

The Christian Experience of William E. Foy

THE
CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE
of
WILLIAM E. FOY
TOGETHER WITH THE
TWO VISIONS
HE RECEIVED IN THE MONTHS OF JAN. AND FEB. 1842.
PORTLAND

1845

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REMARKS

It is often remarked, when a work of this character, is before the public, "I am no believer in dreams and visions." Very well, such are welcome to their own discerning incredulity. The object in publishing these visions is not to benefit such as reject indiscriminately every thing of this kind; no such expectations are cherished. But an earnest desire to comfort, and encourage the dear saints of God in their weary pilgrimage, by a glimpse of the blessedness, awaiting the finally faithful has prompted us to this step. And no doubt is entertained but that it will prove to them, a rich and invigorating repast.

That God does manifest himself in visions to his children, the records of every age, do abundantly testify. And on this point, the Bible is clear and positive. The patriarchs and Prophets were shown the great and mighty events, that were yet in distant future,, by the agency of visions. But it is often asked if the method of revealing the events, and scenes

the awakening of sinners, reclaiming of backsliders, and the building up of the saints in the most holy faith. They are published as nearly as possible in his own language. There is a most beautiful resemblance in the views here given, with the visions of Ezekiel, Daniel and John. As for instance; the description of the "tall and mighty angel," and "the sea of glass."

The view of the mighty angel having the trumpet of pure silver, and the announcement of the great and terrible voice, is exceedingly interesting and instructive.

That the despised and humble few, who are patiently waiting for the appearing of their glorious King, may be refreshed and comforted,, in this hour of trial, while perusing these two visions,, is the fervent prayer of the Publishers.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE AND VISIONS OF WILLIAM E. FOY

In the year 1835, under the preaching of Elder Silas Curtis, I was led to inquire, what I should do to be saved.

Christians, directed me to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world. I then began to pray earnestly to God to pardon my sins; but the more I prayed the more I beheld the sinfulness of my heart; and for many days I feared there was no mercy for me; but was led to see, that it would have been justice in God, to have cut me off, and sent me where hope or mercy could not have reached me. I then became willing to give up all; and in that moment Christ appeared the one altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousands, and spake the life-giving word to my soul. I then rejoiced in the God of my salvation; while all things around me appeared new, shining forth with the glory of God. Then could my

heart unite in the song of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will towards men." I then saw such a fullness in Christ, that I wanted to proclaim it to all the world. O the glory of God that filled my soul! Three months rolled away in which I enjoyed sweet communion with my God. I was then

thrown into a trial by those who should have been ----sing fathers in Israel, and thus remained many days, struggling in prayer; but the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation." A father in Israel whom I visited at this time, gave me instruction that proved a blessing to my soul. I then joined the Sabbath School, and was there instructed for the first time, to read the word of God, and soon became able to read my little bible. Immediately the duty of baptism was impressed upon me; and after three months disobedience, I went before the church and related the dealings of God to my soul, and the day following was led down into the liquid stream by Bro. S. Curtis, and was buried with my Saviour in baptism. Then did I experience the fulfilment of the promise; "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up as on wings of eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint;" and while coming up out of the water, it appeared to me the opening heavens around me shone; and I cried with a loud voice, saying: "Glory to God, and the

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Lamb that sitteth upon the throne!"

On the 18th of January, 1842, I met with the people of God in Southark St., Boston, where the christians were engaged in solemn prayer and my soul was made happy in the love of God. I was immediately seized as in the agonies of death, and my breath left me; and it appeared to me that I was a spirit separate from this body. I then beheld one arrayed in white raiment, whose countenance shone beyond the brightness of the stars, and a crown was upon his head which shone above the brightness of the sun.

This shining one, took me by my right hand, and led me upon the bank of a river; in the midst was a mount of pure water. Upon the bank, I beheld a multitude, both great and small; they were the living inhabitants of the earth. Soon all moved towards the west, walking on the water, until we reached the mount. This became the separating line between the righteous and the wicked. The righteous crossed it, passed through three changes; 1st. their bodies were made glorious. 2nd, they received pure and shining garments. 3rd, bright crowns were given them.

But when the wicked reached the spot where the righteous were changed, they cried for mercy, and sank beneath the mount. The saints then passed on to a boundless plain, having the appearance like pure silver. Our guide then spake and said, *This is the plain of Paradise.*"

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This heavenly host was then divided into flocks, some exceeding large in number, others, but small. In the middle of each was an angel. These angel's garments, were pure and white and unto each of them, was given a crown, shining with great brightness. Their countenances were most lovely to behold; their wings like unto flaming fire beneath which were the saints, both small and great. The guide then said. *"These angels are they that have preached the gospel on the earth"*. I then beheld, as it were a great gate before me. The gate was so tall, the height thereof I was unable to see. Before the gate stood a tall and mighty angel clothed in raiment pure and white; his eyes were like flaming fire and he wore a crown upon his head, which lighted up this boundless plain. The angel raised his right hand, and laid hold upon the gate, and opened it; and as it rolled upon its glittering hinges, he cried with a loud voice, to the heavenly host, *You'r all welcome!*" Then, the guardian angels, in the midst of the saints, struck a song of triumph, and the saints, both small and great sang with loud voices, and passed within the gate; and the guardian angels arose upon their glittering wings, and vanished from my sight. The inside of the gate appeared like glittering diamonds. Beneath our feet was as the appearance of pure glass. I then beheld countless millions of shining ones, coming with cards in

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their hands. These shining ones become our guides. The cards they bore shone above the brightness of the sun; and they placed them in our hands; but the names of them, I could not read. These guides took us by the right hand, and led us to a boundless place. Then I lifted mine eyes and looked above, no clouds, or skies appeared; but there countless millions of bright angels, whose wings were like unto pure gold; and they sung with loud voices,

while their wings cried "*Holy! Holy!*" I then beheld an innumerable multitude arrayed in white raiment, with cards upon their breasts; and unto each was given a crown of brightness. The guide spake, saying, "*These are they which have passed through death.*"

There was arrayed before me in the spirit an innumerable multitude, which had not passed through death; their crowns were like the brightness of the stars; and in their right hand they held cards. I then saw an individual, which had passed through death. Her brightness was beyond the expression of mortals and at her right side stood a guardian angel: the angel's raiment was like pure gold, and his wings like flaming fire and as she passed me, she cried with a lovely voice. "*I am going to the gate to meet my friends.*" An angel then appeared flying through the midst of this boundless place, and came to the spirit of one of

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those that had not passed through death, and cried with a loud voice, saying: "*This is my Mother.*" He then became her guide. I then beheld in the midst of this boundless place a high mountain like unto pure silver. It appeared perfectly round, and although I was unable to see through it, yet my vision extended around it. Around this mountain was a space in which stood no being. But after this vacant circle, stood as it appeared to be, a choir of angels, and as far as my sight could extend, throughout this boundless place, stood the countless millions of the righteous. And O, the singing no mortal can describe! It appeared to me, the angels next to the circle around about the mountain, with loud voices struck a lovely song and then ceased. The saints next to them caught the strain, and with voice yet more loud, repeated it: and thus it echoed and re-echoed, until it had been sung by all the saints, and then it ceased: and then again the angels sang.

At the right side of the mountain appeared a mighty angel, with raiment like unto burnished gold, his legs were like pillars of flaming fire, his countenance was like the lightning, and his crown gave light to this boundless place, and those that had not passed through death, could not look upon his countenance. I then beheld

upon the side of this mount, letters like pure gold which said, THE FATHER, AND

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THE SON." Directly under these letters stood the mighty angel, whose crown lighted up the place, and all the heavenly host worshiped at his feet, round about the mountain. This mighty angel then raised his right hand, which appeared like a flaming sword, and all the multitude of those that had not passed through death, were caught up to the top of the mountain; and there was a large book opened, and their names came up out of the book in the form of cards, which were stamped upon their fore-heads.

We then stood again upon this pure sea of glass, before the mountain; and our bodies had become like transparent glass; but the being that was within the mountain, I was unable to behold. While I was gazing upon the glories before me, a great voice spake in the mountain, and the place was mightily shaken, and the countless multitude of saints and angels bowed at the feet of the mighty angel, and worshiped him crying with a loud voice "*Haleluja!*" and then every voice was hushed, and the heavenly host remained bowed before the angel in solemn silence; and nought was heard save the trembling of the place caused by the voice of him who spake in the mount.

I then beheld this lower world, wrapt as it were in rolling mountains of flame, and in this fire, I saw a countless multitude crying for *mercy*. They appeared to be the aged and those

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who had come to the years of understanding. Their cries came up before the mountain, while all the heavenly host were bowed in solemn stillness. The voice from the mountain, spake again, and all the saints and angels arose, and with loud voices cried "A M E N." I then began to converse with my guide, and inquired, *why there was no mercy for those whom I had seen in distress*. He answered "*The gospel has been preached unto them, and the servants have warned them but they would not believe; and when the great day of God's wrath comes, there will be no mercy for them.*"

I then beheld in the middle of this boundless place a tree, the body of which was like unto transparent glass, and the limbs were like transparent gold, extending all over this boundless place. On every branch of the tree were small angels standing. There was an innumerable multitude of them, and they sung with loud voices, and such singing has not been heard this side of heaven. This tree was also clothed in light proceeding from the mighty angel. Beneath this tree standing on the sea of glass, were the countless millions of the righteous, arrayed in white raiment, with crowns on their heads, and cards upon their breasts; and in the multitude I saw some that I knew while they were living upon the earth and they were all singing with loud voices and lifting up their glittering hands plucking fruit

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from the tree; the fruit appeared like clusters of grapes in pictures of pure gold. With a lovely voice, the guide then spoke to me and said "*Those that eat of the fruit of this tree, return to earth no more.*" I raised my hand to partake of the heavenly fruit, that I might no more return to earth; but alas! I immediately found myself again, in this lonely vale of tears.

The duty to declare the things which had thus been shown me, to my fellow creatures, and warn them to flee from the wrath to come, rested with great weight upon my mind; but I was disobedient, settling upon this point for an excuse, that my guide did not command me so to do; and I thereby, brought darkness and death upon my soul. But I could find no peace or comfort. I began to doubt whether indeed my soul had ever been converted, and although I often met with the people of God, I obtained no relief but felt distressed and lonely. I could get no access in prayer. At last in order to escape the cross of going and personally declaring it to the world, I decided to have it printed. Yet, in this I could find no relief. Besides after having an account of it printed, it was a very imperfect sketch; and indeed I was unable to relate it for that purpose. But the Lord in his mercy spared me to behold the evening of the 4th of Feb. 1842, when I met with the people of God in May St. A large congregation was gathered together, and

christians were engaged in exhortation and prayer. But I enjoyed none of the sensible presence of God.

In the last part of the evening, the house being much crowded, I gave my seat to a friend who had been standing through the evening. While I was thus standing, I began to reflect on my disobedience; and while thus engaged, suddenly I heard a voice, as it were, in the spirit, speaking unto me. I immediately fell to the floor, and knew nothing about this body, until twelve hours and a half had passed away, as I was afterwards informed.

It appeared to me that I was a spirit separate from this body, standing upon the earth alone. No other being appeared to be with me. The earth had the appearance of a place perfectly level. The sun shone forth in its splendour, as it naturally does at noon day. I then beheld a cloud gently rising out of the west, which came up and covered the sun, so that it was darkened, and the whole heavens become like sackcloth; then something beyond the expression of mortal man, burst forth from the heavens, from the south even unto the north. It was like a flaming bar of fire; and immediately after, something appeared, which it is impossible for me to describe. I then beheld innumerable multitudes coming from the four quarters of the earth and were assembled before this bar, and there stood in solemn silence, while paleness

gathered on all countenances. Immediately they were caught up to this bar, and the bodies of the saints were changed, becoming like transparent gold; and they were clothed in light and shining garments, and crowns of brightness were placed upon their heads, and shining cards upon their breasts; and singing sweetly they passed through the bar of fire. But the wicked were unable to pass. The world beneath appeared to be wrapt in darkness and fire; into this, the wicked sunk from my sight, crying for mercy. I beheld mothers with their infants in their arms come to the flaming bar; the bodies of the infants become like transparent gold, and on wings of flaming fire, they passed the bar, singing with lovely voices, and the unholy mothers, crying for mercy, would sink below.

I then beheld an innumerable multitude, coming up from the waters, and an innumerable multitude, coming up out of the earth, arrayed in white raiment, with cards upon their breasts, and singing with loud voices, they passed this bar, and received crowns of glory upon their heads.

I then beheld, a multitude coming up out of the earth, and some of them I knew whose names were enrolled in the church books on earth, some of whom I had seen communing with the saints of different orders, and some which had professed

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to be preachers of the gospel. Although they had high professions, yet they were not found worthy, but cried for mercy, and sunk with those who had blasphemed. As we passed the bar, we entered upon a boundless place which was lighted up with great brightness. Near the place through which we passed I beheld a mighty angel clothed in pure white raiment, having a crown of brightness on his head. He appeared to be gazing through the bar, and his eyes like lamps of fire, were fixed with steadfastness upon the earth. He stood with his right foot placed before him, as though walking; and his object appeared to be, to reach the earth. But three steps remained for him to take. Against his breast, and across his left hand, was as it were, a trumpet of pure silver; and a great and terrible voice came from the midst of the boundless place, saying, "*The sixth angel hath not yet done sounding.*" Behind the angel, I beheld countless millions of bright chariots, they had the appearance of pure gold, and were perfectly square. Each chariot had four wings like flaming fire. And while I was beholding, one of the chariots arose upon its wings of fire, and an angel followed after the chariot; and the wings of the chariot, and the wings of the angel, cried as with one loud voice, saying, "*Holy! Holy!*" I watched the chariot, listening to the lovely sound of the wings. It passed towards the earth; and there appeared a spirit

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arrayed in white raiment as it were, standing upon a mountain, and there was given him a crown of brightness; and he stepped into the chariot with the angel, and in a moment he was in this boundless

place. Although he shone with great brightness yet this individual I knew, it was the one referred to by the witness ¹ I who said "I see the chariot coming!" He departed this life, in just two weeks after I saw him in vision.

I then saw in the midst of the place, an innumerable multitude, arrayed in white raiment, standing in a perfect square, having crowns of unfading glory upon their heads. They were of the size of children ten years of age; and they sung a song, which the saints and angels could not sing. In the midst of this boundless place, there was a river of pure water, and on either side of the river, countless millions of angels stood, with crowns of brightness upon their heads; they had in their hands cups like pure gold, and were bowing down and partaking of the water of the river, singing with loud and lovely voices, and worshipping him, whose crown gave light, to this boundless place.

Then came one unto me clothed in white, whom I call my guide; - he led me to a place

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like unto a narrow door. The first which I beheld, was a mighty angel, upon the right hand, having a large book open before him, also at the left, another with a book open before him. My guide, then spake to me, saying, "*They that repent of their sins on the earth, are blotted out of the book on the left, and recorded on the right.*" I then beheld angels ascending and descending too and from the earth; they bore tidings to the recording angels.

My guide, now, informed me what I must do; saying, "*Thy spirit must return to yonder world, and thou must reveal those things which thou hast seen, and also warn thy fellow creatures, to flee from the wrath to come.*" I then answered him saying, "*How can I return to yonder world?*" He answered me; "*I will go with thee, and support and help thee, to declare these things unto the world.*" Then, I answered the angel. - *I will go.*

I then beheld this lower world. It seemed as though the vail which had separated it from the boundless place in which I stood, was removed, and they had both become as one: and the saints and angels were continually passing from, and to, the earth. The earth appeared like a calm sea of transparent gold; above no cloud or sky

appeared, but the air was perfectly pure, and of a silvery brightness. I then heard all the saints, and angels, in heaven, and on the

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earth, singing with loud voices. My guide then spread his wings, and brought my spirit gently to the earth, then soared away; and immediately I found myself in the body.

Notwithstanding the command of my guide and my solemn promise to declare these things to the world; I was at first exceedingly unwilling to do so, and it was three days before I revealed them in a public manner.

The message was so different - and the manner in which the command was given, so different from any I had ever heard of, and knowing the prejudice among the people against those of my color, it became very crossing.

These questions were continually arising. Why should these things be given to me, to bear to the world, and not to the learned, to one of a different condition from myself? But no peace could I obtain in disobedience. "Woe is me if I declare not these things" rested heavily upon my soul.

On the 6th of Feb, the Pastor of the Broomfield St. Church, called upon me and requested me to relate my visions in his house of worship. Several members of that church were present and were anxious for me to comply. I consented: and the appointment was made for me after noon. After they had left me I regretted that such a step had been taken, and thought had the world been mine it would cheerfully be given, to have the appointment recalled.

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The morning of the 7th, however, found my mind calm, and peaceful; but as the hour for meeting drew nigh, temptations began sorely to afflict me. I feared lest my guide would not be with me, and I should be unable to tell the people, the things which had been shown me. A band of brethren, sympathizing with me, accompanied me to the meeting. Upon entering the house, I found a large congregation assembled, and each individual, seemed like a mountain. So much of the fear of man, rested upon me, that I

asked the Pastor, to open the meeting with prayer: telling him, I thought they would be obliged to have a prayer meeting. But while he was addressing the throne of grace, it seemed as though I heard a voice, speaking unto me, and saying, *"I am with thee; and I promised to be with thee"* my heart then began to burn within me, the fear of man suddenly fled, and unspeakable glory filled my soul. I then related with great freedom, the things shown me, while the congregation sat in perfect stillness. From this time I traveled three months delivering my message to crowded houses, enjoying continual peace of mind. But after this I began to fear my family would come to want, and so went to work laboring with my hands, and thus continued for three months. But I could find no rest day and night, until again I consorted to

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do my duty. Since then, I have traveled from place to place, and suffered some persecution, but the promise of my guide has never failed. His supporting presence has been with me.

My object in publishing these visions is to comfort the saints. They have been a great consideration to me, in seasons of temptation and trial.

Often in the silent hours of the night I have seemed to hear again, the sweet song for the angels; and whenever my heart has felt sad and lonely the things shown me by that angel have lifted me up above the trying scenes of earth.

My desire is, that the children of God may be blessed in the same manner. I am now waiting for my coming Lord. Although before the Lord was pleased to show me things, heavenly things, I was opposed to the doctrine of Jesus' near approach. I am now looking for that event. I expect soon to see the tall and mighty angel. Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake in his likeness.

"Ye saints of God, lift up your heads, for he glories of an earth made new, will soon be yours.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." But God hath revealed them unto me by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

TESTIMONIALS

We the undersigned, inhabitants of Boston were witnesses of the apparently inanimate conditions into which our brother, Wm. Ellis Foy, was thrown from some unknown cause, on the 18th of January 1842 when he laid two hours and a half; and again February 4th when he laid twelve hours and a half, during which, each time he testifies that he experienced extraordinary visions of the other world. Charles Tash. Francis Sanders George Williams John Thomas David Williams Andrew Lewis Edward Williams George Harris

Dr. Henry Cummings testifies: "I was present with our brother at the time of his visions. I examined him, but could not find any appearance of life, except around his heart."

Ann Foy testifies: "The first appearance of life I saw in him, was the raising of his right hand. He then arose upon his knee and made signs for water which was given him. He dipped his hand into it, and wet his forehead, and his speech immediately came to him. We then wished him to tell us, what things he had seen, and he answered, as soon as I receive strength, I will reveal unto you, that which the Lord has revealed unto me."

Copy of certificate of church membership.

This certifies that Bro. Wm. E. Foy, is a regular member, of the first Freewill Baptist Church, in Augusta, in good standing. And as such, we commend him to the fellowship of the people of God, of every name, wherever he may chance to meet them.

DANIEL PALMER,

Church Clerk

¹ Mary Black, the wife of the deceased Eld. George Black (the individual seen in the vision) testified: These are his dying words. 'I see the chariots coming towards my spirit home.' He then left the world with a shout.