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# WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?

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## AN ADDRESS

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THOMAS GALES FORSTER,

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SOME friend has placed upon the desk of my medium a very beautiful bouquet. This is a delicate evidence of kindness, and is fully appreciated. Flowers, my friends, have been eloquently termed God's undertones of consolation to humanity. Beautiful creatures of Divine beneficence — what eloquent orators they are! — gently bending beneath the shower, and gratefully lifting their little petals up to the sunshine. O that the flowers in God's moral vineyard would imitate the beautiful little plants in the garden of Nature!

### WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM ?

I endeavored in the last two lectures to speak with regard to this question from a scientific and a philosophical platform; that is, as well as I could do so in two lectures. It has been suggested, and I propose to speak to-day with reference to the same question, from a Biblical standpoint; or, in other words, I propose to address myself to the Biblical objector to the phenomena of modern Spiritualism.

And in the outset, as pertinent to my theme, I can but exclaim, in the language of an inspired poet of the present day, —

“ Is God asleep, that he should cease to be  
All that he was to Prophets of the Past, —  
All that he was to Poets of old Time, —  
All that he was to Hero-souls, who clad

Their sun-bright minds in adamant mail  
 Of constancy, and walked the world with him,  
 And spake with his deep music on their tongue,  
 And acted with his pulse within the heart,  
 And died, or seemed to outward sense to die,  
 Evanishing in light, as if the sun  
 Gathered its image back into itself?  
 Is God less real now than when he sang,  
 And smote with his right hand the harp of space,  
 And all the stars from his electric breath,  
 In golden galaxies of harmony,  
 Went choiring out, heart-flushed with life from Him?"

The Spiritualist believes that after the phenomenon termed Death has occurred, and you have buried the body, man has an individualized, conscious existence, beyond the grave. You know that all Spiritualists believe this; and that all who believe this are called Spiritualists, whatever else they believe. The Spiritualist believes, in addition, that these individualized spirits can, and under proper conditions do, communicate with the friends they have left in the form. But there is a large body of mind in Christendom that declare these two items of the spiritualistic faith to be erroneous, on the ground that they are opposed by the Bible, and that they are antagonistic to the teachings of the Bible. With this declaration of Christendom, my friends, we are at issue; and I shall attempt this afternoon to show that the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, upon which rest these two items of faith, are not only not antagonistic to the Bible, but that they are strictly analogous to the facts of the Bible; indeed, that there is such a striking analogy existing between the two, as to be apparent to the most casual observer.

A miracle, according to the Orthodox interpretation, is said to be constituted through a deviation from the course of Nature. But the intelligent inquirer at once suggests the inquiry, How shall man be enabled by this rule to

determine when a miracle is performed? For, even in the present age of earnest inquiry, who shall decide as to the legitimate course of Nature? In the days of Moses and of Jesus, men were not so well informed as they are in the present day with regard to such matters, and consequently were more liable to run into error in drawing their deductions from the phenomena by which they were surrounded. Upon this point, Spiritualism declares that a miracle, in the theological sense, is scientifically, philosophically, and morally impossible; and that if it were possible that a miracle could take place in that sense, it would not only destroy the divinity of the Bible, but it would destroy divinity itself—and why? Thus: no one will deny that God is infinite in his attributes, and that natural law is the effect of the perfection and divinity of those attributes, and that, consequently, all things have been arranged upon the wisest and best plan, for the wisest and best purposes. Any deviation, therefore, from this plan, must be a detraction, because there can be no change in what is perfect, except for the worse. To base a system of religion, as is done in the Orthodox world, upon the performance of miracles, with the theological interpretation of the word, is to base that system upon the inharmony of the divine attributes; and in doing so, you necessarily deprive Deity of that which alone makes him infinite.

The spiritual school, therefore, is entirely justified in declaring that a miracle, so interpreted, is utterly impossible. The legitimate corollary, therefore, is, that all the various phenomena of the past, as recorded in the Old and New Testaments, together with the analogous manifestations of the present day, were and are in accordance with the harmonious action of natural law; and that none of the powers that were exercised in the past through any of the prophets, patriarchs, or seers, through Jesus or his apostles, were drawn from with-

out the domain of Nature. With these preliminary remarks, I shall now proceed to institute a comparison between the manifestations of the past and those of the present, in order that I may succeed in establishing the existence of the analogy to which I have adverted.

Now, let us begin, my friends, with the first book, the very first book, of the Bible. And here, perhaps, I ought to premise, and I wish the premise to be fully understood, that in adverting to the Bible, I intend no disrespect to that book; but, on the contrary, I have no hesitation in averring that there are hundreds and thousands of Spiritualists to-day who reverence the Bible more than they ever did before they were Spiritualists; because, looking at the spirit and not the mere letter, they find in their own faith an extension of the views of the inspired minds of other days, together with a newer and brighter light thrown upon the obscurities of the past by the dawning brilliancy of the demonstrations of the present.

In the 16th chapter of Genesis, you who are Bible readers (and I hope you all are) perhaps will recollect it is stated that an angel appeared to Hagar (Sarah's maid) in the wilderness, and comforted her. In the 18th chapter of Genesis, three angels, in the form of men, so it is recorded, appeared to Abraham upon the plains of Mamre, and Abraham fed these angels (in the form of men) with material food; and during the interview between the three and Abraham, the promise was made to him that through his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Now, my friends, if there is any validity in the Christian plan of salvation, if there is any truth in the declarations of the old theological school, that the system of religion to-day is based upon the fulfilment of that promise made to Abraham, then the Christian religion, and all the good that is in it, depends entirely upon the manifestation of the appear-

ance of angels in the form of men, just as is claimed they have appeared to the mediums of Boston in the present day. And the objector upon Biblical ground will have to settle the difficulty with himself as to whether or not there is any reliance to be had in such manifestations.

In the 19th chapter of Genesis, two angels in the form of men appear to Lot in the gate of Sodom, and through the warning which these angels give him, his family and himself are enabled to escape from impending evil. Now, my friends, it would be well if the warnings that are given through modern media — if the warnings that are given by the spirit in modern times — were always attended to. Perhaps it would have been well for your nation (time alone must determine) if the true and pure-hearted Lincoln had listened to the manifestations and the warnings that were given to him through a medium in your National Capital; he would not so soon have stepped from the topmost round of the ladder of fame into the sky, but would have remained to carry out his own ideas in regard to the perpetuity of American institutions.

In the 21st chapter of Genesis, an angel again appears to Hagar, and prophesies in behalf of the boy Ishmael, and comforteth the mother. In the 22d chapter of Genesis, the arm of Abraham is arrested when he is about to commit murder upon the body of his son Isaac, having been tempted to do so by what, to-day, would be called an undeveloped spirit, under the supposition that God had so ordered him, by way of a temptation.

In the 28th chapter of Genesis, Jacob is represented as having had a dream, wherein he saw a ladder extending from earth to heaven, up and down which the angels of God were ascending and descending. Modern Spiritualism, by its various phenomena, is proving that such a ladder exists — is proving that there is an intellectual, spiritual ladder,

reaching from earth to heaven, "bright with beckoning angels." You believe in the dream of Jacob, and scoff at the declarations of to-day.

In the 30th and 31st chapters of Genesis, Jacob is represented as having had another dream, in which he receives the advice, which results in the curious proceedings, to say the least, by means of which the property of his uncle, Laban, is transferred to himself. During this interview with the angel in his dream, he was also advised to leave his uncle Laban. In the 32d chapter, after he had left his uncle Laban, the angels of God met him, and when Jacob saw them, he said, "This is God's host." And when Jacob was left alone, there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. Now, all this seemed extremely absurd to the Spiritualist before the manifestations of modern Spiritualism; but corresponding manifestations have occurred in different parts of the country, where there has been actual physical force manifested in contests with media by an unseen power. Consequently, the Spiritualist believes in this manifestation of the past, far more than those do who deny the existence of conscious individuality beyond the grave.

Again, one of the allegations brought against modern Spiritualism, and heralded forth by the many-mouthed press, and by the pulpit, is this: that the tendency of modern Spiritualism is evil; that the inculcations which come from the spirit-world, through modern media, are calculated to demoralize society. Now, my friends, without stopping to argue the question whether in the past or in the present they were or are immoral, let us see whether the analogy does not hold good even in this respect. In the 3d chapter of Exodus, whilst Moses was watching the flocks of his father-in-law, Jethro, an angel of God appeared to Moses, and appointed him to take the captaincy of the Israelitish host

in their contemplated exodus from Egypt. During the conversation held with Moses, the angel gave Moses the advice that the Israelitish women should fraudulently possess themselves of the jewels and the raiment of the Egyptian women — steal them. My friends, did ever *Dr. Kittridge* give such advice? Did ever *black Susan*, did ever *star Mary*, did ever *Sunlight*, did ever the beautiful *Birdie*, or any of the spirits that are controlling the media in different parts of your city or vicinity, give such advice? Yet the spirits controlling to-day are immoral; and the spirits of former times should be listened to, according to the Biblical objector!

In the 14th chapter of Exodus, an angel preceded the host of Israel in the final exodus. In the 22d chapter of Numbers, an angel met Balaam by the way, as he was proceeding to the camp of the Moabites, whose ruler invited him to come in order that he might curse the Israelites, whose encroachments he had begun to fear. In the 2d chapter of Judges, it is stated that an angel spoke to all the people at Bochim.

In the 6th chapter of Judges, a manifestation occurs, wherein the party concerned gave indications of precisely just such conditions as too often prevail to-day among some Spiritualists, and among many investigators — that is, a disposition to doubt perpetually, and to require conviction every morning; forgetting the test that has but recently been given, and manifesting an earnest desire for a continued repetition, or for the production of a similar one. In the 6th chapter of Judges, at the time that Israel was oppressed by Midian, an angel of the Lord, it is stated, appeared to Gideon, and appointed him to take command of the Israelitish host against the Midianites. Gideon was one of the doubting Spiritualists. He doubted whether it was an angel who appeared to him in the form of a man, and

he asked him for a test. The test was this: that he might be allowed to place a fleece of wool on the ground, and that the angel should so manifest that the fleece of wool during the night should become wet whilst the ground remained dry. The angel did this, and so effectually, that a bowl of water was wrung from the fleece of wool. Now Gideon was not satisfied with this, but he said, "Will the Lord permit me, that I again place the fleece of wool, and let the fleece of wool remain dry and the ground become wet?" and the angel did that also. Still Gideon was not satisfied, nor was he convinced, until, in the 7th chapter, he received another manifestation — that of the tumbling of a cake of barley-bread into the Midianitish camp. All I can say in regard to this is, that when you next visit a medium, I trust you may meet with a spirit as complaisant as the one who met Gideon.

In the 13th chapter of Judges, an angel appeared to the wife of Manoah. Now the wife of Manoah was barren, and the angel promised her the birth of a child. He afterwards appeared to Manoah and his wife together in the form of a man, and they both conversed with this man, nor did they know he was an angel or a spirit until he disappeared in the flame of their own burnt-offering. In the 5th chapter of Joshua, it is stated, that as Joshua approached the walls of Jericho, he saw a man standing by the wall with a drawn sword. He advanced to him, and demanded of him on which side he fought. The Book, which you call infallible, says that the angel replied that he appeared there as the captain of the Lord's hosts, and that he fought upon the side of Joshua. In the 19th chapter of 1 Kings, it is recorded that an angel appeared to Elijah more than once while he was fleeing from the anger of Jezebel to Mount Horeb, and that Elijah was fed by the angel with material food. Through certain media in Boston and vicinity, material

things are sometimes brought into circles; and, doubtless, if bread were brought, such is the fanaticism of incredulity to-day, that the modern investigator would not believe that a spirit did it, unless he were informed as to who grew the wheat, and who made the bread. Yet those who doubt the manifestations occurring to-day in Boston, with regard to the presentation of material substances at circles, still believe in the presentation of material food to Elijah in his flight to Mount Horeb.

Again, it is said that spirits, through modern media, are disposed to falsify; that they tell falsehoods; in other words, that they will lie. Well, now, my friends, let us see if the analogy, even admitting for a moment that this be true, let us see if the analogy will not hold good still. In the 22d chapter of 1 Kings, it is stated that God himself put a lying spirit into the mouths of the prophets of Ahab, in order that he might be deceived. With what bad grace, therefore, comes the charge in the present day, by Biblical objectors, against modern media, and the spirits controlling, with respect to falsehood.

Again, the Davenport media, and the Ellis medium, and others throughout New England, and other portions of the country, have been heralded all over the land as impostors, because of the materialism of their manifestations. Let us see if the spirits in the olden time were not material, and if one, at least, of the brightest mediums spoken of in the ancient record was not willing that a material manifestation should come through his organism. In the 6th chapter of 2 Kings occurs this manifestation: Elisha, by the power that was manifesting itself through him, caused a solid iron axe to swim upon the surface of the River Jordan. Is Johnnie King's trumpet more material than Elisha's axe?

Again, in the 21st chapter of 1 Chronicles you will recollect it is stated that David had angered God by num-

bering the people, and that God gave David the choice of three modes of punishment. Now, mark you, David was a man after God's own heart, and his means of communication with God were through the agency of Gad, the seer. Compare the manifestations of Gad, the seer, with the manifestations of Andrew Jackson Davis, the seer, together with those of the different male and female seers of Boston, and answer to yourselves, and to the spirit of the age, whether or not there is not as much rationality and beauty in the manifestations of seers of modern times as in any of those presented in the past.

In the 21st chapter of 2 Chronicles is a remarkable verse. It is there stated that a handwriting came from Elijah, the prophet, to Jehoram, King of Judah; whilst the Biblical chronology shows that Elijah had gone to heaven, in a chariot of fire, thirteen years prior to the date of the writing. What reference can this verse possibly have, if not to corresponding conditions in the present day?

In the 34th chapter of 2 Chronicles you will remember that Josiah, then King of Israel, determined to rebuild the house of the Lord, and he sent Hilkiah and others to attend to the moving of the rubbish, preparatory to the building of the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah found a book, which he submitted to the scribe, and the scribe submitted it to the king, and the king directed that it should be submitted to — whom? To Huldah, the prophetess, the medium! Huldah's decision was deemed by the king to be the word of the Lord, and consequently final. Huldah's opinion was taken. This occurred about a thousand years after the date assigned to the existence of Moses; and for that one thousand years the world knew nothing of the law of Moses, nor until it was decided to have an existence, by a spiritual medium, and that medium a woman! Now you believe that the book of Moses is important — you believe that the book of Moses

is invaluable — you believe that the law of Moses should be obeyed. The book of the law of Moses, in all probability, would not have been handed down to present generations but for Huldah. You believe in Huldah, and yet you have just as beautiful seeresses, just as beautiful prophetesses in your city, on Eliot Street, on Dwight Street, on Harrison Avenue, on Hanson Street, in Cambridge, in Roxbury, in Dorchester, in Chelsea, in Charlestown — all around in your vicinity. You ridicule these, you repudiate these, you denounce these, but you accept the law of Moses, given you through Huldah!

In the 69th Psalm there is a remarkable verse. It is the 22d verse. Read it, and remember it. David is represented as uttering a prayer, in which he makes use of this exclamation: "Let their table become a snare before them; and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap." It is difficult to tell what allusion this has, but if it does have an allusion to the corresponding conditions of modern manifestations, then only the experienced investigator in modern Spiritualism can appreciate the deep malignity of any man's heart who could utter such a prayer.

In the 1st, 2d, and 3d chapters of Ezekiel you have an account of visions presented to Ezekiel, and of his interviews with the spirits; and in the course of these interviews Ezekiel says, distinctly, "A spirit entered into me, and enabled me to hear the voices from the sky," — precisely what is claimed by the majority of the trance mediums of modern times. And I ask you to compare the manifestations of the book of Ezekiel with the manifestations of modern times through different media, and see which has the advantage in morality and decency. In the 3d chapter of Daniel you will remember that three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, by the presence of the angel and by the influence

of that presence, were saved from injury by the devouring element. In the 5th chapter of Daniel, the finger of an angel wrote upon the trembling walls of the revelling Belshazzar, "*Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,*" and a spiritual medium interpreted the chirography. In the 6th chapter of Daniel a manifestation occurs illustrative of that wonderful magnetic power that can be brought to bear through the human organism; indicative of the fact, that when you shall have properly understood the laws of your being, and more fully comprehend the occult forces of Nature, you will find that men and women, the entire human family, stand upon the apex of creation, and must, of necessity, control all things below. In the 10th chapter of Daniel, after Daniel had fasted, as is the custom with modern mediums on all proper occasions, he was entranced, and a vision was presented to him; and, during the vision, the spirit approached him in the form of a man, and spoke to him, and touched him — precisely what is occurring daily in Boston. You believe in the former; you reject the latter. In the 9th chapter of Nehemiah it is said, all the people praised God. Because of what? He had sent a good spirit to speak to them.

In the 9th chapter of 1 Samuel there is a brief history, to which I wish to call your attention. Before doing so, however, let me advert to a fact you are probably all conversant with in your own history, or in the history of some one of your acquaintances. You doubtless have frequently left your domiciles with an intention of going in one direction, and have found yourselves controlled to go in another, and that you have been controlled wisely and for good. My medium and a friend recently started to visit one of your cemeteries. They found themselves, however, after a ride of an hour, in the presence of some beautiful media, in your vicinity, where they participated in the pleasurable emotions

of congenial minds, while drinking in the wisdom of the sky. The chapter to which I refer presents a case in point. In the 1st book of Samuel, 9th chapter, — by the way, if the friend of my medium is present, he will remember that while conversing of the incident narrated, both he and the medium cudgelled their brains to tell in what chapter it occurred, — in the 9th chapter of 1 Samuel, it is stated that Saul's father had lost some asses, and that he sent out Saul and one of his men to hunt for them. After hunting for some days, Saul became fatigued. (Of course, my friends, you know I am not giving you the exact phraseology.) Saul became tired, and was disposed to give up the search, and so remarked to the man who accompanied him. The man said to Saul, "There is a man of God in this neighborhood; suppose we go and ask him about these lost asses." Saul said, "If we go, what shall we bring the man?" (It was the practice *then* to pay mediums; *now* it is the practice to condemn mediums for accepting money.) The man said he had a fourth part of a shekel of silver left, which he would give him to tell them their way. The record says that God had told Samuel the day before that he would send a man to him the following day, whom he was to anoint as ruler in Israel; and he told him also about the lost asses, and what had become of them. When Saul and the man met Samuel, he told them to be easy about the lost asses of his father; that they had been found; and now his father was worrying himself about him; but he was nevertheless to remain a day with him, and he would send him forth. He remained a day with Samuel, and Samuel anointed him, and sent him forth consecrated as a ruler. But what else was the result of this anointing? Just precisely what has been the result of a thousand visits in your land to developing media. Saul went away a medium, and in the nineteenth chapter he passed through a similar experi-

ence to that of many modern media. An evil spirit took possession of him. How did he get rid of the evil spirit? By precisely just such means as are to-day recommended by advanced Spiritualists for creating harmonious relations around the medium — through the instrumentality of music, or by some other similar means. The servants of Saul procured David, that the music of his harp might harmonize his own soul, and counteract the inharmonious influences around him. Is there not a striking correspondence through this entire history with the incidents of modern times?

But again; when you go home I wish you to read in the 28th chapter of 1 Samuel, from the 1st to 19th verse, inclusive. You have all heard of the witch of Endor. The Bible does not call her a witch; it is only the clergy who thus denominate her. She is not called a witch except in the headings of the chapter and page, which have been furnished by the translators. The chapter itself, from the beginning to the end, does not contain the word *witch*. She is called the woman of Endor. She was a very good, hospitable woman likewise. When Saul went there, she set before him the best she had, although quite poor in this world's goods. She gave them a sitting, as it is called in modern times, with a striking manifestation. She proved herself a good woman, and a noble, true-hearted, God-gifted medium. All throughout the land you have just such to-day. They are called *witches* by some. A hundred or two years ago they were called *witches* in this state, and suffered physical death in consequence.

In the 32d chapter of Job, 8th verse, one of the advisers of Job utters a declaration, which we commend to those of you who believe in the infallibility of the Bible. Elihu, the youngest adviser of Job, proposes to speak before two elder advisers, and he offers an apology to Job, if we may so term it, in this language: "But there is a spirit in man:

and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Just the apology, if it be one, that all the media of the land would offer to the learned wisdom of the age. We would not assume to arrogate to ourselves a superabundance of wisdom; but whilst we are aiming to teach, we beg you to remember "there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." In the 33d chapter of the same book, "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction." Every word of which the Spiritualists of this age believe.

But not to be tedious, turn over a number of leaves, until you come to the 1st chapter of the book of Matthew. There you will find that an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, and explained to him the condition of Mary. You believe that. Suppose an angel was to appear to-day in Boston, and attempt to explain away such a condition in some of the mediums of modern times. You would reject such a declaration as wholly absurd; but you accept the manifestation of two thousand years ago. In the 28th chapter of Matthew, an angel appeared to the two Marys at the sepulchre. What is more, my friends, he performed a physical manifestation. He removed the stone from the door of the sepulchre; and what is more, in the present age of scepticism, it was done in the dark, just before the dawn of day. You believe that, but you reject, ay, you denounce, bitterly denounce, the dark circles of modern times, and utterly reject the manifestations occurring in such circles. Why should you do so? Why this universal distrust of media, men and women, whom you would recognize as honest upon any other platform? Why should you charge them with charlatanry and fraud, because certain conditions

are requisite for certain kinds of manifestation? Why such denunciation, even by some Spiritualists, of dark circles? Does not the great God of the universe hold a dark circle once in every twenty-four hours, and are not all the table-lands of the earth turned upside down thereby? Does not the good Father, through the darkness that succeeds the day, render you more appreciable of the twinkling divinity of the bright-eyed stars, and of the brilliancy of the silver-faced moon, in her pathway of benevolence and beauty?

In the 1st chapter of Luke, it is said that an angel appeared to Zechariah, and promised the birth of John. Now Zechariah and his wife were aged, and did not believe what the angel said, and told him as much. The angel said, "In proof of the truth of my mission, you shall remain dumb until the prophecy is fulfilled;" and he at once became dumb. The Spiritualist alone can readily believe this; and why? Because similar manifestations occur amid modern media. Some years ago, whilst my medium was in the city of St. Louis, a lady there, a female medium, was struck dumb, and remained dumb two weeks, owing to certain manifestations that had been given forth against her becoming a medium by her husband. At another time, when I was speaking through my medium in a distant island in the Gulf of Mexico, a lawyer in the audience was struck dumb, and remained so for some hours. The Spiritualist, from such facts as these, can believe that similar manifestations occurred in the olden time. In the same chapter, it is declared that an angel appeared to Mary, and promised the birth of Jesus. In the 2d chapter of Luke, the angels appeared to the shepherds, you will remember, and an electric glory shone around, and they gave forth that beautiful declaration, "Glory to God on highest, on earth peace to all good, willing men," — as the sainted Parker always rendered this verse. In the 9th chapter of Luke, as Jesus,

John, James, and Peter were on the mount, whilst Jesus was transfigured, the apostles saw Moses and Elias talking with Jesus. Hundreds of years had elapsed since Moses had died (speaking after the manner of men); and in this connection, permit me to call your attention to another denunciation that is hurled at the media of modern Spiritualism. You are called believers in necromancy. You are called necromancers. Let me inquire, What does the word *necromancy* mean? It is derived from two Greek words — *nekros* (νεκρος), the dead, and *manthano* (μανθάνω), to learn. Was not Jesus learning from the dead when he was talking with Moses and Elias? I congratulate you, media of Boston, that you are in such good company!

In the 3d chapter of Acts, Peter had a power manifested through him, precisely as it is done through Newton and others in New England and in different portions of your country, — precisely through the same law, and through the same angelic agency. In the 12th chapter of the Acts, it will be remembered that Peter was imprisoned, and his friends hourly expected his execution. One evening the friends were assembled in the house of Mary, the mother of John, in an upper chamber. Perhaps if a modern writer should endeavor to give a description of this meeting, it would be said they were holding a circle in an upper chamber of sister Mary's house. While there, a rapping was heard at the gate, and the girl Rhoda, one of the circle, was sent down to see what occasioned the disturbance. Peter spoke, and when she heard his voice, it so rejoiced her, that she ran back and told the friends that Peter was at the gate. They told her she was mad. In the mean time the rapping still continued, and she insisted she was not mad. Then said they, "It is his angel." Observe the point, my friends — if it were not possible for the angel of Peter to have rapped, would the apostles have made such a declaration?

But one more manifestation. In the first chapter and first verse of that wonderful book, the Apocalypse, it is stated that information is about to be given by an angel. And in the last chapter, after John, in the isle of Patmos, had received the mysteries of the book of Revelations, the angel, through whom they had been received, approached him. John, psychologized by the idea of the age, when he perceived the brilliant beauty of the angel, supposed God himself was before him, and "fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed him these things." But the angel said, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets. Worship God." Precisely what the spirits, through the various phenomena of modern Spiritualism, are saying to-day. The spirits who communicate to-day, my friends, as in the past, are but your brethren, members of the same great human family. Our injunction likewise is, Worship God. But our desire is, also, that you will listen to the advice of those who have journeyed across the silent river before you, whose affections are still warm towards you, and who seek to pilot you securely to the bright and beautiful shores of another and a better land.

Now, my friends, I have given but a few of these manifestations, in order to show the analogy existing between those of ancient days and those of modern times, and also to represent how utterly absurd it is, upon Biblical grounds, to object to the phenomenal phases of modern Spiritualism. The hypothesis assumed is this, — and I beg of those of you who object, upon Biblical grounds, to the phenomena, to take home the declaration, — the hypothesis of the spiritual school, summed up, is this: If in the past there was a law existing in the divine economy by means of which Moses and Elias could have conversed with Jesus, by means of which angels in the forms of men could converse with Abra-

ham, or appear amid any of the conditions to which I have adverted — if there was a law by which one of his fellow-servants could appear to John on the isle of Patmos — then, if God be eternal and his laws unalterable, that law must still be in existence; and you, my friends, can commune with your fellow-servants who have gone before you; you, too, commune with angels proportionately to the conditions and circumstances by which you may be surrounded. And I aver that this is a logical conclusion, a legitimate deduction, from whence there is no escape.

You will observe that there is a difference in the tenor and manner of the communications to which I have adverted, corresponding to existing differences to-day. There is a difference between those recounted in the Old Testament and those in the New. This is attributable to the conditions and circumstances of the age, and the conditions and circumstances of the channel through which the communications came. The pivotal point of the revelation of the Old Testament was, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." The pivotal point of the revelation of the New Testament was, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." So that the difference alleged to exist in the spiritual communications of to-day, and which are urged as an objection to modern Spiritualism, likewise have their analogies in the past. Consequently, if the latter revelations are to be rejected on the ground of seeming contradictions, so must the former, by the same rule of reasoning. And besides, let me ask, if revelations were made by angels thousands of years ago, why may they not be made to-day? Think you God permitted angels to visit the rebellious Jews perpetually, and that he will deny the same blessing to you? Upon what authority has ecclesiasticism declared the canon of revelation closed?

No, my friends, the canon of revelation has not closed.

Inspiration is universal, and the angels are ever near, aiming to comfort, seeking to bless. A beautiful little spirit is now near me, who passed from the form just nine years ago, according to your calendar, to-day. Her parents are regular attendants at your hall, and she bids me say, adopting the rhythm of another, —

“ I am happy now, dear parents ;  
 My home's amid the flowers,  
 Where zephyrs from the throne of God  
 Are born in fragrant showers.

“ Would I come back, dear mother,  
 And leave my glorious home ?  
 Ah, though I love thee dearly, mother,  
 From heaven I would not roam.

“ I am happy here, dear father,  
 And I can watch you, too ;  
 And I can guard your steps, father,  
 As you did mine, so true.

“ I bask within the sunlight, mother,  
 Of a brighter world than thine ;  
 As the soft perfume which angels breathe  
 Is borne on the evening wind.

“ Your world is very fair, father,  
 With its sunny hills and dales ;  
 But ours is fairer, far, father,  
 And its beauty never pales.

“ Then rejoice with me, dear ones,  
 Though on earth I've closed my eyes,  
 For I will guide your steps, dear ones,  
 To my home beyond the skies.”

Tell me, O, ye jeering sceptic, what do you find in this language of the dear spirit which you can object to on Biblical grounds? Is there any proposition in philosophy or science that warrants the rejection of love when proffered by the departed from a brighter realm of beauty? Can you reject it on the score of the affections — that is, do you find

it in your hearts to shut out the rhythmical effusions of the sky, however oft repeated, when, with soothing cadences, they are borne upon the air like the sweet sounds of distant music floating o'er the surface of a summer's lake?

Two other spirits (whose parents are now in the hall), who left the form in early life, and in the early womanhood of their mother, are bidding me utter, in language heretofore given through another medium, but still coming from their hearts, —

“Tell us, parents, where is death?

We do not find it here;  
 We only find still more of life  
 Each moment in this sphere;  
 We're here, parents, where the flowers  
 Pour forth their fragrant breath;  
 And no one in these heavenly bowers  
 Can tell us aught of death.

“We saw your burning tear-drops fall

Upon our pallid brow;  
 We heard your cry, in agony,  
 ‘We have no darlings now!’  
 But could you've seen the angel throng  
 That bore your pets away,  
 You'd not have shed another tear  
 Upon our pulseless clay.”

O, is there not comfort in modern Spiritualism, found by the mourner in no other system of faith? O, is there not emanating from the phenomena of modern Spiritualism a brilliant joy, shooting out far above the hill-tops of superstition and fanaticism, illuminating the soul, and bidding it upward and onward move towards higher, and holier, and more beautiful relations? O, is not this glorious system, which appeals to the heart while it convinces the judgment, worthy of the most cordial reception, and of the most earnest vindication?

But a few words to the Spiritualists, and I shall close,

for I fear I have already wearied you; and I trust I shall be pardoned for speaking plainly the words of advice, though a comparative stranger. I find, my friends, that you have here in Boston and its vicinity a broad field in which you might operate beautifully and beneficially; but I fear you are too much divided for the exercise of that practical usefulness which might otherwise be brought into operation. Perhaps this disintegration may have been necessary thus far; but now, a large portion of you Spiritualists of Boston have reached that intellectual stand-point which enables you to discriminate between the true and the false in ethics, and which should enable you to stand forth upon a broad, philosophical platform in the advocacy of the glorious cause with which you are intrusted, and which is so eminently worthy of your warmest affections and your most devoted efforts; and, as a primary step to a consummation so beatifying, and so much to be desired, permit me to enjoin upon you the cultivation of more of that brotherly love among yourselves, and more of that sympathy that was so eminently characteristic of the beautiful Medium of Nazareth. Cultivate kindly feelings for each other, and for all your fellow-travellers along the tortuous pathway of this earthly existence. Cultivate a love for the beautiful in all things, remembering that

“Your world is as full of beauty  
As other worlds above;  
And if man but did his duty,  
It might be as full of love.”

Let all your aims be high and holy. Lift your aspirations towards loftier points, and struggle for more elevated positions in the realm of thought. And believe me, as thus you aspire, there is not an angel bending from the snowy clouds that roll as an ocean of drapery on the blue depths of the sky, but who smile with exceeding beauty upon all such

efforts; whilst images of unfading beauty shall forever be thine, coming to thee in quick succession from the heaven of brighter minds above thee. Thus, too, you will become more united. Thus you will be enabled to move forward as a glorious brotherhood along the pathway of progress that lies before you. And thus, through the magnetism of unity, of sympathy, and of love, you shall preach louder in behalf of truth than all the media you can place upon your rostrum, as, trumpet-tongued, your acts proclaim to the community, See how these Spiritualists love one another!

O, if I had lungs of brass, and a mountain for a pulpit, I could not superinduce better results by speaking, than you can, yourselves, by learning to love one another, and by aiming to discard whatever is calculated to retard your advance in this direction. O, let your common faith in the immortality of spiritual truth be written as with the diamond's point upon the living rock, and let your diversities of opinion with regard to the various manifestations of this truth be inscribed on the shifting sand. Cast aside the microscope of prejudice and bigotry, which too much magnifies the points of difference between you, and use the telescope of charity and reason, which will bring within the horizon of your view the manifold and mingling beauties of the glorious cause you all so much love. And in your social and business relations, in your conversations one with the other, and of each other, endeavor to imitate the example of the painter, who is said to have been employed to sketch the portrait of Alexander the Great. Alexander had a scar on his forehead, and the painter was perplexed to find a way to avoid showing the defect in the portrait. He at length adopted the expedient of representing the monarch as sitting in a chair, his head leaning upon his right hand, and his forefinger covering the scar on his brow. When, in a business or social relation, you attempt a sketch of your

neighbor, O, my brother and sister Spiritualists, with the right hand of brotherly love cover up any scar that might otherwise create a deformity.

In conclusion, permit me to borrow an illustration. Cast a quantity of quicksilver upon the ground, and it breaks into a thousand globules, on account of the unevenness of the earth's surface. But the affinities of the quicksilver are not destroyed. Use a little care and gentleness, and you can very soon collect the globules into a bright mass, reflecting your countenance as you behold it. So with Spiritualists — it is your earthly surroundings that originate your differences; it is the selfishness of materialism that severs. A little charity, a little brotherly love, would soon collect you into one common mass of spiritual development, reflecting the glory of your common Father, the righteousness of your common cause, and the brilliant beauty of your future home. O, remember these things. Cultivate, at all times, "in essential things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; and in all things charity;" — and then, indeed, will have dawned for you the glorious millennial morn, when "Ephraim shall no longer envy Judah, and Judah no more vex Ephraim."

#### BENEDICTION.

May the bright-eyed angels of our common Father's love so impress your minds, each and every one of you, that you may be enabled to realize that they are perpetually aiming to guide you to

That land of beauty, home of joy,  
Where mingles nought of earth's alloy.



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