

Testimony for the Church
No. 5

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Answer to Prayer

The Lord has visited me again in great mercy. I have been greatly afflicted for a few months past. Disease has pressed me heavily. For years I have been afflicted with dropsy and disease of the heart. It has had a tendency to depress my spirits, and destroy my faith and courage. The message to the Laodiceans has not accomplished that zealous repentance with God's people I expected to see, and my perplexity of mind has been great. Disease seemed to make continual progress upon me, and I thought I must lie down in the grave. I had no desire to live, therefore could not take hold of faith and pray for my recovery. Often when I retired to rest at night, I realized that I was in danger of losing my breath before morning. In this state I fainted at midnight. Brn. Andrews and Loughborough were sent for, and earnest petitions were offered to God in my behalf. The depression and heavy weight were lifted from my aching heart, and I was taken off in vision, and I saw these things which I present before you. p. 32, Para. 1, [50T].

I saw that Satan had been trying to drive me to discouragement and despair, to make me desire death rather than life. I was shown that it was not God's will that I should now cease from the work, and lie down in the grave; for then the enemies of our faith would triumph, and the heart of God's children would be made sad. I saw that I should often suffer anguish of spirit; that I should suffer much; yet I had the promise that those around me would encourage and help me, that my courage and strength might not fail while so fiercely buffeted by the Devil. p. 32, Para. 2, [50T].

I saw that the testimony to the Laodiceans applied to God's people at the present time, and the reason it has not accomplished a greater work is because of the hardness of their hearts. But God has given the message time to do its work. The heart must be purified from sins which have so long shut Jesus out. This fearful message will do its work. When it was first presented it led to close examination of heart. Sins were confessed, and the people of God were stirred everywhere. Nearly all believed that this message would end in the loud cry of the third angel. But as they failed to see the powerful work accomplished in a short time, many lost the effect of the message. I saw that this message would not accomplish its work in a few short months. I was designed to arouse the people of God, to discover to them their backslidings, and to lead to zealous repentance, that they might be favored with the presence of Jesus, and be fitted for the loud cry of the third angel. As this message affected the heart, it led to deep humility before God. Angels were sent in every direction to prepare unbelieving hearts for the truth. The cause of God began to rise, and his people were acquainted with their position. If the counsel of the true Witness had been fully heeded, God would have wrought for his people in greater power. p. 32, Para. 3, [50T].

The efforts made since the message has been given, have been blessed of God, and many souls have been brought from error and darkness to rejoice in the truth. I saw that God would prove his people. Patiently Jesus bears with them, and does not spue them out of his mouth in a moment. Said the angel, "God is weighing his people." If the message had been of as short duration as many of us supposed, there should have been no time for God's people to develop character. Many moved from feeling, not from principle and faith, and this solemn, fearful message stirred them. It wrought upon their feelings, excited their fears, but did not accomplish the work God designed that it should. God reads the heart. Lest his people should be deceived in regard to themselves, he gives them time for the excitement to wear off, and he proves them to see if they will obey the counsel of the true Witness. p. 33, Para. 1, [50T].

God Tests His People. p. 34, Para. 1, [50T].

God leads his people on step by step. He brings them up to different points which are calculated to manifest what is in the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the

next. At every advanced point the heart is tested, and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to the straight work of God, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, or be spued out of the mouth of the Lord. Said the angel, "God will bring his work closer and closer to test them, and prove every one of his people." Some are willing to receive one point, but when God brings them to another testing point, they shrink from it and stand back, because they find it strikes directly at some cherished idol. Here they have opportunity to see what is in their hearts that shuts out Jesus. Individuals are tested and proved a length of time see if they will sacrifice their idols, and heed the counsel of the true Witness. If they will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have their charge,--"They are joined to their idols, let them alone,"--and they pass on to their work, leaving them with their evil traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the true Witness, and they will be fitted for translation by the latter rain. p. 34, Para. 2, [50T].

God proves his people in this world. This is the fitting up place to appear in his presence. Here in this world, in these last days, individuals will show what power affects their hearts, and controls their actions. If it is the power of divine truth, it will lead to good works. It will elevate the receiver, and make him noble-hearted and generous, like his divine Lord. But if the evil angels control the heart, it will be seen in various ways. The fruit will be selfishness, covetousness, pride and evil passions. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Professors of religion are not willing to closely examine their own selves to see whether they are in the faith, and it is a fearful fact that many are leaning on a false hope. Some lean upon an old experience; but when brought down to this heart-searching time, when all would have a daily experience, they have nothing to relate. They seem to think a profession of the truth will save them. When those sins which God hates are subdued, Jesus will come in and sup with you, and you with him. You will then draw divine strength from Jesus, and you will grow up in him, and be able with holy triumph to say, Blessed be God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. It would be more pleasing to the Lord if

lukewarm professors of religion never named his name. They are a continual weight to those who would be faithful followers of Jesus. They are a stumbling-block to unbelievers, and evil angels exult over them, and taunt the angels of God with their crooked course. Such are a curse to the cause at home and abroad. They draw nigh to God with their lips, while their heart is far from him. p. 34, Para. 3, [50T].

I was shown that the people of God should not imitate the fashions of the world. Some have done this, and are fast losing their peculiar, holy character, which should distinguish them as God's people. I was pointed back to God's ancient people, and then was led to compare their dress and apparel with the mode of dress in these last days. What a difference! What a change! Then the women were not so bold as now. When they went in public they covered their face with a vail. In these last days fashions are shameful and immodest. They are noticed in prophecy. They were first brought in by a class over whom Satan has entire control, who, "being past feeling (without any conviction of the Spirit of God), have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." If God's professed people had not departed greatly from him, there would now be a marked difference between their dress and that of the world. The small bonnets, exposing the face and head, show a lack of modesty. The hoops are a shame. The inhabitants of earth are growing more and more corrupt, and the line of distinction must be more plain between them and the Israel of God, or the curse which falls upon worldlings will fall on God's professed people. p. 35, Para. 1, [50T].

I was directed to the following scriptures. Said the angel, "They are to instruct God's people." 1 Tim. ii, 9, 10. "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." 1 Peter iii, 3-5. "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also who trusted in God, adorned themselves. p. 36, Para. 1, [50T].

Young and old, God is now testing you. You are deciding your own eternal destiny. Your pride, your love to follow the fashions of the world, your vain and empty conversation, your selfishness, are all put in the scale, and the weight of evil is fearfully against you. You are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. While evil is increasing and taking deep root, it is choking the good seed which has been sown in the heart, and soon the word will be spoken to the angels of God concerning you, as was given concerning Eli's house, that your sins shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever. Many, I saw, were flattering themselves that they were good Christians, who have not a single ray of light from Jesus. They know not what it is to be renewed by the grace of God. They have no living experience for themselves in the things of God. And I saw that the Lord was whetting his sword in heaven to cut them down. Oh! that every lukewarm professor could realize the clean work that God is about to make among his professed people. Dear friends, do not deceive yourselves concerning your condition. You cannot deceive God. Says the true Witness, "I know thy works." The third angel is leading up a people, step by step, higher and higher. At every step they will be tested. p. 36, Para. 2, [50T].

Houses of Worship. p. 37, Para. 1, [50T].

I saw that many feel at liberty to use the means freely that is lent them of God, for their own convenience in fitting up pleasant homes here; but when they build a house in which to worship the great God, who inhabiteth eternity, they cannot afford to let the Lord have the use of the means he has lent them. Each is not striving to excel the other in showing his gratitude to God for the truth, by doing all he can to prepare a suitable place of worship; but some are trying to do just as little as possible; and they feel that their means is as good as lost which they spend in preparing a place for the Most High to visit them. Such an offering is lame, and not acceptable to God. I saw that it would be much more pleasing to God if his people would show as much wisdom in preparing a house for him, as they do in their own dwellings. p. 37, Para. 2, [50T].

The sacrifices and offerings of the children of Israel were commanded to be without blemish or spot, the best of the flock, and every one of the children of Israel shared in that work. The work before us will be extensive. If you

build a house for God, do not offend and limit him in casting in your lame offerings. Put the very best offering into a house built for God. Let it be the very best you have, and show an interest to have it convenient and comfortable. Some think time is so short it is no matter. Then carry out the same in your dwellings, and in all your worldly arrangements. p. 37, Para. 3, [50T].

I saw that God could carry on his work without any of man's help; but this is not his plan. The present world is designed as a scene of probation for man. He is here to form a character which will pass with him into the eternal world. Good and evil are placed before him, and his future state depends upon the choice he makes. Christ came to change the current of his thoughts and affections. His heart must be cut off from his earthly treasure, and placed upon the heavenly. By his self-denial, God can be glorified. The great sacrifice has been made for man, and now man will be tested and proved to see if he will follow the example of Jesus, and make a sacrifice for his fellow-man. Satan and his angels are combined against the people of God; but Jesus is seeking to purify them unto himself. He requires them to advance his work. God has deposited enough in this world among his people to carry forward his work, without embarrassment, and it is his plan that the means which he has entrusted to his people be used judiciously. Sell that ye have and give alms, is a part of God's sacred word. The servants of God must arise, cry aloud, and spare not, "Show my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." The work of God is to be more extensive, and if his people follow his counsel, there will not be much means in their possession to be consumed in the final conflagration. All will have laid up their treasure where moth and rust cannot corrupt, and the heart will not have a cord to bind it to earth. p. 37, Para. 4, [50T].

Parables. p. 38, Para. 1, [50T].

I was then shown that the parable of the talents has not been fully understood. This lesson of importance was given to the disciples for the benefit of Christians living in the last days. And these talents do not represent merely the ability to preach and instruct from the word of God. The parable applies to the temporal means which God has entrusted to his people. Those to whom the five and two talents were given, traded and doubled that which was

committed to their trust. God requires of those who have their possessions here to put their money out to usury for him, to put it into the cause to spread the truth. And if the truth lives in the heart of the receiver, he also will aid with his substance in sending the truth to others, and through his efforts, his influence, and his means, other souls embrace the truth, and begin also to work for God. I saw that some of God's professed people are like the man who hid his talent in the earth. They keep their possessions and means from doing good to God's cause. They claim that it is their own, and that they have a right to do what they please with their own; and souls are not saved by any judicious effort they make with their Lord's money. As judgment passes upon the house of God, the angels keep a faithful record of every man's work, their sentence is recorded by their name, and the angel is commissioned to spare them not, but to cut them down at the time of slaughter. And that which was committed to their trust is taken from them. Their earthly treasure is then swept away, and they have lost all. And the crowns they might have worn, had they been faithful, are put upon the heads of those saved by the faithful servants whose means were constantly in use for God. And every one they have been the means of saving, adds stars to their crowns in glory, and increases their eternal reward. p. 38, Para. 2, [50T].

I was also shown that the parable of the unjust steward was to teach us a lesson. "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." If we use our means to God's glory here, we lay up in Heaven a treasure, and when earthly possessions are all gone here, the faithful steward has Jesus and angels for his friends, to receive him home to everlasting habitations. p. 39, Para. 1, [50T].

"He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much." He that is faithful in his earthly possessions, which is least, to make a judicious use of what God has lent him here, will be true to his profession. "He that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much." He that will withhold from God that which he has lent him, will be unfaithful in the things of God in every respect. "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" If we prove unfaithful in the management of what God lends us here, he will never give us the immortal inheritance. "And

if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" Jesus has purchased for us redemption. It is ours; but we are placed here on probation to see if we will prove worthy of eternal life. God proves us by entrusting us with earthly possessions. If we are faithful to freely impart of what he has lent us, to advance his cause. God can entrust to us the immortal inheritance. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "If ye love the world, the love of the Father is not in you." p. 39, Para. 2, [50T].

I saw that God was displeased with the slack, loose manner in which many of his professed people conduct their worldly business. They seem to lose all sense of the fact that the property they are using belongs to God, and they must render to him an account of their stewardship. Some leave their worldly business in perfect confusion. Satan has his eye on it all, and he strikes at a favorable opportunity, and by his management takes much means out of the ranks of Sabbath-keepers. And this means goes into his ranks. Some who are aged are unwilling to make any settlement of their worldly business, and in an unexpected moment they sicken and die. Their children who have no interest in the truth, take the property. Satan has managed it as it has suited him. "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" I saw the awful fact that Satan and his evil angels have had more to do with the management of the property of God's professed people, than the Lord has. Stewards of the last days are unwise. They suffer Satan to control their business matters, and get into his ranks what belongs to, and should be in, the cause of God. God takes notice of you, unfaithful stewards; he will call you to account. I saw that the stewards of God can by faithful, judicious management, keep their business in this world square, exact, and straight. And if they should be suddenly taken away, it is their privilege and duty, especially for the aged, feeble, and those who have no children, to have their means where it can be used in the cause of God. But I saw that Satan and his angels exult over their success in this matter. And those who should be wise heirs of salvation almost willingly let their Lord's money slip out of their hands into the enemy's ranks. In this way they strengthen Satan's kingdom, and seem to feel very easy about it! p. 40, Para. 1, [50T].

Surety, Oath-Taking, etc. p. 41, Para. 1, [50T].

I saw that God was displeased with his people for being surety for unbelievers. I was directed to these texts. Prov. xxii, 26. "Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are surety for debts." Prov. xi, 15. "He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretyship is sure." Unfaithful stewards! They pledge that which belongs to another--their heavenly Father--and Satan stands ready to aid his children to wrench it out of their hands. p. 41, Para. 2, [50T].

I saw that Sabbath-keepers should not be in partnership with unbelievers. God's people trust too much to the words of strangers, ask their advice and counsel, when they should not. The enemy makes them his agents, and works through them to perplex and take from God's people. p. 41, Para. 3, [50T].

I was shown that some have no tact at wise management of worldly matters. They lack the qualifications, and Satan takes advantage of them. When this is the case, such should not remain in ignorance of their lack. They should be humble enough to counsel with their brethren, whose judgment they can have confidence in, before they carry out plans. I was directed to this text, "Bear ye one another's burdens." Some are not humble enough to let those who have judgment, calculate for them, until they have followed their own plans, and have involved themselves in difficulties. Then they see the necessity of having the counsel and judgment of their brethren; but how much heavier the burden then, than at the first. Brethren should not go to law, if it can be possibly avoided; for they give the enemy great advantage to entangle and perplex them. It would be better to make a settlement at some loss. p. 41, Para. 4, [50T].

I saw that some of God's children have made a mistake in regard to oath-taking, and Satan has taken advantage of this to oppress them, and take from them their Lord's money. I saw that the words of our Lord, "Swear not at all," do not touch the judicial oath. "Let your communication be yea, yea; and nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil." This refers to common conversation. Some exaggerate in their language. Some swear by their own life. Others swear by their head. As sure as

they live--as sure as they have a head--some take Heaven and earth to witness that such things are so. Some hope that God will strike them out of existence if what they are saying is not true. It is this kind of common swearing that Jesus warns his disciples against. p. 42, Para. 1, [50T].

I was shown that we have men placed over us for rulers, and laws to govern people. Were it not for these laws, the world would be in a worse condition than it is now. Some of these laws are good, and some bad. The bad have been increasing, and we are yet to be brought into straight places. But God will sustain his people in being firm, and living up to the principles of his word. Where the laws of men conflict with God's word and law, we are to obey the word and law of God, whatever the consequences may be. The laws of our land requiring us to deliver a slave to his master, we are not to obey, and we must abide the consequences of the violation of this law. The slave is not the property of any man. God is his rightful Master, and man has no right to take God's workmanship into his hands, and claim him as his own. p. 42, Para. 2, [50T].

I saw that the Lord yet has something to do with the laws of the land. While Jesus is in the sanctuary, God's restraining Spirit is felt by rulers and people. But Satan controls to a great extent the great mass in the world, and were it not for the laws of the land, we should experience great suffering. It was shown me that it was no violation of God's word, when it is actually necessary, for his children, when called upon to testify in a lawful manner, to solemnly take God to witness that what they say is the truth, and nothing but the truth. p. 43, Para. 1, [50T].

Man is so corrupt that laws are made to throw the responsibility upon his own head. some men do not fear to lie to their fellow-man; but they have been taught, and the restraining Spirit of God has impressed them, that it is fearful thing to lie to God. The case of Ananias and Sapphira his wife, is given for an example. The matter is carried from man to God, so that if he bears false witness, it is not to man, but to the great God. He reads the heart and knows the exact truth in every case. Our laws make it a higher crime to take a false oath. God has often visited the one who has taken the false oath, and even while the oath was on his lips, the destroying angel has cut him down. This was to prove a terror to evil-doers. p. 43, Para. 2, [50T].

And I saw if there was any one on earth who could consistently testify under oath, it is the Christian. He lives in the light of God's countenance. He grows strong in his strength. And when matters of importance must be decided by law, there is no one who can so well appeal to God as the Christian. I was bid by the angel to notice that God sware by himself. Gen. xxii, 16; Heb. vi, 13, 17. He sware to Abraham, Gen. xxvi, 3, to Isaac, Ps. cv, 9; Jer. xi, 5, and to David, Ps. cxxxii, 11; Acts ii, 30. God required of the children of Israel an oath between man and man. Ex. xxii, 10, 11. Jesus submitted to the oath in the hour of his trial. The high priest said unto him, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto him, Thou hast said." If Jesus meant the judicial oath in his teachings to his disciples, he would have reproved the high priest, and there enforced his teachings for the good of his followers present. p. 43, Para. 3, [50T].

Satan has been pleased to have some view oath-taking in a wrong light, for it has given him opportunities to oppress them, and take from them their Lord's money. The stewards of God must be more wise, lay their plans, and prepare themselves to withstand Satan's devices; for he is to make greater efforts than he has ever made. p. 44, Para. 1, [50T].

Some, I saw, have a prejudice against our rulers and laws; but if it was not for law, this world would be in an awful condition. God restrains our rulers, for the hearts of all are in his hands. Bounds are set, beyond which they cannot go. Many of our rulers are those whom Satan controls; but I saw that God has his agents, even among the rulers; and some of them will yet be converted to the truth. They are now acting the part that God would have them. When Satan works through his agents, propositions are made that, if carried out, would impede the work of God, and would produce great evil. The good angels move upon these agents of God to oppose the propositions, with strong reasons, which Satan's agents cannot resist. A few of God's agents will have power to bear down a great mass of evil. Thus the work will go on until the third message has done its work, and at the loud cry of the third angel, these agents will have an opportunity to receive the truth, and some of them will be converted, and endure with the saints through the time of trouble. When Jesus leaves the most holy, his

restraining Spirit is withdrawn from rulers and people.
They are left to the control of evil angels. Then such laws
will be made by the counsel and direction of Satan, that
unless time should be very short, no flesh could be saved.
p. 44, Para. 2, [50T].