

SPIRITISM

(Commonly called "Spiritualism")

UNMASKED

BY

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Author of "The Divine Inspiration of the Bible," "The Gospel of the Bible," "An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words," "A Greek Testament Grammar," etc.

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Preface.

IT is with much pleasure that I comply with the author's request that I should write a foreword to his message on "Spiritism." Those of us who heard his lecture on the subject felt that it should, if possible, have a wider audience. It is true that there are already many such exposures in the field, but this one seems to cover fresh ground. Nor is this surprising. The cult is making such rapid developments, and its votaries are now to be found amongst so many of the professed religious leaders, that it is not to be wondered at that, waxing bolder by its successes, it more clearly manifests its origin. But be the manifestations what they may, the standard by which they are to be judged abides the same, and as the evil develops so it is met still at every turn by the unerring testimony of Scripture.

As the author shows, the relapse of Christendom to the practices hitherto associated with heathendom is a manifest and sure symptom of the gross darkness soon to set in and to end in judgment. As another has said, "It is shocking to find men amidst the darkness of heathenism practising such customs; but to see men engaged therein where the Name of Christ is known and where the living oracles of God are possessed, linking the Name of Christ and the Scriptures therewith, is a thousand-fold more so, and may be truly characterised as being appalling wickedness."

May this testimony for the Truth be used of God to strengthen the faith of His children, and to unmask to many what is involved in Spiritism, and be the means in His hand of deliverance from its solemn doom.

BATH.

W. R. LEWIS.

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Spiritism Unmasked

The Claims of Spiritism.

SPIRITISM is based on the assumption that the spirits of the departed can communicate with us, and accordingly it consists of efforts to enter into such communications. Spiritists claim to prove that life exists after death, and that the departed are able to render assistance to those still in the body. They also claim that the teachings of Spiritism conduce to the present comfort, the highest elevation, and the permanent blessing of humanity.

As to the first of these claims, the existence of life after death is one of the greatest foundation tenets of Christianity. The assistance of Spiritism, even if it were of *bona fide* value, would not be required to prove that. Nor is there anything new in the belief that "the spirit world manifests itself by producing effects in the physical world inexplicable by the laws of nature." That Spiritists do obtain communications with beings in the spirit world has long been undeniable. There is, of course, much that passes for the real thing, which is nothing but quackery and illusion. Making full allowance for this, however, the evidences produced by Spiritism, subjected as they have been to the severest tests, cannot be explained away. Physical research yields an increasing volume of evidence corroborating the fact, acknowledged for ages past in human history, that certain powers of communication with spirit intelligences exist.

The Claims of Scripture.

The question is as to the real character of those who are the source of the communications. Upon this the Bible provides abundant light. We are quite prepared for the repudiation of the Bible as a Divine revelation. Yet for every argument advanced in disproof of it as a revelation from God, we can advance a hundred in proof of the validity of its claims as such. We will confine our attention to one in particular which bears directly upon our subject.

To the unprejudiced reader of Scripture the fact is undeniable that the prohibitions contained throughout this Book had, as their underlying motive, the direct welfare of those to whom the prohibitions were given. They are the outcome of a Wisdom which, acting for the best interests of men, has forbidden only what would prove detrimental to them. Now in all the passages which deal with the subject—and they are not only numerous, but are to be found in most of the books which constitute the volume—Spiritism, in any and every shape or form, is persistently and systematically prohibited. The fact is striking and significant that writers whose books were written at intervals during a period of 1500 years, writers differing as widely as possible in status and calling, writing, too, in countries as far distant from one another as Italy and Chaldea, and without the possibility of arriving at the same conclusion either by mutual consultation or by mere imitation of their predecessors, adopt an identical attitude of condemnation of Spiritism, and bear an absolutely consistent testimony regarding it. This forms a link in a long chain of incontrovertible evidence that the Book comes to us with Divine authority and inspiration.

The Testimony of Scripture.

Taking representative passages, we find in the Pentateuch the following :

“Turn ye not unto them that have familiar spirits, nor unto the wizards ; seek not to be defiled by them ; I am the Lord your God” (Lev. 19. 31 ; see also 20.6 and 27).

“There shall not be found with thee anyone . . . that useth divination, one that practiseth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the Lord ; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them (the nations) out from before thee” (Deut. 18. 10-12).

In the historical books it is said of King Saul, that he

died, not only because he kept not the Word of the Lord, but also because "he asked counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire thereby" (1 Chron. 10.13); and of Manasseh, that 'he dealt with them that had familiar spirits, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger" (2 Kings 21.6).

Turning to the prophetic books, we find denunciation following remonstrance thus: .

"When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto the wizards that chirp and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? On behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead? To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, surely there is no morning for them" (Isa. 8. 19, 20, R.V.).

In the Acts of the Apostles, the evil of sorcery is frequently exposed. In the Epistles, the Apostle Paul gives warning that those who practise it shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5. 20, 21). In the Apocalypse their doom is foretold as the second death, and exclusion from the city of God (Rev. 21. 8; 22. 14, 15).

The argument is raised in regard to the Leviticus passage, that the same book forbids the wearing of clothes of mingled materials, and that inasmuch as the latter prohibition is inapplicable to present-day life, so is that against dealing with familiar spirits. Such reasoning is almost too grotesque to deserve notice. Regulations made for the people of Israel regarding food and clothing were the outcome of the Divine choice and care of the nation, and were intended for their welfare in the special circumstances in which that care was necessary. Certain prohibitions, in themselves of a salutary character for that people, were applicable solely to them under the Mosaic economy. The quotations just given suffice to show that the prohibitions against all forms of Spiritism are not confined to Israel, but are of universal application.

Now the Bible has proved to be a means of enlightenment and advancement, and a benefit in every way, wherever it has been received, whether in the life of the

individual, or in the family, or in the nation; and this is the Book which, forbidding only what is deleterious, absolutely and from beginning to end of its contents, prohibits Spiritism. Can it be conceived that God would term "an abomination to the Lord" that which carried with it the welfare of His creatures? On this showing alone Spiritism is injurious, and its humanitarian claims are invalid.

Concerning the Departed.

But this is not the only kind of testimony provided in Scripture. There is instruction as to whether we are to look for the re-appearance of the departed in spirit form, or to receive communications from them. In the first place, had this been so, we should have expected that a Book which treats so constantly of communications from the other world, would have given frequent evidence of, and teaching concerning, such communications or appearances. This, however, is not the case. On the contrary, Job says, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way, whence I shall not return" (Job 10. 22), and David says of his dead child, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12. 23). Significant also is the conversation in the spirit-world between Abraham and the man who had spent his days in selfish ease. In seeking to persuade Abraham to send a messenger to his brethren still in the body, he argues that "if one go to them from the dead, they will repent." Abraham replied, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead." He thus discountenances the idea of one going in spirit form, and speaks only of the possibility that a messenger should be sent in the body by means of resurrection (Luke 16. 27-31).*

Again, the Bible is a book which provides abundant

*In the case of those who appeared with Christ at the Transfiguration, there is no evidence that they were in a disembodied state. The evidence rather points to the fact that they were "clothed upon with their house from Heaven." We know that Elijah had been caught up without passing through death, and the presumption from Scripture evidence is that Moses had been raised from the dead. This narrative therefore affords no example of the return of the spirits of the departed (see Jude 5. 9). Acts 26. 23 is correctly rendered in the R.V. In 1 Cor. 15. 23, "Christ the firstfruits" is not to be taken as relating to priority of time in reference to the case of Moses.

comfort to those who are in trouble. But there is never a hint in it that comfort for the bereaved is to be derived from any sort of communication with spirits of the departed. When the Apostle Paul imparts consolation to the bereaved concerning their departed, he does so as follows :

“If we believe (and the ‘if’ is not hypothetical : the implication is that we do believe) that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in (*lit.* ‘through’) Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the Word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the Coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4. 14-18).

If, as Spiritists say, “the early Church was saturated with Spiritism”—an absolutely gratuitous assumption for which there is not a shred of evidence—here surely was the passage in which some reference might be expected to the comfort to be obtained from messages from the departed. The churches, however, were not so taught.

It is poor comfort that is not derived from sources absolutely reliable ; and to seek to obtain comfort by disobedience to God is, to say the least, dangerous. There are unlawful means of procuring relief from sorrow, and Spiritism is one of these. True Christians—and by that term we mean those who by faith in the Son of God are in the enjoyment of vital union and communion with Him—have for nineteen centuries derived genuine and lasting comfort concerning their departed ones by the means thus graciously granted by God. They know that those who have died in the faith are “with Christ,” that theirs is bliss unspeakable, undimmed, and uninterrupted

and that there will be eternal reunion in resurrection glory at His Second Coming.

The Endor Medium.

An appeal is made by Spiritists to the record in 1 Samuel 28, of King Saul's dealings with the woman at Endor, in order to show that Scripture testifies to the reality of mediumistic communications, and therefore to justify the practice. It is somewhat strange that any appeal should be made in this way to a book which invariably passes condemnation upon Spiritism. Yet it is easy to impose on those who are in comparative ignorance of the teachings of the Word of God. There is one thing that the narrative referred to makes quite clear, however, and that is that the Spiritism of modern times is identical in character with that described in the Bible.

The parallel is worthy of notice. In the modern séance there is the applicant who seeks to obtain communication from a person who has departed this life; there is the medium who passes into temporary subconsciousness or unconsciousness in order to receive the communication; there is the "control," or the spirit-being whose special influence is regularly exercised over the medium; and there is, hypothetically, the spirit of the departed person from whom the message is desired. All this corresponds precisely with what took place as recorded in 1 Samuel 28. The applicant was Saul—who, by the way, would scarcely have had recourse to a practice which in his former days of well-doing he had endeavoured to abolish from his kingdom, had this dealing with spirits been mere illusion and jugglery, and not actually a dark and evil reality. Then there was the woman, possessed of mediumistic powers. Thirdly there was the "familiar spirit," in present-day phraseology, "the control." Lastly, there was the departed prophet Samuel, from whom Saul hoped to receive a message. The modern and the ancient methods are the same. Present-day Spiritism is not a "new revelation," but an old sin. The indictments of Scripture therefore apply to the present practice. Moreover, the identification of the two is confirmed by the fact that the Hebrew word

frequently used to describe the practice signifies "one who consults the dead for information."

In that particular instance, however, the normal method of procedure was upset by God's interposition, and that in a way which consistently stamps the Divine condemnation upon the practice. Instead of an impersonating spirit, Samuel himself was actually sent, and the machinery of the customary séance was entirely dislocated; the medium was terror-stricken by the unusual revelation, an alarm intensified by the disclosure of her applicant's identity; the message was not given through her mediumship at all, as was usual, but direct to Saul, and was a message, not of quiet information, but of stern denunciation. God Himself intervened to take things out of the hands of these Spiritists, and to communicate direct with the king. The whole narrative, with the comment in 1 Chronicles 10. 13 above quoted, is condemnatory of the practice, and provides no ground of appeal whatever for the Spiritist, nor any justification for having recourse to such means of endeavouring to communicate with the departed. Nor, again, does the extraordinary event, with its Divine intervention, provide any reason for supposing that the spirits of the departed come to the séance room or send messages at all.

The Truth About the Spirits.

We turn now to another side of the evidence provided by Scripture. The Book which has pronounced a ban on Spiritism makes known its true character. Those who practise Spiritism claim that the spirits with whom communication is held are those of human beings, but this has never been incontrovertibly demonstrated. It remains yet with Spiritists to prove that the controls, and the other spirits from whom their messages are derived, are human beings, and not those who, possessed of a considerable amount of knowledge of human circumstances, impersonate the departed with intent to deceive. This is of the utmost importance in view of the fact that the Scriptures warn us of the existence of evil spirits, and of their seductive activities. Satan, the arch-

enemy of mankind, is called, "the deceiver of the whole world" (Rev. 12. 9). He is said to "fashion himself into an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11. 14). Of the work of other evil spirits and their influence over mankind, the Bible gives abundant evidence. It foretold that during the later part of the present age there would be a falling away from the faith on the part of some, "through the power of seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 4. 1), and that at the close of this dispensation the world would come under a specially organised activity of these beings (Rev. 16, 13, 14).

The Hebrew and Greek words which describe these spirits have significant meanings. The Hebrew word is *shedim*, which denotes "mighty ones"; the Greek is *daimones* (or *daimonia*), *i.e.*, "knowing ones." Their superhuman power is illustrated in the records of the Gospels and the Acts, and further in the physical condition of modern mediums and other subjects of Spiritist control. In regard to their knowledge, it is evident that demons have closely observed the ways and doings of men, and the dealings of God with humanity. They have thus been enabled to understand considerably the constitution of man and the conditions of his life. They can have little difficulty, therefore, in impersonating the departed, whose lives they have watched. Their knowledge of human affairs, coupled with the fact that they act under the guidance of Satan, enables them to predict the future to some extent. Further evidences of their super-human knowledge abound in Scripture (see Matt. 8. 29; Mark 1. 24, 34.; 5. 7.; Acts 16, 17, etc.) They are shown to be not only deceptive, but cruel and, in many cases, unclean, and as seeking to control the bodies of men. They instigate men to rebel against God (Rev. 16. 13, 14).

An Important Distinction.

Demon-possession is not mere mental disease. For

(a) Luke, himself a physician, distinguishes thus between the two. He speaks of a great number of people who came to be healed of their diseases, and under a separate heading, of those who were troubled with unclean spirits (Luke 6. 17, 18).

(b) Matthew's Gospel makes a similar distinction. "They brought unto Him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic (A.V., lunatic), and palsied" (Matt. 4. 24).

Here again there is a clear differentiation between well-known mental affliction and demon-possession.

(c) Mark's Gospel bears the same testimony.

"They brought unto Him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons . . . and He healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons" (Mark 1. 32, 34).

(d) Demons are mentioned no less than seventy times in Scripture, and never once is the effect of their power referred to as a disease, but always as demon-possession. Persons so possessed lost the power of individual will, and their consciousness was yielded to the power of the demon. Hence the supernatural utterances and strength manifested, and the abnormal movements of the body while under such control; such indeed as are evinced in the case of modern mediums.

(e) The Chinese have separate names for idiocy, insanity, epilepsy, hysteria, and demon-possession. There are resemblances, of course, between the physical disease and the case of possession, but the differences are great and are not accountable by pathological diagnosis.

These differences are chiefly as follows:

(1) The person under the demon influence manifests an "automatic and methodical acting of a new personality;" he refers to himself not in the first person, as in the case of a lunatic, but in the third person, as if speaking of another being. In insanity the assumed personality is obviously unreal. Not so, however, in the case of possession.

(2) A knowledge and power are manifested, not possessed by the person affected when in his normal state, and inexplicable by pathology. There is to-day, for instance, the same recognition of, and hatred towards, Christ, as in Scripture instances, such as

the incident of the girl mentioned in Acts 16. This is especially the case in heathen lands, where aggressive mission work is carried on.

(3) There is a direct change in moral character ; mediums frequently evince antipathy to God, to Christ, to the Christian religion, and to prayer. The following admission has been made by a Spiritist : "So long as you reply to our arguments with a text, we cannot teach you." The tendency to moral degeneracy is dealt with later on.

(4) Deliverance from the supernatural power comes when certain articles are abandoned or destroyed, such as rings or books, or, in heathen lands, idols, shrines, etc.

The Reality of the Evil.

These evidences are sufficient to give proof of the reality of demon possession both in ancient and modern times. In all these respects the testimony of Scripture is corroborated by that from other sources. Those who try to explain the phenomena by pathology and psychology are constantly confronted with difficulties, which entirely disappear if the causes are attributable to demon-possession. Those who to-day are engaged in psychical research produce strong evidence that a distinct personality acts through the medium under control. A distinction must be made, in passing, between a demoniac and a demon-controlled medium. A demoniac is an involuntary victim, though he may by yielding to sin have brought the trouble on himself, his misdeeds opening the avenues of his being for demon aggression. A demon-controlled medium is a willing subject though deceived.

Mediumship is practised in China in much the same way as in the West. Thus an applicant writes a charm for a medium. The latter takes an incense-stick in his hand, and stands still, thereby notifying his willingness for the unseen being to take control. The charm is burned, the demon is worshipped and invoked. The medium announces what spirit has descended, and gives information. After returning to the normal state he often declares ignorance of what he had been stating during

the process. Automatic writing is carried on in China in much the same manner. To a forked willow branch a pencil is attached, and a sanded platter placed beneath. The medium goes through the same process as just described. The pencil then traces characters on the sand, and so information is obtained.

Varying Methods.

While this manifestation of demon-power corresponds to what prevails in highly civilised lands, the activity of these powers of darkness is generally displayed in heathendom in the more openly repulsive forms. The reasons are not far to seek. Firstly, the true character and power of demons would naturally be shown in the more congenial atmosphere of heathen lands. Secondly, to adopt these methods largely where Christianity prevails, would hinder the purpose and influence of Satan, as the revelation of his character would prevent his work of deception. Thirdly, people of natural enlightenment, who are equally the objects of his delusions, would repudiate association with methods obviously debased. Accordingly in civilised communities the powers of darkness must adopt more subtle means of turning men away from God. The mode of activity is therefore adapted to varying conditions of time and locality. For people of refinement and education the method must be suitably alluring. In civilisation, then, demon-control is dignified by plausible and euphemistic phraseology, and disguised by more specious methods.

Demons are capable not merely of dragging men into sensuality, but of persuading them to a life of asceticism, philanthropy, self-denial, and morality—all excellent things in themselves—deceiving them all the while as to the path they are really treading, and blinding them as to the true character of sin in God's sight, and the Divinely appointed remedy. It is deplorable that men and women of thought and influence are to-day being thus beguiled, under the impression that they are merely engaging in psychical research for the benefit of their fellow men.

Concerning Doctrines.

The "doctrines of demons" are first directed against the Person and Work of Christ, who is ever, the object of Satanic hostility. As long as the Evil One has any degree of liberty he will use it in antagonism against the Son of God. With untiring effort, therefore, he and the hosts of darkness under him seek to undermine the Christian faith. In the first Epistle to Timothy the Apostle Paul immediately after enumerating some of the great basic truths relating to the Son of God, says, "But the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Tim. 3. 16; 4, 1). Special doctrines follow, which we must notice presently, but clearly the contrast is first with the truths in the preceding context relating to Christ.

When, therefore we hear one of the leading advocates of Spiritism proclaiming that the Sacrifice of Christ was not vicarious, that He "came to place Himself before the tribunal of man's judgment," that "He was simply a perfect medium," that He "occasionally lost His temper," that there is no resurrection and no Hell, we have no difficulty in tracing such teachings to their Satanic source, and in recognising in them the outcome of the activities of these seducing spirits. Of similar origin are the statements of Mr. W. Stainton Moses, a noted medium of recent years, who repudiated the doctrines of redemption and atonement, and declared that "far too much stress is laid on Christ's death," and that "it is no uncommon thing to die for an idea." "This idea," he says, "of a good God sacrificing His sinless Son as a propitiation for man is repudiated as monstrous. Man is his own Saviour." This, by the way, is not the language of Scripture, which says that Christ "offered Himself" (Heb. 9. 14). The Satanic source of the views of Mr. Stainton Moses—himself a renegade from the Christian faith, and eventually harassed by the spirit-beings under whose influence he had come—is suggested by his own confession. "All the information ever given me," he says, "in proof of the presence of the departed,

might in harmony with my experience of the spirits have been first obtained and then imparted by a false intelligence." The lamentable course of this man is a danger-signal to those who are tempted to practise Spiritism.

A Spiritist Conference.

The following identification of the teachings of Spiritism with those mentioned by the Apostle Paul is remarkable. At a Spiritist Conference held in Rhode Island, U.S.A., at which eighteen States were represented the following four resolutions were passed:

- (1) That Sunday schools should be discontinued;
- (2) That all Christian ordinances and worship should be abandoned;
- (3) That sexual tyranny should be denounced;
- (4) That abstinence from animal food should be affirmed.

The last two are precisely what the Apostle predicted. The doctrines of demons would be as follows: "Forbidding to marry (or rather 'hindering marriage'), and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. 4. 3.).

Admissions of Spiritists.

That the spirit-controls of mediums are demons is confirmed by the testimony of Spiritists of the present times. It has often been confessed by mediums in the séance room that neither good angels nor the departed, but evil spirits are in attendance. They acknowledge that they are frequently deceived and sometimes are in difficulty to determine whether they have been deceived or not. What a contrast is here presented to the teachings of Scripture! In the case of Spiritism there is acknowledged uncertainty; in the case of Scripture, irrefutable declarations. A Spiritist confessed that

"most of the stories of returned friends are due to the work not of the latter but of other spirits."

Miles Grant, in "Spiritism Unveiled," says:

"For seven years I held daily intercourse with what purported to be my mother's spirit. I am now firmly

persuaded that it was nothing but an evil spirit, an infernal demon, who in that guise gained my soul's confidence, and led me to the very brink of ruin."

Madame de Morgan, in an address given before the Spiritualist Alliance, stated that

"the resemblance (*i.e.*, between the departed one and the spirit pretending identity with that of the departed) never seems to be perfect."

In a standard work explaining Spiritism, the writer says :

"Communications from the spirit-world are not necessarily infallible truth."

An issue of the *Occult Review* contains the following statement :

"Spiritists are well aware of the awful peril of obsession by evil spirits. Man has some very dangerous and powerful enemies behind the veil."

Lying Theories about the Other World.

That spirits appeal to God is no proof of the validity of their claims. Unclean demons have confessed Christ. The cause of truth needs no assistance from means which God has condemned. Christ and His Apostles repudiated such testimony (see Mark 3. 11, 12 ; Acts 16. 17, 18). Messages that come through automatic writing professing to describe worlds after death, the people who live therein, how friend meets friend, how youth and age are transformed, the various pursuits and occupations in the different spheres, etc., are all void of true proof as to their reality. The teaching of the Word of God shows that they are illusory, and not only so, but that they are part of a scheme of Satanic deception to allure men away from God and the truth. And surely it is not difficult to grasp the fact that deceptive spirits, acting through automatic writing or through a medium in a state of subconsciousness, can present a view of after-death circumstances, which are not substantiated by facts, but which, on the other hand are merely blinds to keep the truth from the human heart !

"The god of this world (Satan) hath blinded the

minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them" (2 Cor. 4. 4).

It cannot be difficult to see that evil spirits, in order to allure men, make the teachings they inculcate conform to a certain extent to the doctrines of Christianity, omitting or repudiating at the same time those fundamental truths relating to Christ and His redemptive work which are absolutely essential for man's salvation.

An unclean spirit does not become pure because an applicant for information is reverent or intellectual. The character of the spirit remains the same though its tactics may be plausible. Not even the best motive—that, for instance, of seeking to get into touch with a departed relative—can purify an unholy intercourse, or can transform disobedience into righteousness. Whatever the means employed by the powers of darkness, their motives remain the same, namely to hinder the work of God, and extend the domination of Satan. We are warned in the Word of God not to believe every spirit, but to prove the spirits whether they are of God (1 John 4. 1). Spiritists appeal to this Scripture as a reason why people should attend séances and engage in the practice of Spiritism. That is an entire misapplication of the passage. It teaches, not that we are to tamper with Spiritism, but to test all teachings by the Scriptures, since false doctrines are the work of evil spirits acting through human teachers. To find oneself possessed of certain psychic powers, and so to begin to dabble in automatic writings and other forms of spiritism under the impression that this is only a means of natural and legitimate human development, is to throw oneself into the snare of Satan, and to invite the disastrous influence of the evil spirits who work under his direction.

Spiritists' Confessions of Evil Effects.

We shall now quote some testimonies of Spiritists themselves to confirm this.

(1) Sir William Barrett, in his book on Necromancy (p. 15) speaks of the "steady downward course of

mediums." Yet we are told now that Christ was a perfect medium. How absolutely void of the knowledge of the true Christ are those who offer such poor flattery to the Christian faith! How simple it is, after all, to create a Christ of one's vain imagination! How easy to suppose a being whose ways and deeds conform to the darkened thoughts of those who turn from the light of the truth!

(2) It has been publicly stated by one of the leading exponents of Spiritism that "it has its dangerous element." Verily to put oneself under the power of evil spirits is dangerous. What a contrast to Christianity! Have the true followers of Christ ever found Christianity a dangerous practice? Does any danger lie there? We are told, forsooth, that Christianity has become effete! And yet there are hundreds of thousands who, true to their Master, are ready to-day to lay down their lives for Him, and whose numbers are greater than in any preceding generation of the present era! Let a man accept Christ as his Lord and Saviour and at once he becomes the dwelling-place of the Spirit of God, and passes out of danger into safety.

(3) The celebrated medium, D. D. Home, acknowledged that the spirits which controlled him were gaining entire mastery of his being. Imagine the spirits of departed friends doing this! The idea is preposterous. And as to those who died in faith in Christ, what an outrageous slur upon their character to suppose that they descend to the degradation that characterises many séances, or that they co-operate with mediums to the detriment of these latter persons, and in disobedience to the Word of God!

(4) Sir Oliver Lodge, an advocate of Spiritism from the standpoint of psychical research, issued a warning, counselling "regulated moderation in the use of unusual power in the psychic direction." He advised any one who has the power of receiving communications in any form "to see to it that he remains master of the situation." "To give up your own judgment," he says, "and depend solely on adventitious aid, is a grave blunder, and may

in the long run have disastrous consequences."* Surely this piece of advice is sufficiently condemnatory in itself.

(5) Similar to the warning just quoted is that of Professor C. Flammarion, another exponent of Spiritism, who says :

"It is prudent not to give oneself exclusively to occult subjects, for one might soon lose the independence of mind necessary to form an impartial judgment."

If that is true, what reliability can be placed upon the advice of those who are practising Spiritism? Such testimonies only fall into line with the warnings of Scripture. To practise this sort of thing is to invite the disastrous control of a power which is purposely inimical to us.

(6) Sir William Barrett again says :

"Spiritism is dangerous in proportion as it leads us to surrender our reason or our will to the dictates of an invisible and often lying being."

And again :

"Granting the existence of the spirit world, it is necessary to be on one's guard against the invasion of our will (when so surrendered) by a lower order of intelligence and morality."

How different from Christianity! Were such warnings ever called for in the case of Christians, to whom the injunction has been given, "Yield yourselves unto God"?

(7) The Spiritist Mr. W. T. Stead bore testimony to the immoral tendency of Spiritism and to the blasted lives of many who practise it. Mediums have again and again acknowledged that once the art of entering into spirit-communications has been acquired, the influence of the spirit-being becomes irresistible. The domination can scarcely be shaken off. In other words, when the power of communication between a medium and the control is established ("control" is, by the way, a highly suggestive term), the demon is unwilling to relinquish the relationship.

*"Raymond," by Sir Oliver Lodge, page 235.

True Spiritualism.

What a contrast, again, is presented to us between the foregoing testimonies and the teachings of the Bible concerning the power of the Spirit of God in relation to the Christian ! What a contrast between the experiences of mediums and the experiences of those who are governed and guided by the Holy Spirit ! For, after all, there is a true means of intercommunication between God and the soul of the one who is born again of the Spirit of God and has received His Son.

“When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come,” said the Lord, “He shall guide you into all the truth ; for He shall not speak from Himself ; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak ; and He shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify Me : for He shall take of Mine, and shall declare it unto you” (John 16. 13, 14).

This promise has been fulfilled in the experience of Christians ever since Pentecost. Spiritism is a devilish counterfeit of this true Spiritualism, and a soul-destroying substitute for it. The Spirit of God is the one channel of communication between God Himself and the true Christian. Never was there any need of warning as to moderation in opening the avenues of our being to the benign influence of His Spirit. His control never works anything but the utmost good. It is He who reproduces in us the character of Christ. To obey the Divine command, “be filled with the Spirit,” is to derive the highest benefit possible to a human being in this life. The believer who thus enjoys constant communion with his Redeemer experiences that which produces true manliness and nobility and makes him a power for good to his fellow men. The enlightenment which is granted him, and the leading of the Spirit of God, prove safeguards to him against attempting to follow the spurious, delusive, and damaging practices and teachings of Spiritism.

Independent Testimonies.

Turning to another class of testimony, the following is the verdict of a doctor who for nearly half a century has been in contact with problems and cases relative to

Spiritism. Speaking of those who have developed their powers as mediums, he says :

“ The tendency in such is ever downwards. The body physically seems, sooner or later, unable to bear the strain ; the mind, in like manner, seems to lose its fibre, its concentration ; the moral character markedly deteriorates ; drunkenness and other vices prevail ; and the whole condition becomes more or less deplorable.”*

The same author quotes Professor Hudson as saying that the exercise of Spiritism

“ produces physical deterioration which keeps pace with physical decline ; and which, no doubt, loosens all principles of morality and truth.”

Yet this is the “ science,” or, as Spiritists have decided to call it, the “ religion,” which claims to elevate humanity. In the disastrous practices associated with this so-called religion, men, women and young people are being encouraged to engage, under the pretext of the development of their latent powers.

The late Reader Harris, K.C., recorded the following :

“ The most remarkable case of mediumship I have met with was that of a young lady, who commenced with a little seemingly innocent table-turning at a children’s party, and finished up by death in a mad-house.”

The verdict of Mr. Birrell, at Bristol, is also worth recording. He said :

“ The records of Spiritism leave me unconvinced. They lack the things of morality, of grandeur, of emotion, in a word, of religion. They deal with petty things, mere prolonged egoism, as if the one thing we want to be assured of is continued existence and an endless capacity to exchange platitudes. A revelation of the life beyond the grave ought surely, if it is to do any good in the world, to be more stupendous than that—something of really first class importance. Otherwise we are just as well without it.”

These latter conditions are amply fulfilled in the

*“ Modern Spiritism,” by A. T. Schofield, M.D.—J. & A. Churchill, 3/6 net.

teachings of the Bible, which, in contrast to the blighting effects of Spiritism, has wrought untold blessing in individual as well as national life. It has ennobled humanity, transformed the life, and beautified the character, giving to all who have accepted the Son of God as their Redeemer, a true and sufficient insight into the conditions of the other world.

Periodic Outbursts.

The spread of Spiritism is so rapid and general to-day as to demand some account of its present significance. Seasons of approaching crisis in the world's history have almost invariably been accompanied by an outburst of Spiritist activity. The regularity of this in the records of the Bible is remarkable. There are abundant evidences from Scripture of the existence of the evil in the days prior to the Flood.*

Passing to the period of the exodus of Israel from Egypt, and their entry into Canaan, not only are records given us of the work of Spiritism in Egypt, as an attempt to hinder the liberation of Israel (Exodus 7. 10-22 and 8. 7.), but in Palestine the iniquity of the Amorites and other Canaanite nations had reached a climax (see Genesis 15. 16). That their sin was that of Spiritism is clear from the Divine injunction given by Moses, already quoted :

"When thou art come into the land . . . thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found with thee . . . one that useth divination, one that practiseth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto the Lord ; and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee" (Deut. 18. 9-12).

The next crisis, which occurred some 500 years later, was that of the appointment of a king over Israel. That

*These are dealt with somewhat fully in Pember's "Earth's Earliest Ages" and the conclusion to which he draws attention seems undeniable. The reader may also be referred to the book, "The Giant Cities of Bashan," by Porter.

event set up the throne upon which ultimately the Messiah will sit, who is to wrest the world from the domination of Satan. The Devil therefore attempted to blast the nation with the influence of Spiritism. That those who had "familiar spirits" (*i.e.*, mediumistic controls) were numerous, is clear from the fact that King Saul had taken measures to purge the land from this evil, and that his drastic measures had not been entirely successful (see 1 Sam. 28. 3, 7.).

Another crisis, again 500 years later, was the removal of the nation into captivity into Assyria and Chaldea. Spiritism had once more become rampant among the people. The records of this are given in 2 Kings 17.17 and 21. 6. The widespread extent of the evil is evinced in the already quoted remonstrance of the prophet Isaiah against those who encouraged the people to make applications to mediums ("them that have familiar spirits"), (Isa. 8. 19, 20). This national sin brought down the judgment of God upon them.

Again, some 500 years after the captivity, at the period of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, and the time of Pentecost, a tremendous manifestation of Spiritist activity took place. The records of the Gospels and the Acts show that sorcery and demon possession abounded. The crisis of the coming of the Son of God and His redemptive work at Calvary, brought the Satanic hosts again into evidence. Christ and His Apostles were constantly confronted with the open hostility of demons. The agents of Spiritism were active in opposing the Gospel (see Acts 8. 7, 9-11 ; 13. 8-12 ; 16. 16-18 ; 19. 13). Thus the intervention of God, in the coming of His Son and the gift of the Holy Spirit, was the occasion of one of the greatest displays of Spiritist activity up to that time.

The Modern Outburst.

The obvious conclusion from the foregoing is that the world-wide Spiritist activities of recent times portend another great crisis in the history of mankind. It seems necessary, therefore, to consider somewhat more closely the circumstances of the present-day manifestation of Satanic Power.

The modern outburst of Spiritism has been dated from 1847, when, owing to events in the United States, a widespread interest was aroused in mediumship. Thence it extended to Europe. In 1871 the number of Spiritists in U.S.A. was estimated at 9,000. A recent estimate gives 20,000,000. The number of periodicals representing their teachings is numerous, and these are circulated in all the continents.

In the latter part of the last century a number of distinguished men became interested in the subject, and in 1891 the *Society for Psychical Research* was founded. The influence of this Society in the British Isles spread rapidly. In 1900 there were twenty-five Spiritist societies in the United States alone, and the mediums there numbered 10,000. Spiritism assumed a more pronouncedly religious aspect; scores of churches were founded; Spiritist ministers were ordained, and Sunday schools and day schools were established. The institution of the Black Mass in Paris is well known. The account of the prohibition of this abomination appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* of March 4th, 1907. The institution has, however, been revived.

The Religious Tendency.

The tendency to regard Spiritism as a religion has become very marked. Mr. W. T. Stead represented it as the duty of all Christians to take up the study of spirit-return and ministry as a religious duty. Evidences of the response to this are numerous. The following appeared in the *British Weekly* of November 4th, 1909:

“Probably no more surprising address has been delivered in a theological college within our generation than that in which Dr. Amory Bradford urged the students of Hackney College to occupy themselves with occult and spiritualistic studies.”

The *Guardian* of February 10th, 1916, contained an article boldly advocating intercourse with the dead. Again, in the *British Weekly* of July 6th, 1917, we find the following:

“Let science lead the way by all means. Borderland studies occupied thoughtful minds in England

for a generation before the War, and the three years conflict has made us all Borderers."

The Great War gave a tremendous impetus to Spiritism. Multitudes who did not know the true and Divinely appointed means of comfort in bereavement, had recourse to mediums and other agencies, either in ignorance, or rejection, of God's condemnation of the practice. How deplorable it is that comfort should be sought by a means both contrary to Divine command, and spurious and delusive, and not only so, but actually under the control of Satanic power!

The Press—Religious and Secular.

The tendency referred to above, to regard Spiritism as a religion rather than a science, is drawing a large number of ecclesiastics into the ranks of the Spiritists, and this is a further sign of the tremendous spread of the evil. In the February, 1920, issue of *Nash's Magazine*, there appeared an article from the pen of a Bishop of the Church of England discussing the attitude of the Christian Church toward Spiritism. "Spiritualism," he says, "is in its nature the ally and not the enemy of Christianity." This is a surprising utterance from such a source. It is enough to refer to "The New Revelation," by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, which may fairly be said to represent the teachings of Spiritists to-day. The blasphemous statements of that book against the Son of God expose Spiritism as the deadliest enemy rather than the ally of the Christian faith. In addition to the disparagement of His Person, the writer denies the value of His atoning work. He declares that inasmuch as "there never was any evidence of the fall of man," there is no justice in a vicarious sacrifice, nor in redemption from sin. This—and there is much more of the same sort—is quite in keeping with the tenets of Spiritists, who deny the essential and eternal Deity of Christ, the efficacy of His atonement, and the truth of His resurrection. How can Spiritism be the ally of Christianity? The Bishop further said that "Christians are naturally drawn towards Spiritism, and indeed towards Spiritual phenomena." They cer-

tainly have not derived any inclination thitherward from the teaching of Christ, or from the Word of God. If any find themselves "naturally drawn," let them beware, lest they be found fighting against God, and against their own welfare! The Bishop based his arguments on the appearance of Christ to His disciples during the forty days immediately succeeding His resurrection, and on their recognition of Him, and the converse they held with Him. It is scarcely consistent to use the great truth of the Lord's resurrection in order to support a heresy which denies it. The following resolution was moved in the House of Laymen:

"That inquiry into psychical phenomena, undertaken in a reverent and scientific spirit, is consistent with the Christian faith, and may, under God's providence, be a means whereby doubting minds are confirmed in behalf of our twofold nature, and of the personal continuance after death of the spiritual part of our being."

If those who profess Christianity were satisfied with the Word of God, they would not need confirmation by such an inquiry. A lying spirit may say what is true as well as any one else, but the motive nevertheless is to deceive. Part of the very deception of Spiritism is that it may teach an article of the Christian faith, such as the belief of the future life, but this does not constitute Spiritism an "ally of Christianity." The Apostle Paul did not regard as an ally the girl-medium at Philippi, who cried out, "These men are servants of the most high God, which proclaim unto you the way of salvation" (Acts 16. 16-18). That statement was true, but Paul repudiated a testimony derived from such a source. Spiritists boast that Spiritism will re-establish the fading belief in a future life. In the case of no true Christian is the belief fading. Moreover, the doctrine concerning the future life as taught by Spiritists is that of a future developed from the present by a process in advancing stages in various spheres. This is its "nobler Gospel!" In reality it is no Gospel at all. It is a delusive perversion of the teachings of Christianity.

An Ominous Increase.

Such is the portentous advance of Spiritism that those who know that the crisis of the next great intervention of God is near, are not surprised to find a whole page of one of the most widely circulated newspapers of the day devoted to news concerning the records of messages received by a clergyman through automatic writing.

It is not surprising to see the subject of Spiritism taken up from time to time in the columns of almost every leading newspaper in the world's press. Nor is it surprising to find that séances are being held in churches as a regular part of the ecclesiastical routine.

A medium recently said, "I learn from spirits that a vast spiritual movement is working out a religious scheme." This is no mediumistic illusion. Evil spirits are doubtless thoroughly aware of future conditions. They know the Scriptures. Another medium lately gave information as from a control, that in a few years half the people in the world would be either Spiritists or would engage in some form of Spiritism.

The Approaching Crisis.

The evil must be expected to continue making rapid strides. No careful student of Scripture will anticipate anything else. The Bible shows in what this so-called religion will culminate, and what is the character of the coming crisis, in which, as in similar circumstances in the past, the judgments of God will inevitably descend upon the earth. Our Lord foretold that the condition of the world just at the end of this age, prior to His return, would be similar to that which prevailed in the days of Noah, and again in the days of Lot's sojourn in Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17. 22-30). The record concerning the former is that the earth was filled with corruption (Gen. 6. 12). The prophecy uttered by Christ is confirmed in many other passages of the Word of God. Nowhere does the Bible teach that the latter part of this dispensation is to be characterised by the moral improvement of humanity. The Apostle Paul foretold that in later times men would give heed to seducing spirits

and doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4. 1 ; see also 2 Tim. 3. 1-5). The Book of the Revelation shows that just before the establishment of the Kingdom of God and the authority of Christ in the earth, by the execution of Divine judgment upon the ungodly, the activity of Satan and his hosts of evil spirits will be greater than ever. The announcement of the impending inauguration of the Kingdom in chapter 12, verse 10, is accompanied by the following warning :

“Woe for the earth and for the sea ; because the Devil has gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time” (verse 12).

The next chapters speak of the two great world-rulers, through whom Satan is to control human affairs for a short time at the close of this age.* Under them the world will be in such a state as to necessitate the retributive intervention of God, as was the case in the days of Noah. The description given of the second of these two potentates suggests that they will exercise Spiritist powers (Rev. 13. 11-18). This is made clear by the fact that they will act under the direction of Satan (verse 2), and from the statement in chapter 16, verses 13, 14, that the spirits of demons speak through both of them. In this last passage the second ruler, again symbolised like the first by the term “beast,” is also called “the false prophet.” The evil spirits will use them to organise mankind in general rebellion against God.

For this state of things Spiritism is undoubtedly preparing the way. The spirits of demons, acting through the practices and teachings of Spiritists are, by the most seductive methods, leading multitudes in rejection of God’s commands, and in denial of His Christ. The Divine judgments must ere long descend upon this state of things. Disobedience to God brings first the retribution of delusion, and then judgments upon the iniquity. Of these we have a solemn instance in the words of Isaiah concerning Egypt of old :

“The spirit of Egypt shall be made void in the midst of it ; and I will destroy the counsel thereof ; and they shall seek unto the idols, and to the charmers,

and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards; and I will give over the Egyptians into the hands of a cruel lord" (Isa. 19. 3,4).

The circumstances of the crisis that is now approaching are given in considerable detail in the Word of God. By the personal intervention of Christ, the Church, the true Church, consisting of all who, having been born of the Spirit of God are followers of Christ, will be removed from the earth (see 1 Thess. 4. 15-17). The Lord Jesus will subsequently be revealed from Heaven "with the angels of His power in flaming fire rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the Gospel" (2 Thess. 7. 8.).

A Final Warning.

Let Christians take heed against being drawn into tampering with Spiritism in any form. To play at planchette with the idea that it is an innocent toy, or to engage in thought-reading, table-turning, palmistry, and clairvoyance, is to throw oneself into the Devil's snare. Many a one has been allured into things of this sort at a social gathering, and has thereby entered on a course leading to results ruinous both to soul and to body. We should beware of counting trivial the character of that which we do not understand. Attempts to communicate with the other world through Spiritism are Satan's substitute for the work of the Holy Spirit, who leads us constantly into communion with God the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

Let us beware of what is called "The New Revelation." Spiritism is an ancient practice, by which for ages man has been allured to his destruction by Satan and his hosts of darkness. Let us never forget that

"our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the Heavenly places." Let us "take the whole armour, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

The end of this age is drawing near. The "day of salvation" has already been lengthened out in the long-

suffering of God. Satan knows his time is short, and is busier than ever alluring men to their doom by the false Gospels of Spiritism, Theosophy, and other deceptions. Should the reader as yet know not the joy of God's pardoning mercy through the death of Christ, and the gift of eternal life in Him, this may be freely obtained. The Divine conditions are simple. They are "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20. 21). That those by whom this booklet is read—and who have not received the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, by faith in Him, on the ground of His death for their sins—may be delivered from the blinding delusions of Satan and his hosts, and saved from coming doom, is the earnest prayer of the writer. "He that hath the Son hath the life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life" (1 John 5. 12).