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SPIRITUALISM

Wherever we find a counterfeit we may rest assured there exists a genuine. If there were no genuine gold dollars, there could be no base imitations, or counterfeits. Then too, the base or spurious article must appear *very much like the genuine* or it would not be a counterfeit.

This is what we claim relative to what is at the present time called "Spiritualism": That it is a counterfeit of the true, as taught in the Bible.

Whoever has carefully searched the scriptures cannot have failed to see that while God throughout all past ages has condemned evil and sin in their various forms, and warned his children both "Israel after the flesh" and also the spiritual children (the Gospel Age Church) of the danger and bad results of evil, yet He has nevertheless permitted evil and good to stand side by side before the people, for their choice. If we take heed to his Word we may discern which is evil and by obedience to that Word, shun the evil and choose the good.

God is the head and fountain of goodness and truth and the Scriptures teach that Satan is the head and fountain of all evil and error—"The father of lies" (deceptions). Both of these are *spiritual* beings. "God is a spirit," and Satan, as we have heretofore shown, was once an angel of God—The chief or Prince of "Those angels which kept not their first (sinless) estate." These though cast out from God's presence, are not yet destroyed—they still preserve their nature as "*angels*," though through sin they have become evil angels; consequently they still are *spiritual beings* (not human) and have the same powers as they ever had, and as good angels have, except that God has put them under certain limitations and restraints which we shall more fully discuss farther along.

If we trace them through the Scriptures we shall find that these *fallen spiritual beings* have continually made use of their spiritual—super-natural powers, to lead mankind astray into disobedience of God and injury to themselves.

Spiritual beings, as we have heretofore shown, possess powers greater and higher than humanity. We have seen from the statements relative to good angels that they can be present in our midst without our being conscious of their presence. (The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him. Psa. 34:7.) (Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation? Heb. 1:14.)

These we have seen, have power to appear *as a flame of fire* (The Angel of the Lord so appeared

to Moses in the bush. Gen. 3:2) or they can and have *appeared as men*. Of this power there are numbers of instances in the Bible.

Some other powers of angels can be discovered by examining the record, for instance, the angels who delivered Lot and his family from Sodom, had power to smite the rioters of Sodom with blindness. (Gen. 19:11.) An angel “did wondrously before Manoah;” another performed a miracle before Gideon. (Judges 6:21 and 13-19.) The Angel of the Lord delivered the Apostles from prison, and yet left the prison doors unmolested; again, an angel delivered Peter from prison, the doors opening of their own accord. Acts 5:19-23 and 12:8. On many occasions they made known to men things which were about to come to pass, etc.

Now, the evil angels, “the devil and his angels,” have by nature the very same powers, but are restrained. So much of evil as can be overruled for good, and tend to the development of experience and the education and discipline of the “heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ,”—is permitted and the remainder *restrained*. As God through his Spirit and influence works in and through men who give themselves up to His control, so does Satan operate in and through those who “*yield themselves* as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin.” “His servants ye are to whom you render *service*.” As Jesus said to some, “Ye are of your father the devil *for his works ye do*.”

As “God in times past spake unto the fathers through the prophets,” who were His mouthpieces, so Satan spake through his agents and agencies. His first agent was the serpent which became his agent in beguiling Eve into disobedience. He manifested his powers through the magicians and soothsayers of Babylon and remarkably in those of Egypt, where God’s powers were manifested through Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh, while Satan’s powers, of a similar kind, were used to *oppose* the truth for a time. Here these *two spiritual powers* were strikingly manifested; both did miracles—things which men alone could not do—but which men *possessed* of evil and good powers, did do. (Exod. 7:11-22 and 8:7-18.) “There were *false* prophets also among the people,” who evidently spoke by an *inspiration*, or power in them almost like the real prophets of God; these were the counterfeits. (See 2 Pet. 2:1 Jer. 23:21.)

We are aware that to the worldly mind it seems superstitious to believe that men and women may be so given up of themselves to Satan, and so controlled by him as to be wizards and witches; but they are recognized as such in the Scriptures, and we believe it. Israel was commanded to put such to death. (Exod. 22:18; Lev. 20:27, etc.) Manasseh, King of Judah made Judah to err, &c.; he “used enchantments and used *witchcraft* and dealt with a *familiar spirit* and with wizards.” (2 Chron. 33:6.)

Take a concordance and see how much God says against wizards, witches, and “they that have

familiar spirits”—*mediums* of the devil for communicating with mankind. It was the claim of these *mediums* of “familiar spirits” that they held communication with the dead and received their information from them. In this claim they contradicted the plain statements of God’s word, which assure us that the *dead could not* furnish any information. (See Job 14:10-21; Eccl. 9:10.)

But this was merely another way in which Satan sought to continue the lie imposed upon Eve in Eden. [“He is a *liar* from the beginning” said Jesus.] God had said that if disobedient they should *die*; Satan contradicted this statement; claimed that man had naturally, immortality and could not die, and that God was a liar. Ever since, he seeks to uphold the statement, “Ye shall not surely die.” Full well does he know that if people realized that it was the “spirits of demons” who spoke to them through the mediums they would shun them; hence, the claim that it is dead people (not *dead*, but more *alive* than ever) who communicate the information.

An illustration of this sort, is given in 1 Sam. 28. Saul, King of Israel, had become wicked, and God would no longer communicate with him through the Prophets. He was engaged in a war with the Philistines, and a great battle was about to be fought. He wanted council and desired to know what would be the outcome. Since the Lord would not answer him, he sought out one of the condemned and forbidden class, a *medium*, a woman who had a familiar spirit—the witch at Endor.

All are familiar with the story: (1 Sam. 28:3-20) how that the medium pretends ignorance as to her visitor, knows what Saul desires, gives a description of Samuel, etc. Then follows an account of the coming defeat of Saul’s army and the death of himself and his sons. The fact that these things occurred just as foretold by the *medium*, has been thought by some, to be a proof that Samuel really furnished the information. But, Satan could foretell those things as well as Samuel could were he alive. Not that Satan is a prophet, nor that God reveals coming things to him, but he is a student of God’s word and a *believer* of it. “Devils also believe and tremble.” (Jas. 2:19.) The defeat of Saul and accession of David to the throne had been foretold by the Prophet and both Saul and Satan knew it, and Satan had learned that every word of God’s is *sure*.

Besides we should not forget the words of the apostle that “He that hath the power of death is the devil.” (Heb. 2:14.) Since he is the executor of the death penalty, and must have the permission to execute from God, (Job 1:12) is it strange that he knew that he was to have power over the lives of Saul, his sons and many others on the next day? No, it is the *reasonable* inference. Certainly we should not for a moment suppose that God (or Samuel if he could) would recognize, or use any means of communication which He had prohibited on pain of death and condemned as wicked. Read 1 Chron. 10:13.

Coming further down the stream of time, we learn that the same wicked spirits continued to

operate in the same manner. The Lord, while still permitting them, warns the people against such, saying: "They shall say unto you, 'Seek unto them that have familiar spirits (spirit *mediums*) and unto wizards that peep and mutter.' (But) should not a people seek unto their God? For [why should] the living [go] to the dead? To the law and to the testimony, [the Bible], if they speak not according to this *Word* it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:19.) God warns people not to believe any one whose

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teachings are contrary to the *Word*, no matter what powers they may exercise.

Coming down to the days of Jesus and the apostles we find that Satan still operated in much the same manner, as well as a variety of other ways. Among the more notable instances [not to mention the numerous cases of casting out of devils, etc., by both Jesus and the disciples] we might remind you of the experience of Philip and Peter with Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8:7-9-24.) "Unclean spirits crying with loud voice came out of many that were *possessed*; ... but there was a certain man named Simon which ... used sorcery and bewitched the people ... to whom they all gave heed ... saying, This man is the great power (*medium*) of God." Thus did Satan use *his power* to delude the people.

Paul and Barnabas had an experience with another of these *mediums* of the devil named Elymas, who withstood them. Paul addressing him said: "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to *pervert* the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10.) And he was blinded immediately. Again Paul and Silas met a female *medium* at Phillippi. "A certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination ... which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying." But Paul "turned and said to the spirit [Satan] I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour." Acts 16:16.

And so ever since, Satan has kept up his practices with various changes of method to suit the circumstances; sometimes with characteristic devilishness, at other times in the garb of religion, "For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, therefore it is no great thing if his ministers [*mediums*] also be transformed as ministers of righteousness" ... (2 Cor. 11:14.) In our day when knowledge is so great, and morality (called *Christianity*) so popular, Satan *must* if he would continue to oppose truth, take the religious cloak; and so he does. To-day Spiritualism ranks itself among the religious sects. ["The synagogue [church] of Satan," truly.]

Spiritualism though refined and modernized is yet the same that it ever was, in ages past. Its object is not the inculcation of truth, nor of love for God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. They claim that Jesus was a fine *medium* and taught and used spiritualism in His day as well as He

understood it. They do not outwardly profess to oppose the Bible and its teachings, but they do so really, both teaching and practicing the very things therein condemned and still seeking to prove by their enchantments that men are not *dead*, thus endeavoring to uphold Satan's first falsehood. Gen. 3:4.

They still possess supernatural powers, too, just as in the days of Saul and Paul and Moses, etc. While we do not question that some of the things claimed to be done by them are mere deceptions, yet we know of many things done by them where no deception was possible. Among those who believe "*in this way*" we know of several who once were *mediums* of the devil and did "those things whereof they are now ashamed." These, when coming to a knowledge of the truth, are thankful for their escape from that "snare of the devil." Spiritualism hates the light and their wonders are done under cover of their favorite principle—*darkness*. Their work of proselyting, too, is dark, covered—secret. Jesus gives us a word of wisdom on this subject. "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reprov'd." Jno. 3:20.

Though working stealthily, their numbers are large and embrace many of the influential of earth—Judges, Senators, etc. The queen of what is known as the greatest *christian* kingdom of earth, on whose possessions the light of day is said never to set, called the "Christian Queen," is known by many to be a "Spiritualist." It is coming before people in a way that commands attention, and those who do not realize it to be the work of Satan are almost sure to regard it as a power of God. The Rev. Joseph Cook, justly celebrated for his able defense of the Bible and its author, God, against the attacks of Atheists and Infidels, such as Huxley, Darwin, Arnold, *et. al.*, has lately had his attention aroused to the recognition of the growing influence of "Spiritualism," and having investigated the subject to some extent he recently delivered a lecture on the subject, in which he expressed his belief that many of their tricks and performances, are performed by no human power and are actually *super-natural*. He does not pretend to say how, or by what power, but claims that not only himself but some of the profoundest scientific minds of Germany have reached the conclusion that Spiritualism cannot be condemned as *false* by any scientific tests yet applied to it.

Nor is this power of Spiritualism difficult to account for if we take the Bible as our authority and recognize it as the work of Satan, whom Jesus designates "The prince of this world." (Jno. 14:30.) "The prince of the power of the air (spiritual power) *the spirit* that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2.) And the same book is our authority for saying that "Spiritualism" has not yet reached the climax of its power; its powers are to increase wonderfully. Paul says, (1 Tim. 4:1), "Now the Spirit [of God] speaketh expressly that in the *latter times* some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing [deceiving] spirits and doctrines of devils." Jesus says, "They are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the whole world to gather

them to the battle of that great *day of God Almighty.*" Rev. 16:14.

Peter (2:4) and Jude (6) tell us, that when cast out of God's presence as evil angels, they were bound by "chains of darkness" "unto the judgment of the great day." Many scriptures have shown us that the closing part of the Gospel age is to be upon the living a time of trial and trouble preparing them for the coming Millennial reign of Christ, and is called "the day of the Lord"—"the great day"—"the great day of His wrath," etc. We understand, then, that Satan and his angels have been limited: might not appear except through human beings who willingly gave themselves up to be "possessed of devils" or became his "*mediums.*" He has thus been confined or chained. But we claim that this "*day of the Lord*"—day of the "*presence of the Son of man*"—has already commenced, that the Scriptures prove it to be so; and if the chains of darkness restrain Satan *until* "the great day," we should expect that very soon those chains will be loosed and no longer restrain. (Any who expect soon the loosing of those powers should, to be consistent, recognize both "The day of the Lord" and the trial as commenced.)

The facts correspond to this exactly. "Spiritualism" claims that they are having more power to show their wonders daily, and they claim now (one case very recently) that the Spirits can *materialize in broad day light*: and they promise wonderful revelations and manifestations *very soon*. Now, materialization of a spiritual being, just as they claim, has been possible all along to the angels of God, of which we have many records—angels on many occasions appearing *as men*. Jesus, as we have seen, when *born of the Spirit* at his resurrection, a spiritual body, ("That which is born of the Spirit *is spirit.*") was, as all other spiritual beings, (good and evil) *invisible* to human sight, and in making known his resurrection to his disciples he appeared in various fleshly "forms." (Mark 16:12.) These are the powers which Satan has desired, but could not heretofore use, because bound or limited, but which he will have when the judgment (trial) of "the day of the Lord" begins. (Which we believe is *now.*)

The trial of this day is not only a day of trouble and distress among nations, but it includes a trouble or fire upon the living phase of the church. This church trouble comes first, and we believe began in the spring of 1878, and is to result in the purifying of faith and bringing of those who will continue to bear the name of *Christian* to the firm foundations of the teachings of the *Word of God*. For all *the errors* of human traditions shall be consumed as dross, wood, hay, stubble, in the *fire* (trial) of this day. The apostle says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which *shall* try you (the church) as though some strange [unforetold] thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. 4:12.) For the fire of that day shall try every man's work of what sort it is: "He that hath built [his faith] with gold, silver and precious stones [the truths of God's word] the same shall remain. (His faith will not be destroyed.) But if any man build with wood, hay, stubble, (the teachings and creeds of man) the same shall suffer loss, &c. (1 Cor. 3:12-15.)

This trial is “the trial of your faith” and in this “day of the Lord” not only does the light of truth shine *strongly and beautifully*, showing us the great prize of our high calling as we never saw it before; revealing to us the *present king*, who causes us to sup with Him and feeds us with His truth which is, “meat in due season,” giving strength needed in *this* day; but it is also a day for the increase of the powers of evil, that the separation between the wheat and tares (the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one. Matt. 13:38) may be complete.

Because of this struggle between truth and error, the real and the false spiritualism, etc., Paul says, “My brethren, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against the flesh and blood [not against human beings, but against evil *spiritual* beings] but against principalities, against powers, against the *rulers of the darkness*, of this world, (Satan—the prince of this world. Jno. 12:31) against *spiritual* wickedness in high (controlling) places. *Wherefore*, [on this account] take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand [the *spiritual* wickedness—the devil’s wiles] in the *evil day* [this day of the Lord’s presence—day of trial.] ... Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with *truth* and having on the breastplate of righteousness, etc. Eph. 6:11.

This same day of trial is referred to in Psalm 91, where only those who have made God’s “Truth their shield and buckler [support] are able to withstand the snares of the devil, the *arrows* of infidelity and the moral *pestilence* of Spiritualism. While thousands shall *fall* at their side.”

“In God I have found a retreat,
Where I can securely abide,
No refuge, nor rest so complete,
And here I intend to reside.

“The pestilence walking about,
When darkness has settled abroad,
Can never compel me to doubt
The presence and power of our Lord.

“A thousand may fall at my side,
Ten thousand at my right hand,
Above me His wings are spread wide,
Beneath them in safety I stand.

“His truth is my buckler and shield;

His love He hath set upon me,
His name in my heart He hath sealed;
E'en now His salvation I see."

—**Songs of the Bride.**

There are portions of Scripture which *seem* to teach that during this "Day of the Lord" there will be manifestations of the saints *as men* in fleshly bodies of those who have been *changed* to spiritual bodies like unto Christ's glorious body—and that they will *appear* as He "appeared" after His resurrection, and do a work of teaching as He taught the Disciples, opening men's understandings that they might understand the Scriptures.

We have seen that the coming of Moses the first and second times to deliver Israel from Egypt, was a type of the two comings of the Lord. The second time he came with *power*, and "Aaron, the saint," was his mouthpiece before Pharaoh, and during the signs, &c. So we expect that the living representatives of the church will sometime be used as the mouthpiece of their Lord before the world [Egypt in type]. As there in type Jannes and Jambres, and the other magicians under Satanic power, opposed and hindered for a time the effect of the wonderful powers wrought through Aaron, so we anticipate that in the antitype, when the living church is used as the Lord's mouthpiece, they will be withstood and their teachings controverted by the same *spiritual* wickedness—"Spiritualism"—which will seek to do the same things and *partly* be able. Paul seems to refer directly to this in 2 Tim. 3:1-8, when, after saying: "In the last days [of the age] perilous times shall come," &c., he adds: "Now, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth ... but they shall proceed no further; for their *folly* shall be manifest unto all men as theirs also was."

We suggest again, then, that every counterfeit is a proof of a genuine; second, that none but valuable things are counterfeited, and third, that a counterfeit must resemble the genuine very *closely*, or it would not deceive. Already, Spiritualists, are talking much as we do, of "the good time coming," the "glorious day," and even declare that Jesus is *present*, &c. This is an old practice with our opponent. At the first advent, the devils knew Jesus and crying out said: "Thou art Christ the Son of God," and He rebuking them, suffered them not to speak, "for they knew that he was Christ." (Luke 4:41.) (See also Paul's experience, Acts 16:17.) Yes, "The devils also believe and tremble." (James 2:19.) And

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no doubt they would fain call some of us, Spiritualists, both for the purpose of bringing to their credit our knowledge of God's word and plan, and to seek to offset the value and effect of our *Bible* teaching, by claiming us as one with themselves.

But, beloved, "believe not every Spirit, but try the spirits whether they be *of God*" or of Satan. "By their fruits ye shall know them." That system, by whatsoever name it calls itself, whose time and talent is spent in doing useless and foolish things, and making use of supernatural power to obtain money; which appeals merely to the human *credulity*, and neither seeks nor develops an increase of faith and love toward God and men; ignores Jesus and the plan of salvation; repudiates the Bible; whose tendency is *toward* things earthly, sensual, devilish—"Free-loveism," &c., is *not of God*, but bears unmistakable signs of Satan being its author.

On the contrary, a system based not on forbidden and *pretended* communications with the dead, but upon the word of God only; whose teachings tend to the glory of both the Father and His Son, our Lord; which seeks to unfold to those who have "ears to hear" and "eyes to see" the glorious beauty and grandeur of God's plan of salvation, of which Jesus is the recognized foundation; which tends not to the ignoring of any part of the Word, but to a searching of the Scriptures daily; which tends *toward* and teaches that the prize of our high calling is obtainable only by patient perseverance in well-doing—the death of the *old* nature and newness of life as a *new creature in Christ Jesus*, bears unmistakably the stamp of God and *is of God*—for it speaks according to His word.

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— March, 1881 —



Jeżeli zauważyłeś błąd w pisowni, powiadom nas poprzez zaznaczenie tego fragmentu tekstu i przyciśnięcie *Ctrl+Enter*.