed with many joyful and heavenly gifts of God; such as gifts of revelation and prophecy, which have actually come to pass; discerning of spirits; so that I could many times discern the secret state of souls: also divers kinds of tongues and signs; and many glorious and heavenly visions, by which the spiritual world was brought, as it were, into open view to my spiritual sight. Concerning the existence of such gifts, in this day, I well know that a spirit of scepticism prevails, almost universally, both among professors and profane, and especially among the learned priesthood. They are taught to believe that there can be no such gifts in this day, nor any divine or supernatural inspiration; because they all ceased with the primitive Church. It is true that when the primitive Church lost the life and spirit of Christ, and fell back into the spirit of the world, these gifts actually died away. But a restoration was promised, which was to take place when the true Church should rise in the spirit and life of Christ: for these gifts are the life of the soul, and a seal to the testimony of the true gospel.



I was formerly taught, agreeable to the prevailing opinion, that those gifts had ceased, and were no more to be expected. Accordingly I strove to believe it, until I was convinced to the contrary by actual experience. I have myself experienced many such gifts; I have been an eye and ear witness of many such in Mother and the Elders; and many such have I known to take place in the Church, from time to time, down to this day. Can I then disbelieve the sight of my own eyes, the hearing of my own ears, the feelings of my own senses, or the inspirations of Divine light in my own soul? I cannot. The evidence of these things is as clear to me as that of my own existence. It is an immutable truth, established by the eternal principles of Heaven, that without the inspiration and gifts of the Holy Spirit, no soul can ever find salvation. These gifts, being the very essence of divine life, are as important to the spiritual life of the soul, as the inspiration of the natural air is to the natural life of the body. Why then will mankind still cleave to an erroneous and blind tradition, which cannot be maintained by scripture nor reason?

O, ye professors of the divine religion of Jesus Christ! when will ye cease to believe in the soul-darkening doctrines of men, and the blinding creeds of human invention? Is not God "the same yesterday, to-day and forever?" Is his "hand shortened that it cannot save," or his Spirit straitened that it cannot work? Is it not *iniquity* "that has separated between you and your God?" Have not your sins shut you from the light of his countenance, and hid from your eyes the divine operations of his Spirit? I know, by living experience, that this was once my case, and why not yours now?

I feel it my duty, before I leave this earthly tabernacle, to bear a testimony concerning the characters, moral and religious, of Mother Ann and the Elders who administered the gospel with her; knowing, as I do, the many false and infamous reports circulated in the world against them, and more especially against Mother Ann, who was the principal object of the *dragon's rage*. For it is clearly evident that he is now gone forth in his wrath, "to make war with the remnant of her seed, who keep the commandments of God, and maintain the testimony of Jesus." I have been

with her in many places, and had much opportunity to hear her testimony and observe her conduct, both in public and private; and I can bear witness to the purity of her life and the sincerity of her religion. She was truly a pattern of godliness to all christians, and especially to those of her own sex: for she was indeed the most exemplary person, both in word and deed, that my eyes ever beheld. Her words were generally few; but they were directed in the most perfect wisdom; and none were able to gainsay or resist the power of her spirit. Yet she was free and familiar in conversation, when occasion required it; nor did she feel herself above conversing freely with the least and the lowest, whether aged or young.

She showed a remarkably kind and tender feeling towards children, and would often give them some good advice; and the attachment of such little ones to her was wonderful. There were many small children who, by a few words from her, received impressions of godliness which governed them through life. And there are numbers now living, whose first impressions of faith and love to the way of God, were inspired into their souls, by the notice of Mother Ann to them, in their infancy.

She was truly a Mother in Christ. Her whole soul seemed entirely devoted to the will of God; and her discerning spirit was able to see and feel the state of souls in every situation, and to administer to their necessities under all circumstances. Indeed the discerning light of God in her was such, that it seemed as if no secret thought of the heart could be hid from her. Often did she expose the secret sins of hypocrites and deceivers, to their shame and confusion: and in all she said, I never knew her to be in the least mistaken.

She always manifested a feeling of kindness and compassion to the poor, the widow and the fatherless, and often deprived herself of temporal comforts, in order to administer to their wants. She taught us to be faithful and just in all things, both spiritual and temporal—to be industrious, prudent and saving, and to manage our temporal affairs with economy; that the blessing of God might attend our labors. In so doing, she said we should be blessed with a plentiful store of the comforts of this

life, and be able to supply the wants of the poor and needy. And by walking in uprightness and keeping the way of God in purity, she assured us that we should always be blessed with the gospel and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, not only for ourselves, but to administer to other needy souls, who should desire to forsake the course of this world, and find a part with us in the way of God.

All these promises I have lived to see fulfilled, and they are now daily fulfilling before my eyes, notwithstanding the rage of the *dragon*, so often displayed in the enmity and opposition of his emissaries, whose object is to overthrow the work of God, and effect the ruin of its subjects. This rancorous brood have often charged Mother and the Elders with intemperance, injustice, cruelty, fraud, deception, lewdness, obscenity, and many other abominable crimes. But should they charge these things upon the angels of God in Heaven, and upon Jesus Christ himself, their charges would be equally foolish and contemptible in my view. It is in vain to tell me that Mother or the Elders were guilty of any of these crimes; because I know such charges to be false. Such malignant and groundless slanders might convince any considerate person, whose mind is not biassed by prejudice, that *they were not of the world*; for "the world loveth its own." It also goes far to prove that Mother Ann was the Lord's anointed, to build up the Kingdom of Christ on earth, which *is not of the world*, and does not belong to the kingdoms of this world.

In the early part of my life, I often contemplated upon the character of a child of God; as exhibited in the New-Testament, and earnestly sought for it; but could never find it, until I found it in Mother Ann Lee and the Elders, William Lee and James Whittaker; there indeed I found it perfectly exemplified to my full satisfaction.

Come then, ye who desire to learn the way of peace and righteousness, and be partakers of that life and salvation which, I can testify, is treasured up in this Church, which was founded by the ministration of Mother Ann Lee. I know by the revelation of God, and by my own experience, that the second coming of Christ has commenced; that the latter day of glory has dawned upon earth, and the Kingdom of Christ is begun, which will

never have an end. And I feel confident that all souls will yet bow before it, and acknowledge it, either in judgment or mercy. Beware then, ye children of men, that ye speak not evil of those things which ye understand not, "lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye will in no wise believe, tho a man declare it unto you." (Acts xiii. 40, 41.)

Expecting this to be my last public duty, I solemnly bear witness, in the fear of God, to the truth of these things: and I pray God that, in his mercy, it may be the means of awakening and rightly directing some poor lost souls, who are, as I once was, seeking in the wilderness, where there is no water, and in the desert, where there is none to save, and where there is no way of salvation to be found. So testifies your aged friend,

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

*New-Lebanon, Jan. 19th, 1827.*



### TESTIMONY OF AARON WOOD.

It is now forty-six years since I embraced the everlasting gospel of Christ's second appearing, which was revealed through our beloved and ever blessed Mother, Ann Lee, and those faithful witnesses of God who came with her from England. As I was intimately acquainted with these beloved witnesses, I feel it a duty I owe to God, to my own soul, and to the cause of truth, to make an honest declaration concerning my connection and acquaintance with them, and my knowledge of their character and ministration. In doing this, I shall relate a little of my own experience before I became acquainted with them.

When I was about twenty years of age, I was convicted of my lost state, and felt great concern for the salvation of my soul. I was sensible that I was daily increasing in sin against God, and I saw no way to escape his righteous judgment. I fled to the holy scriptures; but I found these condemned me. They testified that, "He that

committeth sin is of the Devil." I cried to God as well as I was able ; but found no relief—my trouble of mind daily increased. I attended the meetings of various denominations of professed christians ; but could find none that I believed really walked with God, according to the precepts and example of Christ. Thus my tribulation and condemnation increased for about the space of five years, until my life became such a burden to me, that I was tempted to put an end to my existence, in order to stop my career of sin. But thanks be to God, that he at length opened a way for my releasement.

About this time, I heard of a strange people who were persecuted and imprisoned in Albany, for their religion. I went from Shelburn, Massachusetts, where I then lived, to see them, and was soon convinced that they lived and reigned with Christ on earth. They spake the word of God to me, which was indeed "quick and powerful." They taught me to confess all my sins to God before his witnesses, and to take up a daily cross against all sin and all manner of uncleanness, and to live a just, holy and pure life before God and all men. I had so much faith and confidence in them, that I was ready and willing to confess my sins, which I did faithfully, and brought them out, one by one, as I had committed them. And the blessed gift of repentance which I felt, cleansed and healed my wounded soul, and released me from the fear of death and the torments of hell. And I can testify of a truth, that in obedience to the faith which I then received, I am saved from all sin.

In my first visit, I did not see Mother Ann. She had been previously moved from Albany to Poughkeepsie, and imprisoned in that town. This was in August. In the fall I went to see the Elders again, and staid with them one night in the prison. After Mother and the Elders were released from prison, I went to see them at Watervliet ; and from this time I was with them the most of my time. I journied with them from place to place ; and was with them in nearly all the places where they visited. I have suffered much persecution and affliction with them ; and I thank God that I was counted worthy to suffer with them. I have been beaten and wounded by wicked, persecuting mobs, till the ground was be-

smear'd with my blood. At one time I was knocked down with a club, and was taken up and carried into the house for dead.

But these things were light in comparison with what Mother and the Elders suffered by the hands of lawless ruffians. I am confident that nothing short of the power of God, could have preserved their lives through such severe sufferings as I have witnessed. I was with them at the time Mother was so shamefully and cruelly abused by that outrageous and horrid mob, which began at George Darrow's, in New-Lebanon, on the morning of the 2d of September, 1783, and which continued until dark; the bare recital of which is enough to make humanity shudder, and bring everlasting disgrace upon the inhuman actors in it. Shortly after this, I went with Mother and the Elders from New-Lebanon to Watervliet; I continued to live there with them for more than a year; and was daily conversant with them, dwelt in the same house and eat at the same table. I was there when Elder William Lee deceased, July 21st, 1784, and remained there till after Mother Ann's decease, on the 8th of September following.

Notwithstanding the evil reports that have been circulated abroad against Mother Ann, and the base charges of intemperance and lewdness, I can truly say, that in all my acquaintance with her, from first to last, I never discovered in her the least symptom of intemperance or lewdness, nor any kind of evil whatever. I always considered her to be the most godly person my eyes ever beheld. She truly loved and feared God, and taught the same to others. Her charity to lost souls was boundless; and her severity against sin was like a flaming fire. No wonder the world hated her; for she was not of the world. Hence they hate her, and say all manner of evil against her falsely. In doing this, they bring the greatest possible evidence in her favor.

And now I say unto you that utter false accusations; ye are the children of a persecuting generation. "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth,

from the blood of righteous Abel," down to the suffering witnesses of God whom ye have persecuted and abused.

AARON WOOD.

*Watervliet, Sept. 15th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF PETER DODGE.

I have been a member of the United Society, called Shakers, forty-six years. During this period I have had much experience in the work of salvation in this Society, and a general knowledge of the progress of the Society, in things spiritual and temporal. And being now in the 70th year of my age, and considering my days nearly at a close, I feel it my duty, before I go hence, to state a few facts respecting my connexion with the Society, and my acquaintance with its first founders.

My former place of residence was in Shelburn, Massachusetts. In the spring of 1780, I received intelligence of a family of people, living near Albany, who were said to be very remarkable for the purity of their religious faith and manners, and for the extraordinary power which attended their worship. And as I always felt a tender impression of mind towards every religious revival, where I had reason to believe the Spirit of God was striving with mankind, I had a secret feeling to see these people, for my own satisfaction. But it being in the time of the revolutionary war, I was called into the army that summer, and thought no more of religion till I returned home the next fall.

I went to Jonathan Wood's, in Shelburn, where I had been living previous to my going into the army; but to my great surprise, I found a remarkable alteration in the family. Instead of pursuing the course of the world, as formerly, I found them engaged in the service of God, and under the most extraordinary exercises of Divine power, which appeared very marvellous in my eyes. On enquiry, I found that some part of the family had been to see Mother Ann Lee. This put me into a deep labor of mind; for I saw that such extraordinary operations were

beyond the power of nature. I therefore began to look for the fruits of these wonderful operations, to see whether they were in reality the fruits of the Spirit of God; and I was soon convinced that they were good. Instead of living as they had done, I found the people were led to acts of virtue and goodness, and appeared to be wholly given up to the service of God. I was convinced that nothing short of Divine power could effect such a wonderful change.

But the thoughts of breaking off from my former connections, and sacrificing the friendship of the world, seemed like an intolerable cross. Yet I well knew that the way I was in, was the way to destruction. This brought me under such deep tribulation of soul, that I could not sleep. As I was pondering upon these things, one evening, after the family had retired to rest, I came to a determination that I would forsake the course of the world, if I could only find salvation by that means.

I had no sooner settled this matter in my own mind, than the power of God fell upon me, like lightning, and produced various operations of body and spirit, by which means I was soon moved to speak in other tongues. This was a powerful witness to me that it was indeed the work of God; tho I had not, as yet, seen any of the Elders or laborers that were sent out from the Society; and I knew nothing of the doctrine of the confession of sin, until some time in the fore part of the following winter, when Elder Joseph Meacham and Samuel Fitch were sent, by Mother Ann, to visit the people in that place. They preached the gospel of salvation, and taught us the necessity of confessing our sins in the presence of God's witnesses, in order to find the mercy of God, and gain a union and relation to the true Church of Christ. Accordingly I confessed to Elder Joseph, as a witness of God, and told him what I had done.

The next summer I went to Harvard to see Mother Ann. I was there but a short time before she sent for me to come into the room where she was. She asked me if I wanted to open my mind. I felt it to be a great cross to open my wicked life before that burning and shining light which I was sensible dwelt in her, and therefore voluntarily requested a privilege to open my whole life,



from my childhood up. She granted my request, and I made an honest confession of all my sins. When I had got through, I was taken by the mighty power of God, and prostrated on the floor at her feet. She prayed vocally to God for me, by which means I was released from the guilt and condemnation of my former life, and was able to go forth in praise and thanksgiving to God for my deliverance.

After this I had many opportunities of seeing Mother, at different places. She was twice at Ashfield, which was within three miles of Shelburn, where I lived. The first time she staid about two months, and the last time she tarried through the winter, and several times visited the family where I lived, and was there for days and nights at a time. I used to attend their meetings at Ashfield, on the Sabbath, and was often with them for a number of days, and sometimes a week at a time, and was an eye and ear witness to many marvellous gifts of God.

I once went there under excessive tribulation of soul, having been absent for some time. I arrived on Saturday evening; and all the lower part of the house being greatly thronged with people, I crept in and seated myself on a flight of stairs, in a dark corner of the kitchen; for I felt such a sense of my loss from God, that I was glad to conceal myself from the sight of every living mortal; and I had no knowledge that Mother, or any one else, knew that I was in the house. I had been there but a short time, when Mother came through the multitude, directly to the place where I was; and taking me by one of my fingers, she led me through the crowd into the meeting-room. The moment she took hold of my finger, I felt the power of God, from her hand, run through my whole body, and all my tribulation was instantly gone; so that I felt perfectly released, and my soul was filled with comfort and peace. Such was the divine power which Mother Ann possessed, and which I saw displayed on many such occasions.

I also visited Mother and the Elders at Watervliet, where I was a witness to many displays of Divine power. Mother was pleasant and lovely in her common deportment; but when she was called by the Spirit of God to reprove sin, she was like a flaming sword, which caused

the most stout-hearted to fear and tremble in her presence. Her discerning spirit would often bring out and expose the secret thoughts and intentions of those who were dishonest, and who practised hypocrisy. I have known such ones brought under such conviction, by the searching power of her words, that they were compelled, as it were, to make an open and public confession of their secret abominations.

I have heard her foretell many things by the spirit of prophecy; and I never knew any of her words to fail. She prophesied repeatedly of a great work of God, which she said would take place at a great distance in the southwest; "but (said she) I shall not live to see it." This, it is well known, has already come to pass. I went once to Watervliet, in company with a young woman, daughter of Jonathan Wood, by the name of Rhoda, whose brother, Jonathan, had died a short time before. When we were about to return home, Mother gave her a charge to return home and prepare for another world: "for, (said she,) as certain as your brother Jonathan is gone, you will go soon." We returned home; and according to Mother's words, Rhoda was taken sick and died within a very few weeks. I have heard Mother speak and testify many other things by the spirit of prophecy, of which I knew she could have no knowledge, except by the revelation of God.

Mother and the Elders surpassed all people I was ever acquainted with, in their exemplary and godly lives. They were wise and discreet in their conversation; prudent and careful in all their conduct; and very temperate in all things. I have heard many evil reports about them, and especially about Mother Ann; but I know such reports to be without any foundation in truth. As a tree is known by its fruit; so I know by the external evidence manifested in Mother's exemplary life and conduct, that she was a woman of God. And I also know, by the revelation of God in my own soul, which to me is a more sure evidence, that Mother Ann was anointed with the holy Spirit of God, to reveal the everlasting gospel of Christ's second appearance, which will sooner or later prove a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, to all the children of men. And I also know, that those who have

succeeded Mother in the ministration of the gospel, were chosen vessels, anointed with the same holy Spirit which was revealed and made known through her.

These things are not with me as matters of mere belief in the testimony of others; for I know them by the inspiration of the Spirit of God in my own soul. From the same Divine source, as well as from my own experience, I am fully convinced that the lust of the flesh, with all its unclean works, is the source of all misery, and the primary cause of all the judgments that ever were sent upon mankind for their iniquities. There is nothing that appears so hateful and odious to my sensation, as the filthy and unclean gratifications of the flesh, committed through lust. And this sensation towards that nature and its works, has been inspired into my soul, by the light and operations of the pure Spirit of God, through the gospel of Christ. And in obedience to the faith I received from Mother Ann, through the mercy and goodness of God, I have been enabled to live free from those doleful pollutions, and from all the snares and temptations of the world, from that time to this.

Before I received this gospel, my natural propensities were like those of all other men, naturally inclined to evil, and continually leading my mind after those things which are the delight of mankind in their natural state. But I can now bless God that I have received an overcoming power over all those things; so that I now possess and enjoy that inward power of God, and feel the blessed influences and givings of the Holy Spirit, which the world, with all its power, can neither give nor take away. These blessings, which I first received through the ministration of Mother Ann, have afforded increasing peace and consolation to my soul, from that day to this, and they have been in me "as a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John iv. 14.)

As I am now advanced in years, and do not expect to continue long in this world, I desire to leave the foregoing statement, as a testimony of what I have experienced, and do know of this blessed gospel of salvation. And I do solemnly and sincerely recommend to all souls that desire to be saved, to acquaint themselves with the present work of God among the people called Shakers,

and to satisfy themselves of the truth of what I testify, that it is the only sure and certain way of salvation and eternal life.

PETER DODGE.

*Waterliet, March 8th, 1827.*

### TESTIMONY OF DANIEL GOODRICH.

It is now more than forty-six years since I enlisted as a volunteer of Jesus Christ, in the cause of truth and righteousness. And I esteem it not only my duty, but my blessed privilege, to bear the sword of the Spirit, and lift my voice in this sacred cause, against all unrighteousness and every kind of falsehood. And my works can bear witness that I have never acted the part of a coward, nor flinched from the cause in which I am engaged. But that the motives which first led me to engage in this cause, may appear plain and obvious to the reader, I shall give a few outlines of my early life and experience.

I was the son of Daniel Goodrich, sen. who was formerly a deacon of a Baptist church in this town, under the ministerial charge of Valentine Rathbone, sen. I was early taught the principles of moral rectitude, and the difference between right and wrong; nor was I altogether inattentive to these principles, even in early childhood: for God, in his mercy, did not suffer me to live and grow up in a state of entire carelessness and stupidity. Yet I discovered at an early age, that I had in me no small portion of an evil nature. When about ten years of age, I began seriously to feel myself accountable to God for all my words and actions; and was conscious that God would never justify me in any falsehood, nor in any wicked words or works. These considerations often brought trouble on my mind; for I was often overcome with words and works, which I fully believed were contrary to the pure nature of a holy, just and righteous God. The honest and sincere desire of my heart was to do good and to be good; but I found myself unable to come at it; because evil was always present with me, and I knew not how to get rid of it.

I continued in this situation until the year 1779, when I had arrived at the age of fourteen. During an extraordinary revival of religion which took place in that year, my conviction and distress of mind greatly increased. I saw that I was, in very deed, an enemy to God, involved in sin and shame, and for aught I could see, an heir of hell. To increase my tribulation, many of the youth of my age, who were the subjects of that revival, came forth as converted and regenerated souls, filled with life and zeal, and rejoicing in the new birth, which it was supposed they had attained to; while I gained nothing but additional distress and tribulation of soul. Yet I sought after salvation in the most fervent, honest and upright manner I was able. I attended meetings, and prayed and cried to God, according to the best of my understanding; and was often in conversation with those who thought they had found eternal life in Christ. I often resorted to the woods, and other retired places, to mourn and deplore my forlorn situation, until I came near falling into a state of absolute despair.

Here I began to pause, and to enquire what good I was likely to obtain by all my distress and tribulation: for I could find none that could tell me any more what I should do to be saved, than I had already heard; and that I had tried a long time to no purpose. Besides, I began to see that many who had been accounted good converts, were vain and carnally minded, and no better than they were before. Tho' these things were, at that time, a great trial to me; yet they afterwards served to convince me that the blind could not lead the blind. I read in the scriptures that, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; all old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." This I could not see fulfilled in any of those who professed to know Christ. A consideration of these things led me to look back to the days of Christ and his apostles; and I began to cry out, in the feelings of my soul, "O that I had lived in the days of Jesus Christ and his followers! for they could have told me what I must do to be saved; but it is not so now." Here I came to a resolution to make myself as comfortable as I could in my situation, under such a miserable condition; and I made a faithful promise, that if I should ever

find any soul, whether male or female, that could tell me what I must do to be saved, I would certainly do it. Having made this promise, my distress of mind ceased, and I felt greatly released ; and it was not long before I had an opportunity to fulfil my promise.

We soon after had intelligence of a society of people above Albany, who (as was reported) were in possession of the apostolic gifts. My father and a number of the neighbors went to see them, received faith and embraced their testimony. Shortly after this, in the latter part of June, 1780, I went, in company with my sister Hannah, and a number of others. We arrived on Sabbath morning, and attended their morning meeting. Many people were present. We heard the Elders preach, who bore a faithful and sound testimony against all sin of every name and nature. But this did not, at that time, affect my feelings like what I saw and heard in the afternoon. Mother Ann and her little family all sat down, and sung in such a solemn and heavenly manner, that I felt as tho I had got among the heavenly hosts, and had no right there ; for I had neither part nor lot in it. I cried aloud, in distress of soul ; for I believed it to be the worship of the living God, such as my ears had never heard, nor my soul ever felt before. Here began my acquaintance with Mother Ann and the Elders.

Soon after meeting, Mother informed me that if I desired to find the way of God, and obtain salvation, I must confess my sins to God, in the presence of his witnesses, and forsake them forever ; and take up my cross against all those propensities which caused me to commit sin ; and in so doing, I should find forgiveness, and obtain the favor of God, and have power over sin. She said, " It is a shame to commit sin ; but no shame to confess it." In obedience to her instructions, I have proved the truth of her testimony, and have always had reason to bless God for it. It has afforded me that salvation from sin, which I never was able to find in all my labors and researches after what was called religion among mankind ; tho I sought it faithfully. And hence I have proved by actual experience, that a religion which does not save the soul from sin, no matter by what name it is called, is not the religion of Christ. For the mission of Christ into this

world was, "to save his people from their sins;" and his religion is the only religion that is able to accomplish this work. Now let the professors of christianity prove the efficacy of their religion by this criterion; and if it does not save them from sin, let them no longer rest on a false foundation, and call it the religion of Christ.

Many are ready to judge this Society, and condemn this religion, upon the strength of the false accusations and reproaches that have been cast upon it by the enemies of truth, and the lovers of sin. But I am able, from personal knowledge and acquaintance, to deny all these base charges, in the most positive manner. For I had sufficient opportunity with its first founders to know, of a certainty, that they were the true witnesses of God, and that they were inspired with divine power and wisdom to teach the way of salvation and eternal life.

The precepts of Mother Ann were pure and heavenly, full of wisdom and solid understanding, and in perfect conformity to those of Jesus Christ, whom she always acknowledged as her head and Lord. Her exemplary life and conversation were truly worthy of christian imitation. In the spirit of true godliness, she came the nearest to Jesus Christ of any woman that ever lived. This is my unshaken belief; and I have the witness of the Spirit of the living God to confirm it. If Jesus Christ had the sword of the spirit; so had Mother Ann. If he spake the word of God; so did she. If he bore a testimony against all sin and all manner of unrighteousness; so did she; and indeed it produced the same effect in turning all who had faith in it, and were obedient to their faith, from the service of the Devil, to serve the living God with clean hands and pure hearts. This was the effect it produced on me; and my faith and confidence in her testimony, neither wicked men nor devils can destroy, nor take away.

But like the Lord Jesus, she was shamefully reviled and persecuted by the enemies of righteousness. I was personally acquainted with a number of the most malicious and venomous slanderers that ever persecuted Mother and the Elders in these parts. I have heard their vile speeches, and seen their malignant writings; and have been a witness of the miserable lives they afterwards

led, and had full information of their untimely and shocking deaths. Indeed I never knew one of these persecutors to prosper in the world, after indulging their malignant enmity against Mother and the Elders.

Among their malicious persecutors, there was none in this vicinity who acted a more conspicuous part, or was more influential in stirring up the common people to abuse and persecute them, than Valentine Rathbone, sen. This man was formerly an elder and preacher of the Baptist Church, in Hancock and Richmond. After the intelligence concerning Mother and the Elders began to circulate in this quarter, the old man went to see them. On his return home, he declared himself very strongly in their favor, before a public assembly, and said, "I would as soon speak against the Holy Ghost as against that people." I was present at the meeting, and heard this declaration, as were also many others, now living in this vicinity, who can bear witness to it. And altho he embraced their testimony, and maintained it for a time; yet he afterwards apostatized, became a violent persecutor, and published the first pamphlet that ever came out against them.

Tho the enemies of truth, and the lovers of carnal pleasure, have reviled and slandered Mother Ann, without restraint, and without regard to truth or justice; yet she evidently bore the same cross, and maintained the same testimony that Jesus Christ had done; and she truly proved herself a Mother in Christ. And I have never felt ashamed to acknowledge her as my Mother, from the first of my acquaintance with her to this day: for she verily brought me forth into the family of Christ; and without her kind assistance, I must have remained in the kingdom of darkness, and under the dominion of sin to this day. Therefore she is truly my heavenly Mother; and I love her with an everlasting love, which can never be taken from me. She was truly a Mother to every faithful soul who was willing to put away all sin, and follow Christ in the regeneration. Her soul abounded in kindness and charity to the needy and afflicted: She often taught us to remember the poor and needy of this world, and supply their wants and relieve their distresses.



She often manifested a peculiar love and tender feeling towards little children. She would often notice and speak to them, and give them some good advice—teach them obedience to their parents, and caution them against indulging themselves in any kind of wickedness. And there were, at that time, many young children among the Believers who, by a few words from Mother, received those impressions of love to the way of God, and those principles of righteousness, which they have never lost to this day : nor has that divine love which they then received from her, and for her, ever left them. She also taught parents to bring up their children in the fear of God, and teach them the principles of truth and righteousness—to be kind to each other, and to love one another, and to shun all evil—to be industrious in business : “ for (said she) if you bring up your children in idleness, the devil will set them to work.” She gave parents many solemn warnings to keep a watchful care over their children ; for as they had been instrumental in bringing these children into the world, their responsibility was great, and they must be accountable to God for the manner in which they brought them up, and must therefore be faithful in the performance of their duty to their children.

The power and influence of Mother’s spirit, especially when under the immediate operation of the gift of God, was truly wonderful. In reproofing sin and sinners, she would often make the most stubborn and stout-hearted quiver and tremble, like people under the operation of a violent ague fit. In calling upon the Believers to repent and humble themselves before God, she would often minister, in a few words, such feelings of sorrow and repentance, as to make the whole assembly break forth into weeping, till their hearts were filled with sorrow and their tears trickled down upon the floor. At other times, when she perceived the people to be borne down with tribulation and sorrow, she would, by a few words of comfort, and sometimes by singing a melodious and heavenly song, instantly fill the assembly with inexpressible joy and rejoicing. Often have I seen individuals filled with the power and gifts of God, by a single expression from her lips, or a touch of her hand. These things I

have witnessed with my own eyes and ears, and experienced them upon the feelings of my own heart and soul.

DANIEL GOODRICH.

*Hancock, Feb. 15th, 1827.*



### TESTIMONY OF COMSTOCK BETTS.

When I first heard of the testimony maintained by Mother Ann Lee and the Elders with her, and understood the nature of it, my mind was forcibly struck with doctrines which, tho new and strange, appeared so consistent with truth and reason, and so much in harmony with the testimony of Jesus Christ and his apostles. Their testimony was, that Christ had come "the second time, without sin unto salvation;" that they had come as God's witnesses to the people, and were sent to teach the way of salvation; that all sin and every kind of iniquity was condemned; that they had obtained power over sin; that the call of God to the people was, to confess all their sins to God, in the presence of his witnesses, and to forsake them forever. They also taught the necessity of confessing sin, and of hating and crucifying the carnal nature of the flesh, as the only means by which souls could enter in at the strait gate, and walk in the narrow way that leads to eternal life.

All this appeared reasonable and right to me: for I did not believe that any one could follow Christ in the regeneration, while living in any known sin. But my natural feelings, at that time, were very far from yielding obedience to this work. And I presume I never should have been one of this despised and persecuted people, called Shakers, if I could have found any other way, short of this humiliating way of the cross, in which I could have felt any real hope of acceptance with God. But I confess I could see no way of salvation, only in obedience to this testimony. Many of the people who lived near me had embraced this testimony, and set out in this way, more than three years, before I confessed my sins. I frequently attended their meetings, and their worship ap-

peared very solemn and heavenly to me. I felt more and more affected with my case : for I knew that I was a sinner, and expected, if I should continue in my sins, that I must go to hell.

In the summer of 1783, Mother Ann and the Elders returned from the eastward, on their way to Watervliet, and tarried a short time at Samuel Fitch's, in Richmond, where I attended their meetings. Elder James Whittaker spoke, and opened the gospel in such a feeling and powerful manner, that it made the tears flow freely from my eyes. From this time, my feelings were much affected by day and by night. I believed, without a doubt, that this was the only way of eternal life ; and I have never had a doubt of it, from that day to this. But altho I was fully convinced what my duty was ; yet the cross was in the way. I saw evidently that life and death were set before me, and that I must renounce all my carnal pleasures, or lose my soul. When I came to weigh the matter seriously, I could not consent to sacrifice my soul for the purpose of building up the flesh. I therefore came to a full determination to confess my sins, and forsake them forever.

Accordingly, in August, 1783, I went to Daniel Goodrich, sen. who was a leader among the people, and confessed my sins to him. Soon after this, I went to see Mother and the Elders, at Watervliet, and was received with great kindness and charity. After tarrying several days, being greatly satisfied with what I had heard and seen, and feeling an increase of the work of God in my own soul, I returned home in peace. I soon went a second time, and had much opportunity with Mother and the Elders, which I esteemed as a great privilege. In both of these visits, I was greatly satisfied with the godly example which was manifested in all their words and works. Their feelings seemed wholly devoted to do the will of God. I felt so well satisfied with what I had heard and seen, that I went to Mother and begged the privilege of living there, which she granted.

Accordingly I moved there, late in the fall or beginning of winter, and lived there more than three years. I was daily conversant with Mother and the Elders, and was there when Elder William and Mother Ann deceased.

Their testimony against all sin was piercing and powerful, and they appeared to live fully up to their profession and testimony. They seemed to spare no pains to make the brethren and sisters comfortable, both in things spiritual and temporal; and they were ever free and liberal in extending charity to the poor and needy. Their meekness and humility was manifest in all their conversation and deportment. I have often seen them weep, and thank God for the gospel, with the most heart-feeling sensibility. I received, from time to time, many precious spiritual gifts of God from them, and was made joyful in God's house of prayer.

All manner of evil was spoken against them, before ever I set out to obey the gospel, by a persecuting generation, many of whom were greatly addicted to intemperance, and all were more or less abandoned to all sorts of sin and wickedness. But I did not then believe any of their evil reports; nor have I ever believed any of them since. Notwithstanding the base charges of their slanderers to the contrary, I can testify that Mother and the Elders were very temperate in eating and drinking; and I never saw the least appearance of intemperance about them in any thing. From some natural cause, which I shall not attempt to explain, I was constitutionally opposed to drunkenness, and always abhorred drunkards, as the meanest and most contemptible of the human race; and if Mother and the Elders had been of that character, it would have been impossible for me to have contented myself to live with them; much less to subject myself to them as the ministers of Christ.

I can bear witness that Mother and the Elders taught the only way of eternal life; and that they faithfully walked in it themselves. And in obedience to their instructions, I have obtained power over all sin, in my knowledge, and can see my way clear to the mansions of eternal rest. And I have no doubt that I shall continue in this sin-killing work until I find complete victory over the least and last remains of a carnal nature.

COMSTOCK BETTS.

*Hancock, Feb. 16th, 1827.*

## TESTIMONY OF JOHN WARNER.

Having been blessed with forty-four years experience in the important work of salvation and redemption, and feeling myself near the close of my earthly existence, I consider it my duty and privilege to give a short statement of that important work, which God has wrought in these last days, for the restoration of fallen man, and the effect which this work has produced on myself and others. This work I have seen, felt and experienced, and can testify that it is truly of God; and that it has been wrought by virtue of the testimony received through Mother Ann Lee, and the Elders with her. This I received, not as the word of man or woman, but as the truth of God, revealed from Heaven, which is a searcher of the heart and a trier of the reins: for such it has proved to me. And I can say of them, in truth, as the woman of Samaria said of Jesus; "they told me all things that ever I did;" and I can put the same question; "Is not this the Christ?" or in other words, is not this the work of his Spirit revealed through them?

Altho I was early instructed, by my parents, in the principles of moral virtue, which I fully believe was a protection to me, against many evils to which children and youth are addicted; yet in my childhood, I received a sensible conviction of the cause and nature of man's loss from God, and felt in myself the influence of that corrupt nature, too strong for me to overcome, and knew of no way to help myself. Of course I felt myself a child of wrath, and in continual bondage, through fear of death and judgment to come. But when the testimony of Mother Ann came forth with such irresistible power against all sin, I believed, without a doubt, that it was of God, and felt no disposition to oppose it. Yet I hated and dreaded the cross; and through the powerful influence of my carnal nature, which preferred the path of disobedience, I stood out against my own conviction for a number of months. But my condemnation increased, until I found myself on the brink of despair and ruin, and saw no way of relief but in obedience.

As their testimony was plain, powerful and explicit, and pointedly declared that every one would receive a reward according to his works ; that, "he that covereth his sins should not prosper ; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them should have mercy ;" I was at length induced to yield to the power of conviction. I therefore determined, as in the presence of him who searcheth the secrets of all hearts, to make a sacrifice, once for all, and bring my deeds to light, by coming to an open confession of every secret sin that I had ever committed. This I did, in truth and honesty, according to the best of my understanding and memory. In so doing, I felt immediately released from the guilt and condemnation under which I had long labored, and found a sensible and undoubted forgiveness of my past life. I then resolved, from my heart, to break off from the friendship of the world, with all its vain allurements, and to follow Christ in the regeneration. And I have found an increasing victory over the propensities of a carnal nature, from that day to this.

**This experience, (if I had no other evidence,) I find fully sufficient to confirm my faith and confidence in the present work of God, beyond the shadow of a doubt. Those truths which have been confirmed by a long experience of actual obedience, and the constant testimony of a living witness within, can never be doubted. This testimony assures me that Jesus Christ, that despised Nazarene, who was accused by the rebellious Jews, and haughty scribes and Pharisees, as a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners, was the first pillar in the regeneration, to call souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. And this same testimony equally assures me that Ann Lee, that despised female, who is equally accused by rebellious sinners, and modern scribes and Pharisees, of intoxication and lewdness, was anointed of God as the second heir in the all important work of redemption, as all can bear witness who, from the heart, have obeyed her heavenly precepts, and followed her Christ-like example.**

Altho I was well acquainted with the letter of the scriptures, yet I was wholly ignorant of the Spirit which had dictated them, until it was revealed to me through living witnesses, who were under the inspiration of that

Spirit. The scriptures therefore afforded me no real strength to keep either the law or the gospel ; but they were a source of great consolation to me, to find that the testimony of Mother Ann, and those faithful witnesses of God who were with her, was fully confirmed by the testimony of the scriptures.

Among the many false accusations brought against the principles and practice of this Society, it is asserted that we make no use of Bibles. This charge, like a thousand others equally false, might easily be refuted by a little investigation. Notwithstanding the high estimation in which the Bible is professedly held by the great mass of christian professors ; yet they openly declare that they cannot live without sin, while the whole tenor of scripture speaks condemnation to those who live in sin. But admitting that we do not show that exalted veneration for the Bible, which is manifested by many other sects ; yet we not only maintain a pointed testimony against sin ; but we do actually take up a daily cross against all sin in our knowledge, agreeable to the positive requirements of the scriptures. Hence, while they read and extol the letter of the Bible, we peaceably practice the spirit of it. If therefore, they possess and magnify the letter of religion, and yet are dead in trespasses and sin, as they confess ; they must admit that we possess and walk in the spirit of it, and live a life of righteousness. Hence it appears, as the scriptures themselves testify, that, "The letter killeth ; but the spirit giveth life."

JOHN WARNER.

*Harvard, July 7th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF ABIJAH WORSTER.

Harvard, in Massachusetts, was the place of my nativity ; born A. D. 1745. I was under conviction of sin from early life till I grew up to manhood, and after passing through those scenes of tribulation on the one hand, and comfort and consolation on the other, which professors of religion generally view as a regenerating change,

I was esteemed as a brother in Christ, by professors who were perhaps as much deceived as I was.

In the 22d year of my age, I joined myself to the church in Stirling, and a few years after, transferred my connexion to the church in Harvard. Here I continued for a number of years, and became a strong advocate for that Calvinistic doctrine of imputed righteousness; and was so bold and confident in it as to say, I would not accept of salvation in any other line. But wo to me, if God had taken me at my word! I also maintained that horrid and blasphemous doctrine of election and reprobation; but could never bring my inward feelings fully into reconciliation with it: but referring those things to Divine Sovereignty, as I was taught, I let it stand for truth.

Yet after all my labors, I found no solid rest to my soul. The comfort and consolation that I felt at times, would leave me like the morning cloud. And seeing many things in the church to which I belonged, which were not according to the gospel of Christ, I was convinced that the power of salvation was not there, and that their christianity must finally fall to the ground. And as I could find no food for my soul,—nothing but leanness and barrenness, as to the life of religion, I left them and assembled with the Baptists, who had recently commenced a society in Harvard.

Here I found a degree of life and zeal, and a measure of love and union, which felt more comfortable to me than any thing I had experienced for a long time. With them I continued for a season, and was baptized according to their order. But it was not long before I began to perceive a diminution of their former life and zeal in religion, and a disposition to settle down into a lifeless formality, like other denominations. And the evening before I was to have been taken into their church, as I was walking the road, and musing on the solemn undertaking before me, these words fell with weight on my mind: “Arise ye and depart; for this is not your rest: for it is polluted, it will destroy you with a sore destruction.” (See Micah ii. 10.) This entirely broke me off from joining them.

I then associated myself with the followers of Shadrach Ireland; and I found them to be a people that had the light of redemption. With this society I continued



till after the death of Ireland. And when David Hoar took the lead of the society, I united with him, and continued with him for a season. But I soon saw where his ministration would end; and I finally discovered that all the difference between this society and the other christian sects around us was, that the others had silver images, and this had a golden image; and it looked beautiful, because it carried the inscription of redemption in its front. But as they had begun in the spirit and ended in the flesh, their image was a dead carcass, without life or power, like all the rest.

So that after all my labor and tribulation in passing through these different denominations, like Noah's dove, I found no rest for the sole of my foot; and for a number of months, I was like a lone creature in the earth, not knowing a single soul on earth with whom I could unite in christian fellowship. But having been, for a long time, exercised with a feeling that there was some great work upon the wheel of Providence, and by reading the prophecies concerning the day of redemption, I was led to believe the day was near at hand; and I had some hope that I should live to see it, which kept my mind constantly looking forward for something to come. And when I heard of the work under Mother Ann, at the westward, I felt a secret hope that it would prove to be the work of God.

When Mother and the Elders came to Harvard, I was not in haste to go and see them, until I heard that the Harvard people were going to raise a mob to drive them off. I then told Elijah Wilds that I would go and see them; for there must be something of God there, else Satan would not bark so. I visited them several times, and saw nothing in them but what was perfectly consistent with innocence and simplicity. But having tried so many ways, and found nothing but emptiness, I was desirous of some greater confirmation; and God, in great condescension to my weakness, laid his blessed power upon me, and brought me instantly upon my knees, where I was shaken with such astonishing violence, that it seemed to shake the whole house, like an earthquake. Under this operation, I was fully confirmed that it was the way of God. And when the operation ceased, I

sought for Elder James, and opened to him my wretched, ungodly life, and soon received that blessed protecting power against the power of evil, of which I never before had any conception ; and it made sin look as black as its father.

In times past, when I retired for private devotion, evil thoughts would often be cast into my mind ; and while I was striving to expel them, others would rush in. In this manner I have agonized by the half hour together, and have had to retire, not daring to pray in that condition. But after I had opened my ungodly life, I received that protecting power of God, that if any evil influence or evil thought came within the glimpse of my soul, an operation of the power of God, quick as lightning, would instantly drive it from me, and many times, expel even the most distant idea of it from my soul. So that after all my imaginary knowledge of God and Christ, and things spiritual and eternal, I here received the first real and true knowledge of Jesus Christ. When I received that power which protected and saved me from the power of evil, then I received a measure of real understanding that *Jesus was a Saviour* ; and I never had known him in his true character before ; nor will any soul ever know him in any other line.

Having received the confirmation of my faith, by the power and gifts of God, I gave myself up to the direction of Mother and the Elders, and endeavored to be obedient and subject as a child. And I soon found that God blessed me in my obedience, by giving me increasing strength against the power of evil, and blessing me with many precious gifts, and among others, the gift of tongues. Thus it pleased God to confirm the reality of Christ's second appearing, by the same miraculous power which was poured out upon the apostles, at the day of Pentecost.

At times, I felt a disposition to make some reliance on my past experience in religion ; but God in his mercy showed me that all the knowledge and understanding I had obtained of God and Christ, and all spiritual things, was obtained while under the power of that spirit which had led me into sin, consequently under the power of darkness. And it was therefore impossible for me, in that state, to form any just conceptions of spiritual things.

This was made as evident to me as my hand before my face. Hence I gave up my former ideas of religion, as untenable and short of any real work of salvation. By this manifestation of God to me, I was delivered from all perplexity respecting my past experience in religion, as being behind ; so that I had nothing to do with it, but to leave it behind and press forward, in the present work of God, towards the mark, for the prize of my high calling. Being thus released from the bondage of false systems, and all the creeds and dogmas of divided and subdivided sects and parties, my present labor was, to crucify the old man with his deeds, and travel on in the way of redemption, as fast as I could.

I was formerly subject to more than a common appetite for victuals ; but Mother taught me that every propensity of a fallen nature must be crucified with Christ. And considering a gluttonous appetite as a voracious propensity of nature, which ought not to be indulged, I set out to crucify it, by taking as much food as in my judgment was sufficient for a laboring man, and no more. And many scores of times, I have left off eating with a keener appetite than I had when I began. And this cross felt heavier, as I was at that time passing through a scene of hunger, which temporal food could not satisfy. Feeling determined to obtain that victory over the lawless propensities of a fallen and depraved nature, which Mother had told me must be obtained, I followed this course for a year or two, till by the cross I obtained the victory, and God in his abounding mercy blessed me with an entire deliverance from that propensity. And tho I have not felt the sensation of hunger for more than thirty years ; yet my food relishes well, and I never feel straitened in eating and drinking whatever I find needful for my health, strength or comfort ; nor do I feel the least temptation to go beyond. This is my victory in this one point ; and this victory neither men nor devils can take from me.

As to fleshly lust, Mother and the Elders taught me to proclaim an everlasting war against that, as the root and source of all sin, and to make no treaty with it, on any terms ; but to maintain the warfare, till my soul should be able to triumph over it, and stand in complete victory. And

Mother assured me, that if I continued faithful to the testimony I had received, God would bless me with power to overcome.

When I engaged in the conflict, I found it a case of life or death ; and that nature must either die out of my soul, or my soul must die away from God. Therefore I bent all my powers and faculties to war against that filthy, debased and diabolical nature, even against every motion, every feeling and every inclination thereof, with continual cries to God for his delivering power. And God, in his infinite mercy, has blessed me with such a complete deliverance, that I feel no more temptation, desire or inclination towards any thing that belongs to it, than I have to go and wallow in the mire. And the life that I lived while under the influence of that nature, I can now hate with as good a will as I ever hated the most filthy reptile, or poisonous serpent. And I now feel confident, by the light of God which I have gained, that if I had gone out of time in the situation in which the gospel found me, I should have met with an awful disappointment, notwithstanding all my former experience in religion. I have therefore a just reason to love Mother and the Elders, and to bless the Lord God of Zion, for sending Mother Ann with the gospel of redemption to this benighted land, to usher in the second appearance of Christ, and the long looked for latter day of glory.

Mother and the Elders taught me to be diligent and industrious, and cautioned me not to let ambition carry me beyond my strength, to the injury of my constitution ; but to be temperate in all things. They also taught me to be prudent and saving, and let nothing be lost through negligence ; to be just and upright in all my dealings, and to make the golden rule my standard : " All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." They taught me to labor for a spiritual union, as the main-spring of heaven in the soul, without which there could be no heaven ; and to discard every vestige of the union of the flesh. In short, they taught me, both by precept and example, to lead a life of virgin purity and holiness, according to the example of Christ.

Mother also taught me to maintain a tender and compassionate feeling towards the poor blind children of this world,

who were lost in sin and wickedness, and to be willing to do or suffer any thing to help them out of their lost state. She also taught me to feel pity and compassion for every suffering creature, whether in soul or body. And from her I received a ministration of compassion for suffering humanity, which has continued with me to this day ; so that whenever God in his mercy has granted me power to release souls from their sufferings, it has felt more grateful and comforting to me than treasures of gold.

In the early days of my faith, God in his condescending goodness, blessed me (tho unworthy) with the gift of healing, which has been continued to this day, and has been variously exercised, from time to time, especially of late years. Believers, after suffering under infirmity, and obtaining no relief from the physicians, have often been healed by the power of God. Five instances of this kind have taken place in the course of one week. One of them was that of a young woman, who was brought to the door of death, and by a skilful physician pronounced incurable. She was unable to move hand or foot, and her extremities were as cold as clay. The sister who took care of her, told me she had no more hope of her life than if she were already dead ; for her disorder was such that she could not live. This brought upon me a sensible feeling of that kind of compassion, which I have often seen in our beloved Mother. I retired by myself, and cried to God to know whether, in the wise dispensations of his Providence, there might be a gift of healing for her. I was answered that there was : and feeling the power of God upon me, I went into the room where she was, and laying my hand upon her, she instantly felt a glow of warmth that ran through her whole frame, and her extremities became warm. She soon after desired to get up ; the sisters helped her up ; and after walking the floor, back and forth, several times, she sat down in her chair ; and at evening she went down to supper with the family.

These gifts and manifestations of the power of God, were received through faith, by obedience to that spiritual anointing which dwelt in our beloved Mother's soul. No one will believe that, "man who is a worm, and the son of man who is but a worm," has in himself any power to perform such miracles as these ; and Satan

has neither the will nor the power to do it; because it is not in his nature to do good. Who then but an infidel, will refuse to believe that they are wrought by the power of God? And as it must appear self-evident that the fruit is good; therefore, of eternal necessity, the tree must be good.

Thus have I written, in the simplicity of my soul, a few things out of many which I have seen, heard, felt and known, respecting the ministration of Mother Ann and the Elders, and respecting the testimony of the gospel which God sent them to establish in this land of religious freedom. And they were indeed ardent and faithful messengers of the covenant of redemption, zealous and powerful in the work of God, possessing unbounding charity and compassion towards the fallen race of Adam, and exercised, with an uncommon degree of kindness and benevolence, towards souls that were in need, and under trouble and affliction.

But at the time when that ungodly mob so cruelly abused Elder James and others, they showed such a Christ-like disposition as I never saw in any other people on earth. Altho the mob, like so many savages, surrounded Elijah Wilds' house all night; yet in the morning, Mother said to Elijah, "The poor creatures are hungry;" and told him to go and cut up some bread and cheese for them; which he did, plentifully, and carried it out to them in pans; and furnished them with cider to drink with it. Yet after all, these wretches possessed so much of the spirit of their father the Devil, that they could abuse Elder James, in the most brutal and savage manner, that very day. But he could kneel down in the spirit of true christian charity and forgiveness, and say, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Pure and holy was their testimony; and their lives and conversation were a transcript of the testimony they bore. That this is the second appearing of Christ, and that the finishing of this testimony will finish the mystery of God, in relation to man on earth, are things of which I have no more dispute, than I dispute the veracity of God, or question my own existence.

As to those who have reviled and slandered that blessed virgin daughter of Zion, and those that were with her,

charging them with error and delusion, intemperance, lasciviousness and witchcraft, they will have all their hard and ungodly speeches to eat back in agonizing anguish of soul.

Having written the foregoing testimony with my own hand, as a witness of God, I subscribe my name at Harvard, this thirteenth day of July, 1826, being this day eighty-one years of age.

ABIJAH WORSTER.

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### TESTIMONY OF ELIJAH WILDS.

I was born in the year 1746, at Groton, in Massachusetts. My parents being people of strict morals, were careful to instil the principles of morality into the minds of their children; and took much pains, according to the light they had, to show us our fallen state by nature, and the necessity of being regenerated and born of God, in order to obtain the Kingdom of Heaven. These instructions made a serious impression on my mind in early youth, which increased upon me as I advanced in years. My parents taught me to search the scriptures, and I became much acquainted with the written word; but was ignorant of the Spirit by which it was dictated. Feeling a concern of mind about a future state, and desiring to find some way of salvation, I went from place to place to hear preachers of different denominations; but could find none who could administer relief to my soul.

Thus I went on, in great trouble of mind, till I was twenty-one years of age. At this time I purchased a lot of new land in the town of Shirley, and went to work upon it. And tho I was very much prospered in my business; yet my trouble of mind continued, attended with such strong desires to find the way of God, that while at my work, I have had such a sense of the work of God in the days of the apostles, that I was obliged to lay down my axe, and sit down and cry like a child, hoping and praying that I might live to see the glorious day of Christ's second coming. At the age of twenty-five, having erected buildings, and made improvements on my new

land, so as to accommodate a family, I was married, and lived in the married state, according to the common course of the world, nine years, and had four children.

In the summer of 1781, I heard of a new sect of people, who were at the Square-house, so called, in Harvard. I went to see them; and they opened a scene to me that was new indeed. Their doctrine was, that the gospel of Christ required us to confess and forsake all sin, and to subdue that nature which led to it, by a daily cross. They testified that in order to obtain salvation from sin, and redemption from a fallen nature, God required the self-denial of every impure act, word and thought. They also testified that Christ had commenced his second appearance without sin unto salvation, to all who were willing to believe and obey. And truly, salvation was the very object of my desires. Their visages, the power of their testimony, and the spirit of godliness which I felt from them, all conspired to convince me that Mother Ann was a person ordained of God to administer eternal life to a lost world.

I soon made them a second visit. They opened to my view a further degree of light than before. "The trumpet gave a certain sound," and I felt it my duty to prepare for the battle, which they informed me must ensue between the soul and sin. They said we must overcome sin before we could sit down with the Lamb of God, in the Kingdom of Heaven; that we must overcome, even as Christ overcame, and sat down in the Kingdom with the Father. The evidences of the testimony, and the manifestations of the power of God, were so powerful and convincing, that I could by no means resist them. I therefore came before God, and in the presence of his witnesses, confessed my sins; and thereby found that degree of releasement which I had never found before. This served to strengthen my belief that the work was verily the work of God.

They then taught me the necessity of righting all my wrongs, by making restitution where I had done any injury to any one, and of living a pure and holy life. They also taught me, that the only repentance that was acceptable to God, was to cease from sin; for that was the best evidence of true and sincere repentance, and that



there could indeed be no real repentance of sin without forsaking it. This, they said, was the work now before me, and if I would be faithful and true in it, I should certainly find the blessing of God. All this was perfectly agreeable to my faith; and in obedience, I found their words to be true. I soon began to see clearly the great difference between travelling into sin, and travelling out of it; the one was directly contrary to the other.

My wife also received the same faith, and set out with me, to follow Christ in the regeneration, which made it much easier for us both. By the blessing of Divine Providence, we were favored with the best accommodations of any family which had embraced the gospel in the neighborhood, to entertain our beloved Mother and Elders, while they were visiting the people in this vicinity. They accordingly came to our house a number of times, and tarried with us, and greatly strengthened and comforted us in the gospel. And here they were visited by the Believers, as well as by many others. During this time, they labored early and late. Mother would frequently rise very early in the morning, and call upon the family to rise and labor for mortification to a sinful nature. These labors were evidently attended with the power of God. Some of the people would be heard groaning under powerful convictions of sin; some speaking in unknown tongues, while others were filled with raptures of joy and thanksgiving to God, for the great manifestations of his love to them.

Besides these visits at our house in Shirley, I have visited Mother and the Elders at New-Lebanon and Wattervliet, in the state of New-York, and in many other places. And I always found them engaged in the same kind of labors, pulling down the strong holds of sin and Satan, and building up Zion. I can therefore certify, from my own knowledge and experience, that all the base accusations that have been heaped upon them by the wicked, are without any foundation in truth: for I always found their example to correspond with their testimony. They were a prudent, temperate and charitable people; wise, chaste and discreet in their language and deportment. Had they been otherwise, I certainly should have known it: for I had a far greater opportunity to inform

myself, and know the truth about them, than any of their calumniators had. I have also a sure evidence in my own soul, which no calumniator can take from me. I have not only seen the blessed fruits of righteousness which they bore, and those which sprung from their ministration to others; but I have myself received the same from them, and felt the operations thereof in my own soul.

I can say, in the uprightness and sincerity of my heart, that in obedience to the testimony of the gospel, which I first received from them, I have been saved from the power of sin and Satan, and loosed from the bands of death, under which I had before been bound; and have found a daily increasing victory over a sinful nature, which has afforded me peace and justification, and given full releasement and freedom to my soul, from the time of my first confessing my sins to this day. It is not therefore a mere belief or profession which I have found; but a substantial and permanent salvation; agreeable to the promise of God, that Christ, in his second appearing, would come in his glory to make an end of sin.

The spirit of opposition and cruel persecution which was raised against Mother and the Elders, by the wicked, and the patience, meekness and charity which they manifested under it, was a most striking evidence of their Christ-like spirit, and a powerful confirmation of the divine origin and heavenly purity of that gospel which they preached. A remarkable instance of this took place while they were at my house.

In consequence of Mother's testimony against all sin, and every kind of impurity of the flesh and spirit, and the great conviction it produced among the people in this vicinity, a tumultuous mob was raised, mostly from the town of Harvard, and consisting altogether of the enemies of the cross. This malicious crew came to my house on Sabbath evening, [June 1st, 1783,] about eight o'clock, and surrounded the house. Some of the leaders of the mob were, or had been, captains in the militia, and still bore that title. They were followed by a large number of men, (supposed about one hundred,) for the evident purpose of abusing Mother and the Elders. They continued to surround the house all night, and would suffer no one to go out, excepting one woman, who had left a

sucking child at home, which was near by. By her, we sent information of these proceedings to Thomas Buckmore, a town officer, who came in the morning with a constable.

When day-light appeared, the leaders of the mob called for Mother and the Elders to come out to them. With this demand they did not think proper to comply; but gave the leaders liberty to come into the house, who accordingly came in. Mother and the Elders requested us to prepare some breakfast for them, which was done, and these men sat down and eat. Mother then advised me to feed the mob who were in the door-yard. Accordingly I carried out bread and cheese, of which they eat freely. After this, the Elders went out into the door-yard; and Elder James addressed them, and said; "Why have you come here to abuse or hurt us? What have we done? Have we injured your persons or property? If we have, make us sensible of it, and we will make you restitution."

These words so enraged the mob with enmity, that they seized him by one arm, and the brethren by the other, and held him till he cried out, Lord have mercy! you will pull me in pieces! At this cry, the hands of the mob were loosed from him. At this instant, Thomas Buckmore, the forementioned officer, came forward and commanded the peace, and ordered the mob to disperse. This seemed to strike them with some fear; and after considerable parley, they requested that the two Elders, William Lee and James Whittaker, would go with them to Jeremiah Willard's, (a man who professed faith, and lived in Harvard,) promising that they should not be hurt. They pretended that their only wish was, to get them from this place, and have them leave the town. Tho the Elders had no confidence in their professions nor promises; yet, wishing to save Mother from their cruel hands, they agreed to go. They accordingly went, accompanied by a number of the brethren, and left Mother at my house. The mob followed the Elders to Harvard.

At evening, the Elders returned, and were gladly received by Mother and the brethren and sisters, at our house. "Have they abused you, James?" said Mother. "I will show you, Mother," said he; and kneeling down

before her, he stripped up his shirt, and showed his wounded back, covered with blood, which had run down to his feet. He said it was done by whipping. In washing his back, it was found to be beaten black and blue, from his shoulders to his waistbands, and in many places, bruised to a jelly, as tho it had been beaten with a club. "I have been abused," said he; "but not for any wrong that I have done them; it is for your sakes. I feel nothing against them for what they have done to me; for they were ignorant, and knew not what they did, nor what manner of spirit they were of." Mother and the Elders, with all the brethren and sisters, kneeled down and prayed to God to forgive their blood-thirsty persecutors. Elder James cried heartily, and said, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" After praying for their enemies, Mother and the Elders were filled with joy and thankfulness, that they were counted worthy to suffer persecution for Christ's sake.

Thus they bore their sufferings with meekness and patience, and in a lamb-like spirit, prayed for their persecutors. This, in addition to so many evidences which I had before received, was a further proof to me, that they possessed a treasure above all earthly treasures, and a power beyond all human power. That this power and spirit may find an entrance into the hearts of the children of men, and thereby bring them into the way of purity and holiness, so that they may be enabled to reap the fruits of eternal life, is my sincere and daily prayer.

ELIJAH WILDS.

*Shirley, Nov. 4th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF EZEKIEL MORRILL.

My native place was South-Hampton, in New-Hampshire. I was born November 15th, 1747. In my childhood, my father moved with his family to Canterbury, where I lived till I was upwards of forty years of age, and then removed to Enfield, N. H. where I expect to spend the remainder of my days.

My parents were Calvinists, and I was brought up under the influence of their principles. In my youthful days, I had religious impressions, and felt some concern for my soul; but having very little hope that I was one of that small number who were elected to salvation, I resolved to pursue the course of the world to the extent of my abilities; but determined, at the same time, that if I should ever feel any call of God, by the movings of his Spirit upon me, I would embrace it. In this situation I passed my time, till I was about thirty-one years of age, when I was struck with a deep conviction of my loss from God, which put an end to all my worldly pursuits and carnal pleasures.

About this time, a light broke out in the vicinity, attended with a great outpouring of the Spirit, which was evidently the spirit and power of Elias, and might be compared to the work of John the Baptist, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Under my conviction, I united with this body of people, who were afterwards called *Free-will Baptists*, and I endeavored to live up to the light manifested in it. My conviction led me to seek salvation from sin, fully believing that the Church of Christ must be a pure Church, and that there could not be a pure head and a corrupt body; and I well knew that Christ was generally acknowledged as the head of his body the Church. It was therefore clearly evident to me, that there had been a falling away from the primitive purity of the gospel; and that the power of the holy people was lost. But having in myself an inward corruption, which was not removed, and which brought me into captivity to the spirit of darkness, I was unable to live up to the light of my conviction; nor was I able to find the cause by the light which I possessed, or by that which was in the body to which I was joined. This led me to believe it could not be found short of a new revelation.

My faith led me to believe there must be a travel in the regeneration, in order to find redemption from a fallen nature; but this I could not find. I also believed that a cross was required; but what this cross was, or in what it consisted, was still unrevealed: for notwithstanding all my exertions to bear this cross, or to find it, my soul was yet in bondage to sin. While laboring under this dis-

tress of soul, I had several visions, in which I saw the pure Church, and received some bright and encouraging manifestations of God, that I should see it established in my day. I continued in this situation of mind about four years, laboring and struggling in deep tribulation, to find some way out of sin. And I believe it would have terminated my existence, had I not found deliverance through two messengers of Christ, commissioned by Mother Ann Lee, to preach the gospel of salvation.

These messengers came to Canterbury in the latter part of the year 1782, with the testimony of the everlasting gospel. When I first saw them, I knew them, having a number of times seen them in vision, during the time of my labor and tribulation to find the way out of sin. When they came to open the gospel, in its purity, they showed what the real cross of Christ was ;—that the lust of the flesh was the veil that darkened the soul ; and that living in the gratification of it, was the reason why we could not travel in the regeneration, nor find the way out of sin. They had spoken but a few words before the prison-doors of darkness were set wide open, and I saw and knew that *the lust of the flesh* was the *man of sin*. They testified that we must confess our sins, and bring our deeds to the light. Their testimony was accompanied with such convincing evidence, that I was constrained, by my own conscience, to confess my sins and bring my deeds to the light, in the presence of God and before his witnesses. I then set out to forsake them forever, and to bear my daily cross, by which I felt my soul released from its burden, and brought into a new element of life.

Shortly after this, I went to see Mother and the Elders, who were then at Ashfield ; and I found them to be just such a people as I had been seeking after. I saw and felt the evidence that Christ, by his Spirit, had commenced his second appearance in Mother Ann. I afterwards visited them often, and had many opportunities of seeing them, and hearing their testimony, the whole object and tendency of which was, to make an end of sin, to purge out and subdue all its evil propensities, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. And I can testify, from long experience, that in obedience to Mother's testi-

mony, through my Elders and leaders, I have found an increasing victory over every propensity to evil, and have received the baptism of the "Holy Ghost and fire." (Matt. iii. 2.) And in proportion as I have gained victory over the nature of sin, so have I felt my soul rise in the resurrection power of life. And I can bear witness to all mankind, that I have proved the truth of all that I have been taught from the beginning, by those who have stood in Mother Ann's gift, and kept her testimony. And in obedience thereto, I now live in the elements of spiritual life, as sensibly as I ever felt the elements of natural life.

EZEKIEL MORRILL.

*Enfield, (N. H.) June 30th, 1826.*



### TESTIMONY OF BENJAMIN WHITCHER, SEN.

I was born in the town of Stratham, New-Hampshire. After I became of age, I was married, and soon after moved to a new settlement in the town of Canterbury, where I have resided to this day.

Altho I was not brought up under the religious discipline of any organized society; yet the precepts of strict morality were ever enjoined upon me by my parents, while under their care. And tho I often felt strong convictions of sin, even from my childhood; yet seeing but little, if any, effectual and lasting reformation in those who professed religion, I did not join myself to any religious society, till after I was twenty-six years of age, when I joined a society of the Free-will Baptists, who were, at that time, apparently engaged in a remarkable religious revival. For awhile I felt some releasement of mind; tho far from being satisfied. My conviction still increased, and my incessant prayer was, that God would open some way of deliverance; "that he would send by whom he would send," and work by means of his own choosing. My wish was to know and do his will; and in this I was not alone.

I continued with this society about six years. During the latter part of this time, I heard of a strange people,

called Shakers, who lived in the state of New-York, and who, it was said, held forth strange doctrines, and were exercised with very singular, and apparently wild operations. While I doubted of these things, my impressions, at times, were, that they were the people of God. At length I received more correct intelligence of these people, from an intimate friend, who had been to see them, and in whose information I could place unshaken confidence. On receiving a correct statement of their principles and exercises, I felt the operation of the power of God upon my whole frame, and I was determined to visit them.

In the mean time, two preachers of that society visited Canterbury and the adjacent towns, where they held meetings. They opened the different dispensations of God's grace to man, which had taken place in past ages; and testified that Christ had now made his second appearance, by his Spirit, without sin unto salvation, which was the final and last display of God's grace to a lost world. They taught us that God now required man to confess and forsake all sin, and take up a full and final cross against every evil propensity of the carnal mind, in order to find justification, and obtain acceptance with God. Their testimony was attended with that power of God which effectually searched the heart and tried the reins of every enlightened soul.

Feeling conscious of the truth of this testimony, I embraced it, together with several of my neighbors; and through obedience thereto, I have found that full salvation from sin, and that justification in my own conscience, for which I had long been praying. This was in the fall of 1782. From this time forward, I became personally acquainted with the leading characters of this society; namely, Mother Ann Lee, Elder William Lee, Elder James Whittaker and others, whose place of residence was at Watervliet, in the state of New-York. Altho Mother Ann and Elder William were never in the state of New-Hampshire; yet I visited them repeatedly, at different places; namely, at Ashfield and Shirley, in Massachusetts, and at Watervliet, near Albany; and whenever I went to see them, I spent a number of days with them, and attended their meetings. Hence I am able, from



personal acquaintance, to bear witness to their piety and morality, and the purity of their doctrines.

They not only maintained the most unblemished moral characters, by precept and example ; but their righteousness far exceeded, in every respect, the righteousness of our modern scribes and Pharisees—the popular clergy of the present day, and indeed of any religious sect within my knowledge or information, since the days of the apostles. They were meek and humble, kind and benevolent, just and upright in all their deportment. They were industrious and prudent in all their temporal concerns ; wise and temperate in all things ; and they invariably taught the same to others. During the whole time of my acquaintance with them, I never saw any appearance of intemperance in them. I never knew them to drink any ardent spirits at any time ; and if they made any use of it at all, I presume it was only on special occasions, and in a very temperate manner. Notwithstanding all the slanderous accusations to the contrary, I never saw the least imperfection in them ; nothing but what an enlightened conscience would cordially approve.

Altho they were greatly persecuted for their testimony, and suffered severe personal abuse ; yet they reviled not, nor did they seek the least revenge in any way whatever. They were often filled with godly sorrow, and poured forth their prayers and tears to God, for the protection and salvation of souls. And often were their hearts filled with joy and thanksgiving to God, for the merciful displays of his power and goodness. They were zealous, powerful and joyful in the worship of God. They were very kind and charitable to the poor and needy, of all classes ; and they always taught the same to their followers, as a necessary and abiding principle of righteousness. In short, they taught and practised every virtue included in the testimony of Jesus Christ and his apostles ; and could therefore, with the greatest propriety, say to their people, “ Be ye followers of us, even as we follow Christ.”

“ These signs shall follow them that believe : In my name shall they cast out devils ; they shall speak with new tongues.” (Mark xvi. 17.) Mother Ann and the first Elders, were endowed with all those spiritual gifts

which were so abundantly poured out upon the apostles, at the day of Pentecost; and many of the Believers actually received the same spiritual gifts through their ministrations; and these gifts have continued in the Church to this day. However incredible or unaccountable these things may appear to those who are without Christ and without God in the world, I am fully established in this truth, and can confidently testify to all men, without the least doubt or hesitation, that Christ did indeed commence his second appearance, by his Spirit, in Mother Ann, to complete the work of salvation and redemption, according to his promise;—that she was a chosen vessel, anointed and commissioned of God, to reveal to fallen man the seat of human depravity, and to preach the gospel of salvation to a lost world;—and that she and the first witnesses did actually administer the only way of life and salvation, to all who believed and obeyed her testimony.

These things are well known to me, and to hundreds of others, not merely because of the visible and miraculous operations of the power of God which wrought in us; but because, through obedience to their testimony, during a period of more than forty years, we have found that full salvation and deliverance from the law of sin and death, which we had long sought in vain among other professors of Christianity. This saving grace of God, and these gifts of the Holy Spirit, have not been exclusively confined to Mother Ann, and the first witnesses with her; but the same anointing Spirit and power have been transmitted, through them, to their faithful successors in the ministry, who have continued to bear the same testimony, and to bring forth the same fruits of holiness, righteousness and peace, to this day; and which, according to promise, will abide in the true Church of Christ forever.

BENJAMIN WHITCHER.

*Canterbury, July 23d, 1826.*

## TESTIMONY OF JOB BISHOP.

As a friend to the cause of righteousness and truth, I feel it my duty, at all times, to bear witness in its favor. Being one of the surviving few, who had particular knowledge of the commencement of that extraordinary work of God, which led to the establishment of the United Society and Church of Christ in this land ; and having been well acquainted with Mother Ann Lee, and the first witnesses of her testimony ; and considering the time of my departure at hand, I owe it as a duty to my younger brethren and sisters, and their successors in the gospel, to give a brief statement of some of the most important transactions of that period, in which I was personally concerned, and deeply interested. In doing this, I shall freely express my faith and understanding concerning the nature and substance of the work, as taught by the first founders, and still maintained in the Society.

I shall, in the first place, give a short sketch of the religious revival, which took place in New-Lebanon and the adjacent towns, in the year 1779 ; because this remarkable event in the Providence of God, evidently prepared the minds of its subjects for that extraordinary work which soon followed it. I was then in the nineteenth year of my age, and lived with my parents in New-Lebanon.

As this work was of an extraordinary nature, it excited general attention, and wrought powerfully upon my feelings. I entered fully into the spirit of the work, and received great light thereby, and was often blessed with sensible effusions of the power of God. But I soon found that all this did not give me power over sin, nor subdue the evil propensities of my corrupt nature. I fully believed that the gospel of Christ required a daily cross against sin, and that a quickening sense of the Spirit of God in my soul, was necessary for my protection against the alluring temptations of the world, and the carnal propensities of an evil nature. But this I had not gained, and could not find any way to obtain it, so as to feel it as an indwelling Spirit, abiding with me. Tho' zealous prayers and religious exercises often had the effect to

produce spiritual sensations; yet their duration seemed but momentary, and soon left me to wander in darkness, or fall a prey to temptations.

But by the light of the revival, and the predictions of the prophets, I was encouraged to look forward and hope for the accomplishment of brighter prospects,—for a further manifestation of the light of God, and the opening of the way of salvation and redemption. This I was convinced must take place, and was led to look, with great confidence, for the second coming of Christ, which I firmly believed to be near at hand. Not only myself, but many others who were associated with me in the light of the revival, were diligent in searching the scriptures, examining the signs of the times, viewing the forlorn state of religion, and earnestly praying for the Redeemer's Kingdom to be established on earth.

During this period of waiting and watching, some among us were led to believe that whenever the time should come, we should see a marvellous and strange work. Elder Joseph Meacham, in particular, who was, at that time, one of the principal leaders in the revival, was strongly impressed with this belief, and warned us to take heed, that whenever the work should commence, we might not oppose it. He believed that the work had already commenced somewhere; but where it was he knew not. He was also impressed with the belief, that whenever the time should come, the apostle's prediction would be verified; "They that have wives shall be as tho they had none;" and a virgin life would be required. Tho he sometimes spoke of his impressions, and expressed his faith on this subject, and the same belief was impressed on the minds of many others in the revival; yet he did not think it prudent to preach this doctrine openly: "for, (said he,) I see no way to protect the people in it."

This revival commenced in the spring, and was very powerful through the summer; but in the fall it died away, and left the subjects of it in great tribulation. They felt as tho the Spirit of God was withdrawn from them, and the life and power of their religion was gone. They had renounced all connexion with other denominations, together with all their creeds and ceremonies; excepting

that some few, who had been brought up in the Baptist profession, still inclined to practise the ceremony of immersion. But the greater part considered even this needless; because they believed the baptism of the Holy Spirit to be at hand, which would entirely supersede the necessity of water-baptism. But the Spirit and power of God, which had been so copiously showered down upon the people, seemed now at an end. Many of the young converts, having lost their power, appeared to be leavening into the spirit and manners of the world; and some were marrying, even against their own belief of the impropriety of such a step: for they still believed the coming of Christ to be near at hand, and that *marrying and giving in marriage* would then come to an end.

These things brought excessive tribulation of soul upon the more faithful, who still maintained their integrity, altho they had lost their power. The meetings were still continued; but they seemed lifeless. Even the former leaders and speakers sat in silence, with their heads bowed down. If any rose up and attempted to speak or pray, they found their utterance taken from them, and they were obliged to resume their seats in dumb silence. Even Elder Joseph Meacham, who had hitherto been the principal leader in these meetings, now declared before the assembly, that he was no longer able to help them: "For, (said he) I cannot help myself." Hence silent distress and tribulation prevailed through the assembly.

In this situation we continued through the winter, exhorting one another to faithfulness and patience; still maintaining our integrity, and waiting and looking, with great anxiety, for the accomplishment of those things which had been held up to our view by the prophetic spirit of the revival. It was not long before our expectations were realized, tho in a manner quite different from any thing our imaginations had formed.

In the spring of 1780, we received intelligence of a remarkable family of people, then living in the wilderness above Albany, who had a new and very singular kind of religion, and who evidently manifested that they possessed an uncommon degree of divine light and spiritual power. Many went to visit them, and returned fully satisfied that they were indeed the true witnesses of God,

and were able to teach souls the way of salvation and eternal life with more clearness than they had ever heard it taught before. The accounts given of these people now became a general topic of conversation among us. I felt a great desire to satisfy myself concerning these strangers, and their religion.

Accordingly I set out early in June, in company with many other young people, the greater part of whom had been associated with me in the light of the revival. We arrived there on Saturday evening, and tarried till Monday morning. We found them kind, free and open in conversation. I spent considerable time in conversing with Elder James Whittaker, who explained to me the doctrines which they taught, reasoned from the scriptures, and evidently manifested a deep sense of the work of God, and great knowledge of the spirit and light of the pure gospel of Christ. We attended their meetings. Their singing was melodious and heavenly; their testimony was powerful and heart-searching; and the manifestations of Divine power were too evident to be disputed. I was fully convinced that they were indeed the people I had so anxiously desired to find. The wisdom of their instructions, the purity of their doctrine, their Christ-like deportment, and the simplicity of their manners, all appeared truly apostolical. These things made a powerful impression upon all our feelings, and we fully believed the work of the latter day was there.

I returned home in a state of mind hardly to be described. A new scene was opened to my view. I saw that the work was of God, and that my salvation was depending upon it. The cross presented itself before me; and this cross was, of itself, a striking evidence in favor of the testimony. On the one hand, the prospects of the world were flattering to a youthful mind. I was in the prime of life and vigor of health; my reputation was fair; and my hopes not unpromising. On the other hand, religion had been my pursuit;—the late revival had awakened my senses, raised my hopes, and directed my faith to a greater and more glorious work;—the light of that work was now evidently breaking forth. Could I turn my back to it? Could I forego these bright prospects of salvation, and flinch at the cross? My reason was convinced—my

judgment was made up—my determination was fixed. Nothing now remained but the execution of my purpose.

I soon made them another visit, and was received with kindness. I now confessed my sins, and set out, once for all, to bear the cross of Christ, with a fixed resolution to persevere in this self-denying way. I was taught to forsake sin, to rectify every wrong I had done, and to take up a daily cross against all evil in my knowledge. By obeying their precepts and following their example, I experienced the truth of their testimony for myself. I received the power of God, and saw and felt its marvellous operations. My soul was filled with the light of divine revelation, and with power over all my evil propensities. I was blessed with heavenly visions, and felt my faith established on a sure foundation, without the smallest glimpse of doubt. Here I found what I had long been looking for—the *second appearing of Christ*. And tho the manner of his coming, and the work of the day, were different from all human calculation; yet it was attended with evidence to my soul, beyond the possibility of a doubt. The work was indeed, “as a light shining in a dark place.” It did not come with an outward display of pomp and splendor; but as an inward work, which wrought effectually upon the feelings of the soul. And the apostolic gifts, promised by Jesus Christ, were evidently displayed among us. (Mark xvi. 17.)

I now began to learn the way of God and the doctrine of Christ more fully, and to become more acquainted with Mother and the Elders; and I had great opportunities to witness the purity of life and manners which they constantly maintained. The doctrine taught by Mother Ann, and the Elders who came from England with her, was strictly conformable to the precepts and example of Jesus Christ; and it was fully confirmed by its effects upon the lives of all who received and obeyed it. Their testimony was powerful and awakening to the soul. It struck at the very root and foundation of man’s loss from God, and opened an effectual way of deliverance by obedience. They taught that mankind were lost and separated from God by their wicked works; and that the only way of recovery from that lost state, was by confessing and forsaking sin,—by taking up a daily cross against all the evil

propensities of a carnal nature, and by leading a new life. They taught us that all old things, which belonged to the nature of the first Adam, must be done away, by confessing, forsaking and repenting of them;—that all things must become new in us, by leading a new life—a life of virtue; and that we must be heavenly minded, honest, true and faithful in all things.

They also taught us that we must put away all contention and strife,—“be kindly affectioned one to another,” and maintain the spirit of peace and love. They said we had our own battle to fight against the world, flesh and devil, and we must be overcomers;—that this was an inward work; and that we need not expect that we were going to overcome the world by fighting with carnal weapons, as they fight against each other; but we must overcome the world in ourselves, by conquering all our lusts and corruptions, and subduing all our evil propensities. Christ said, “Be of good cheer; for I have overcome the world.”—“He had to overcome the nature and spirit of the world in himself, (said Mother,) and so had we; and you must do the same, or you can never go to God.”

Mother Ann was not only faithful in ministering to the people in spiritual things; but she also counselled and instructed them in their temporal economy. She counselled those who had families, especially the females, to be saving and prudent in all their temporal concerns; that nothing should be wasted or lost through carelessness or neglect;—that all our temporal blessings are from God, and are given for our support and comfort in this world, and we must use them as not abusing them: for we must give an account to God for the use we made of all these things. She also counselled the females, particularly those who had families, to be neat and clean, and to keep their houses in good order, and not to indulge themselves in filth and nastiness.

She often warned both male and female against extravagance and luxury, in whatever way it might be indulged, whether in eating and drinking, clothing or furniture; and condemned excess of every kind, as offensive to the Spirit of God. Yet she always encouraged and promoted a spirit of kindness and liberality, and testified against covetousness and avarice, and admonished us to be kind



and charitable to the poor and needy, and not let them suffer when it was in our power to relieve them.

She frequently reminded us that the shortness of this life required the most faithful improvement of our time ; that this world was not our abiding place ; that we must soon leave it, and must be answerable to God for all our works here, and would hereafter receive our reward according to our works. She therefore admonished us to be just and upright in all things ; and to love mercy, and walk humbly with God. She counselled us to be faithful in laboring to gain and keep the life of God in our souls, that we might be able, at all times, to know and do the will of God in all things.

Such were the instructions of Mother Ann, to those who embraced her testimony ; and in all these things she set a godly example, by her own conduct. Her instructions were plain, clear and forcible ; her admonitions and reproofs were delivered with the most astonishing power of God, and yet tempered with the greatest wisdom I had ever witnessed in any human being. In her manners and deportment, she displayed the most remarkable example of virtue and true godliness. In all difficult situations, and under the most trying circumstances, she discovered a presence of mind which was truly surprising ;—always firm and unmoved—never frustrated in her feelings, nor irregular in her conduct ; but in all things, it evidently appeared that her soul was endowed with the Spirit and wisdom of God. She was indeed a perfect pattern of righteousness, in every good word and work.

The wicked have indeed, tho very unjustly, charged her with drunkenness and lewdness. I have visited her many times at Watervliet, Harvard and Ashfield, during her residence in these places ; I was also with her in her visits at Hancock, New-Lebanon and Stephentown, and had great opportunities of hearing her conversation, and of seeing and observing her conduct, both public and private, in all these places. And I can say truly, that I never, at any time, discovered the least appearance of any thing of the kind in her ; nor did I ever entertain the least suspicion of any such thing. All her teaching, and the whole tenor of her life and conduct, was in direct contradiction to such charges. Her followers, tho mostly plain

country people, were by no means destitute of sense and understanding; and many of them had, previous to their acquaintance with her, received a moral and religious education, and had been brought up in abhorrence of drunkenness and debauchery. Can it then be reasonably supposed that they would have followed such a character in pursuit of religion? and that character a woman too? Every dictate of reason and common sense forbids the supposition.

I have been most intimately acquainted with our first founders, and with all the leading characters of the Society, in their day, and have been connected with the ministry from the beginning. I have been well acquainted with all the doctrines and institutions of the Society, and have had a general knowledge of all its public transactions in every place, and I think those who know me, will allow me to be a competent judge of the moral and religious principles and practices, which have prevailed in the Society from its first rise. And I have not been ignorant of the general nature of the charges which, from time to time, have been thrown out against the people, by the tongue of slander, and more especially against the Elders and leading characters of the Society.

The principles and doctrines upon which the Church of the United Society is founded, were first proclaimed to us by Ann Lee, whom we are not ashamed to acknowledge as our spiritual Mother in Christ, and the first witness of his second appearing. And these principles were planted in the hearts of her followers, by her precepts and example. During her ministration, she often predicted the gathering of the people into a united body, or church, having a common interest. She also predicted its establishment in the order of a spiritual relation, and said the time would come, when the true members of the body of Christ would find their proper lot and order, and would travel in union and harmony, under ministers, elders and leaders, standing in their respective lots and orders, in the Church of Christ.

In speaking of these things, she sometimes mentioned the views she had of the great increase of the work of God, in order, purity and righteousness, and foretold the progressive increase of the gospel, in many particulars,

which have since taken place. She asserted that this work was the commencement of Christ's Kingdom on earth; and that, agreeable to the prediction of the prophet, "Of the increase of his government and peace, there would be no end." (Isa. ix. 7.) The Church has accordingly been founded upon these principles, and was established and built up in peace, and has had a progressive increase in all these principles to this day. And tho many have fallen away, from time to time; yet the increase of the work of God among us, has never been in the least obstructed by it.

It has often been asserted by our enemies, and maintained with great confidence, that the Elders are very tyrannical in their government; that the members are held in bondage, and live in a state of abject slavery, both of body and mind. These charges, it would seem, might be known to be false at first view; as such conduct would inevitably subvert and destroy those principles of peace and harmony, which are among the fundamental doctrines of the Society. It is certain the Society could not possibly maintain its existence, if any such conduct should be allowed in it.

If any Elder or leader should usurp any authority over his brethren or sisters, beyond what the Spirit of Christ permits, and the testimony of the gospel teaches, he would thereby dishonor his calling, and forfeit his place. And if the conduct of an Elder or leader, of any family or order, should be found subversive of peace and harmony, in any manner whatever, he would inevitably be removed, and his place supplied with another. Because no one is considered as fit to teach or lead, in a society or institution, where the spirit of peace and harmony is a most essential requirement, unless his principles and practice are strictly conformable thereto. Not even a single family in the Society could be kept together, without a spirit of mutual union and harmony. How then could a whole society, constituted as ours is, and built up with the united talents and interest of the whole, be supported and maintained without union and harmony?

It is a truth that, if a single individual member should renounce the principles of peace and harmony, or any other known and established principles of this Society, he

must, of course, renounce the Society which is founded on those principles. Strife and contention, tyranny and oppression, bondage and slavery, lewdness and intemperance, dishonesty and fraud, hypocrisy and deceit, are all in direct opposition to the fundamental principles of the Society. And no person, let his lot or calling in the Society be what it may, can long continue his union and connexion therewith, while he continues in the practice of any of these things.

But it has often happened that the Elders and leaders, and even the founders of this Society, have been indiscriminately charged with all these crimes, whilst their accusers were themselves guilty of the very crimes of which they accused the Elders. The falsehood and folly of such accusations, must appear too glaring to escape the notice of any man of sense and observation. Can any rational person believe, that an institution to prevent drunkenness, could be established and maintained by drunkards, and even flourish and prosper under their protection? It must readily be acknowledged, that no institution to prevent any of the above mentioned crimes, could be successfully established and prosper under the protection of persons who were themselves guilty of those very crimes. Much less could an institution or Society to prevent all such crimes, be established and prosper, for many years, under the care and government of leaders, who were themselves guilty of living in the very crimes and abominations which it was the object of the institution to prevent. It would be impossible for them either to conceal their own crimes, or to preserve the morals of the Society, for any length of time.

We are told that there have been instances in which some who have been Elders or leaders, have gone off; and therefore there can be no certainty that all will not finally do so, and the whole Society fail and come to an end. But it ought to be remembered, that the fall of Judas did not overthrow the foundation of the Church which Christ planted in that day. Judas was one of the twelve apostles, chosen and appointed by the Lord Jesus himself; and it is well known what was the cause of his fall; and similar causes will produce similar effects in this day. Those who renounce and reject that spirit of truth

and righteousness, which is the support and protection of the soul, and the foundation of the Church, are exposed to the insinuations and temptations of the spirit of wickedness, and liable to fall under the power of evil. But the fall of any one or more from any lot or station, is no discouragement to a faithful soul; because it is well known that those who fall, do fall through unfaithfulness. And tho' some may profess the faith of the gospel, without possessing its real substance, and may hang on for a long time, like dry branches upon a green tree; yet they will not endure; for none but the truly faithful will endure to the end.

Those who are entrusted with the greatest care, whether in things spiritual or temporal, are under the greatest responsibility to be faithful in the discharge of their duty. And the Elders and leaders, of whatever class or order, are required to be examples of faithfulness in all things, to all who are under their care. And no one is considered as capable of standing in the place of an Elder or leader, unless he is able to teach and lead by example, as well as by precept. Hence uprightness of conduct in all things, is essentially necessary in a leader. The virtues of honesty and sincerity, patience and humility, meekness and charity, are essential qualifications in an Elder or leader of this Society. And those who do not possess these virtues themselves, are not considered as qualified to teach them to others. Hence true godliness is invariably preferred before great talents: for the most effectual teacher is he who teaches by example, as well as by precept. A real, faithful Elder, is a faithful servant to those over whom he is placed; and such a one will not fail to gain the love and respect of every faithful soul under his care. Hence the greatest Elders are not only the greatest servants, but are the most highly esteemed by the faithful, for their works' sake.

I have had a fair opportunity to observe the progress of the Society, from its first establishment; and I have seen, with great satisfaction, that the principles which were first taught by Mother Ann, have been faithfully kept and maintained from the beginning. And tho' I have seen many fall away, and "turn again to the beggarly elements," and pursue those very practices which the

tongue of slander has charged against these people ; yet the Society has never been robbed of a single virtue thereby. Those who have kept their rectitude and improved their talents, have stood faithful, and found an increase in every virtue. But the slothful and unfaithful have "buried their talents in the earth," and gained nothing. They have lost their day, by turning to pursue the vain pleasures of this world. But the truth prevails, and the foundation of the Church remains unshaken ; the revelation of God, on which it is built, is sure and stedfast, and never can fail.

JOB BISHOP.

*Canterbury, N. H. August 3d, 1826.*



## ERRATUM.

In page 8, third line from the top, for *could know*, read *could not know*.

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## APPENDIX.

THE two following Testimonies from Enfield, in Connecticut, were received too late to be inserted in the body of this work. They are from respectable characters, well known in that part of the state, who have long held responsible offices, and borne a conspicuous part in the Society there; and being the only ones received from that Society, it was deemed advisable to publish them in an appendix.

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### TESTIMONY OF NATHAN TIFFANY.

I WAS born in the town of Somers, in Connecticut, July 12th, 1765. My parents were members of the Baptist church; they supported a good moral character, were strict in their religious principles, and brought up their family in the same way. In the year 1777, there was a great religious awakening among the people of that town and vicinity, which was attended with solemn warnings against sin, and with many other spiritual gifts, among which were the gifts of prophecy concerning the near approach of the second coming of Christ, and the Day of Judgment, which would usher in *the latter day of glory*. In this revival I became greatly convicted of sin, and was constrained to pray and cry to God for deliverance from it. By yielding obedience to the convictions of my conscience, I found a good degree of comfort and satisfaction. But in about two months I lost the power of conviction, and became more forward and eager in pursuit of the vanities of the world than I was before.

In the year 1780, we had many vague reports concerning a people above Albany, who had come from England with a strange kind of religion. It was said their leader was a witch; that they were enemies to our country; that their religion was witchcraft, and was dreadful and terri-



ble beyond expression. Such awful reports among a people of religious principles, regular morals, and steady habits, could not but excite great prejudice against those strangers, especially while these reports remained uncontradicted. I confess they had a powerful influence upon my feelings, and strongly prejudiced my mind against them.

In the latter part of the same year, Joseph Meacham senior, who was our Baptist preacher, went up to Albany to visit his son Joseph, who was then in prison with those strangers. He there had an opportunity to hear their testimony, and came home apparently awakened by it, and spoke with more life and power than he had done before. He appeared to have something in him which he did not possess before.

In the beginning of the year 1781, Joseph Meacham junior, who had been a Baptist Elder in New-Lebanon, came to my father's in Somers, in company with Samuel Fitch, and opened the testimony of those strange foreigners. My parents received faith in this testimony; but my mind and feelings were still opposed, and I was determined to have nothing to do with it. Some time in March following, they visited Somers again, and came to my father's, and opened their testimony with great clearness. At this time I began to be wrought upon by conviction. I saw that in my then present situation, I was a stranger to God; and that unless I could find my union and relation to him, I must certainly be damned. My mind was so troubled that I could find no rest.

Joseph Meacham and Samuel Fitch returned home; and shortly after this, I set out for New-Lebanon, to visit the believers. Here my mind was greatly struck with the operations of the power of God. From thence I went on to Watervliet, where I saw Mother Ann Lee and her little family, of whom I had heard so many strange reports. But instead of finding such an awful, wicked people, as common fame had represented them, I found a people whose testimony was sharp and powerful against all sin of every name and nature, and attended with such mighty power of God, that I was convinced, beyond a doubt, that Christ had come the second time, "without sin unto salvation." I also saw many and various operations of the

• Holy Spirit among these people, and heard them speak with new tongues, which greatly increased my faith in their testimony. I then confessed my sins, and set out with a determination to forsake them forever. I tarried with them a week or ten days, and saw nothing in the deportment of Mother Ann nor the Elders, but what was strictly according to godliness; and I returned home greatly strengthened in my faith.

I visited them many times afterwards, in various places. Besides seeing them three times at Enfield, near to where I lived, I visited them repeatedly at Watervliet, Ashfield and Harvard. In all these places I heard them deliver many solemn exhortations to the people, showing the necessity of confessing and forsaking all sin. Their testimony was truly the sound of the gospel trumpet to the people: "Come out from the world, and be ye separate; touch no unclean thing; deny yourselves, take up your crosses and follow Christ, or you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. If you have defrauded any one, or stolen any thing, go and make restitution. Be honest and just in all your dealings with mankind; and learn the way of righteousness, by doing right in all things."

Their testimony was also plain, pointed, and powerful against every part of a fallen nature; against "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;" against all drunkenness and intemperance of every kind; against all profane language, all contention and strife, all covetousness and prodigality, all hypocrisy and deceit. Indeed there was no evil that enters the heart of man, but what was utterly condemned by their testimony; nor any real good but what they were careful to nourish and cultivate. In obedience to their testimony, I have found justification; and have been preserved from "the evils that are in the world through lust," and have thereby been enabled to become a child of God, and to follow Christ in the regeneration, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present evil world. And I have been blessed with many good and precious gifts of God, and have found that peace and comfort that the world can neither give nor take away.

As to the scandalous reports that have been spread abroad in the world concerning the moral characters of

Mother Ann and the Elders, I do certainly know, and can testify and declare them to be absolutely false, and without the least foundation in truth. I have been well acquainted with them, and do know that they were pure, chaste and temperate in their lives; harmless and innocent in their conversation; honest and just in all their dealings; kind and charitable to their fellow creatures, strictly obeying the precepts and following the example of Jesus Christ. When they were reviled, they reviled not again; but even when persecuted by their enemies, they would pray for them, saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

I am now advanced in years, and have probably but a few days more to spend in this world; I therefore leave this testimony as my last and solemn declaration to mankind, hoping it may be a benefit to some: for I do earnestly desire the welfare of the children of men.

After Mother Ann's decease, Elder James was evidently called of God to be her successor in the ministry. I had an opportunity of seeing him many times, and of hearing many good and precious exhortations from him. He always maintained a powerful testimony against all evil; and often warned the people, in a very solemn manner, to be faithful: "For (said he) the gospel is committed to your trust; and wo be to you, if you do not keep it; and as you treat this gospel, so God will treat you." His labor seemed to be, to encourage and strengthen the believers in their most holy faith.

NATHAN TIFFANY.

*Enfield, June 4th, 1827.*



### TESTIMONY OF ELIPHALET COMSTOCK.

MONTVILLE, in Connecticut, was the place of my nativity. I was born February 3d, 1748. My parents belonged to the Calvinistic church, and were very strict in their moral and religious principles; and I was brought up in the same strictness of principle. About the age of fourteen, I began to be greatly concerned for the salvation of my soul. Under this concern of mind, I prayed to God

as well as I knew how. After much struggle and labor of mind, I began to feel some releasement; but the conviction I felt did not leave me. Those who professed to understand religion at that time, pronounced me a christian; but their opinion had no weight at all upon my mind.

In the year 1770, I moved up into Somers, was married and had a family; but still felt an increase of conviction until the year 1777. Some time in the month of November of the same year, being still exercised in mind, I felt such a strong sensation of the presence of Christ, that I verily thought I saw his arms extended towards me. I then determined to live a more sober and godly life than I had done.

Shortly after this, I had a remarkable sense of the religious duties which God requires of man, in order that he may obtain those spiritual blessings which are necessary for his salvation. This sense was brought to my view by a similitude, showing the manner in which a farmer raises his bread. He fences his fields, ploughs his ground and sows his seed; but he cannot make it grow. He may dress and cultivate his fields, and subdue the weeds; but without the blessing of Heaven upon his labors, he can have no bread; and certainly he could not expect any without these labors, but would be exposed to starve of course. By this I plainly saw that we must become "laborers together with God," in order to partake of his divine blessing, and be supplied with the bread of life, which is essential to the support and nourishment of the soul in the way of righteousness.

The question then arose in my mind, *What must I do to be saved?* The answer was, *Search the scriptures.* Accordingly I searched the scriptures; and there I found that Christ taught his disciples to deny themselves, take up their crosses and follow him; that is, to walk in his very footsteps, by following his example of holiness and righteousness, (for so I understood it,) or they could not be his disciples.

While I was in this labor of mind, a remarkable revival of religion took place among us, attended with great and wonderful operations of Divine power, with prophetic warnings against all sin, to so great a degree that many

times the whole assembly would shake and tremble. Many prophecies were delivered concerning the second coming of Christ, which were expected actually to take place. Many of us felt that Christ's appearing would be like a mighty rushing wind, breaking down all before it. We boldly testified that there would be no wars nor fightings in Christ's Kingdom: for he plainly testified that his kingdom should be a kingdom of righteousness and peace.

After laboring nearly two years for an increase, and finding none, I began to feel discouraged, fearing that I never should obtain that which I had set out for. I had expected to obtain a certainty; but I had gained nothing that satisfied my soul. And as we found no increase, I could take no comfort in our meetings. The state of my mind was such that words could not satisfy it—I wanted the substance. We, however, still continued our meetings, till we heard the present testimony of the gospel, wherein we found that Christ had, in very deed, commenced his second appearance. A goodly number from our little society believed and obeyed the testimony; but I hesitated.

In the latter part of the year 1780, we received intelligence of a strange people who had come from England, and lived above Albany, and who were in possession of a strange religion; and we were informed that they were imprisoned at Albany, together with a number from New-Lebanon, who had embraced their religion. In the beginning of 1781, Joseph Meacham, who had been in prison with them, came to Enfield, in company with Samuel Fitch. I came with Lot Pease, from Somers to Enfield, to see them; and we invited them to Somers. They came and tarried with us over night, and opened their testimony, which was received in faith by a number of my neighbors; but I was like the unbelieving Thomas, and could not be satisfied with words.

A few days after their departure, I was informed that some of those who had believed, had received the gifts of the primitive apostolic church; and I soon went to see them. There I saw young men and young women under the operations of Divine Power, speaking with new tongues. Here was something more than words; and my mind was greatly struck with these wonderful gifts and

operations, which were evidently beyond the power and wisdom of man. My soul was then brought into trouble, and I felt a great desire to have some lot and part with them. My trouble was so great that I could neither eat, sleep, nor work. I then determined to take up my cross with them, through time and eternity.

Some time in the month of March following, Joseph Meacham and Samuel Fitch came again to Somers, to visit us. I then confessed my sins, and set out to forsake them forever. Having done this, I felt my condemnation taken away, and my soul felt completely happy. In June following, Mother Ann Lee, Elder William Lee, Elder James Whittaker, Mary Partington and others, came to Enfield. I had not heard of their arrival; but on going out into the field to work, I felt such a powerful impression on my mind that I could not work. I therefore laid down my axe and went to David Meacham's, and there I found Mother and the Elders. I sat down and heard them, as they were conversing with the people about heavenly things.

After awhile they all rose up, and placed themselves and began to sing; and such singing I never heard before; they all appeared to be full of the Holy Ghost. My tongue cannot express the heavenly comfort I felt in their singing. After singing, they kneeled down, and their united prayers seemed to ascend to heaven like sweet smelling incense; and their cries to God were loud and powerful. They did not multiply words; but it seemed to me as tho I had never heard any body pray before. I then believed that Christ had made his second appearance in Mother Ann, as much as I ever believed there was a God, or that the sun ever shone upon the earth. Such evident manifestations of the spirit of Christ, filled my soul with such powerful sensations of his presence, that I was more sensibly confirmed in the reality of his first appearance than I ever had been before. And I have never had the least doubt of Mother Ann's purity, nor of the second appearance of Christ in her, from that day to this.

I visited Mother and the Elders many times, and in various places where they had their stations, during their ministration in this country; and I generally tarried with

them a week at a time. Indeed I never was absent from them more than three months at a time, from the first time I saw them till they left this world. And whenever I visited them, I felt an increase of faith and confidence in them; and my soul was more awakened to a sense and feeling of the purity of the gospel of Christ which they possessed. In all the places where I visited them, I saw many wonderful displays of Divine Power, and heard them deliver many solemn warnings and exhortations to the people. Mother Ann's testimony was sharp and powerful against all sin and uncleanness. "No soul (said she) can stand in judgment with one known sin covered in them." She taught us to confess and forsake all sin; to deny ourselves, and take up our crosses and follow Christ in the regeneration, by faithfully walking in his footsteps, according to his precepts and example.

She also taught and instructed us in our temporal economy, and said, "You must be prudent and saving of the good things of the creation, with which God hath blessed you; for you cannot make one kernel of corn grow, tho you should suffer for the want of it; therefore you ought not to waste the least thing. Be neat and clean; for no unclean thing can enter Heaven. Put your hands to work, and your hearts to God." She often spoke to those who were parents, concerning their children, and said, "You have been instrumental in bringing your children into the world; therefore it is your duty to bring them up in the fear of God." I have heard her speak of these things repeatedly, which greatly increased my faith and confidence in her.

In December 1781, while I was at Harvard, Mother and the Elders went to visit the believers at Petersham. One evening, during their absence, there were some singular and very strange operations of the power of God in the meeting at Harvard, which seemed to indicate war. So strange and mysterious was the appearance, that we could not tell what to make of it. The next morning they returned; and Mother came singing into the house, and sounded the gospel trumpet, which instantly awakened the children of Zion, and filled the whole assembly with joy and gladness. Having seated herself, she began to relate the sufferings she had passed through at Petersham.

She said, as they were about retiring to rest, late in the evening, at David Hammond's, a number of ruffians broke into the house, and rushed into the room where she was, seized her by her feet and dragged her out of the house and through the snow to a sleigh, and threw her into the sleigh, as tho she had been the dead carcass of a swine. They then drove off to the distance of nearly three miles, and stopped at Peckham's tavern, near the meeting-house in Petersham.

In their violence, they tore her clothes and abused her in a very shameful manner. She said it seemed to her as tho she should die in their hands; and she considered it as the greatest abuse she had ever met with. She showed us the bruises she had received on her arms, which were black and blue; and she said her body was very much bruised. But she said, that while she was at the tavern, Peckham's wife showed her kindness, and seemed to mention it with feelings of gratitude. As she was relating her sufferings and the abusive conduct of her persecutors, "Lord of mercy!" said I to myself, "how depraved mankind are! Such conduct appears to me like the devil in the flesh; and I think they might find it out by their own experience." We then understood the meaning of those strange operations in the meeting at Harvard.

In March 1782, while Mother and the Elders were at David Meacham's, in Enfield, a mob of about two hundred men, with their leaders, came and paraded themselves before the house, and commanded Mother and the Elders to depart within one hour, or they would carry them away by force. Mother was not terrified with their threats; but chose rather to obey the counsel of the Lord Jesus, that when she was persecuted in one city, to flee to another. She went out before the mob, and sounded the gospel trumpet with singing. Her voice was very powerful, and her singing truly melodious. Some who came in that company, received faith from her which continued with them ever after.

Mother and the Elders then set out for Enfield ferry, attended by many believers, while the mob followed on after them. They crossed the river into Westfield, where they stopped and refreshed themselves. They were con-



tinually thronged and surrounded with people; some as enemies, and others merely as spectators. Mother and those with her, appeared calm and composed through the whole scene. From the time they left David Meacham's till they departed from the tavern in Westfield, I was with them, and can bear witness that they manifested nothing but love and good will to any soul; and when they were reviled, they reviled not again.

In the year 1787, Elder James Whittaker was sick at Enfield, and deceased July 20th. I had an opportunity of being with him in his sickness for six months, and of witnessing in him the same heavenly purity and lamb-like innocence which I first discovered in Mother Ann; and I always felt an increase of the same in him, from my first acquaintance with him till he left this world. I do not believe that any candid, rational person on earth, could have been with him more than one fortnight, without being convinced that God was in him of a truth. Some of his last words to me were these: "This is the gospel, and the only way of salvation; and do you hold it fast." I replied, *I will*. And I have been obedient to my promise. "I have fought the good fight; I have kept the faith;" that faith which has ever been as an anchor to my soul, "both sure and stedfast." O why should I not be thankful for so great a salvation, which is so clearly manifested in this our day, and of which I have shared such a blessed portion!

As to the moral characters of Mother and the Elders, I do certainly know that all the slanderous reports concerning them are false; and I feel under no necessity of going to any of their enemies to obtain information about them: for I have been intimately acquainted with them, and do know of a certainty that they were moral in their characters, pure in their lives, and honest and upright in all their conduct.

I am now in the eightieth year of my age; and as my stay in this earthly tabernacle must necessarily be short, I leave the foregoing as my last testimony to my fellow mortals, hoping it may be a benefit to some; for I am a well-wisher to all mankind.

ELIPHALET COMSTOCK.

Enfield, June 4th, 1827.









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Mace, Aurelia Gay, 1835-1910.

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