

discern or receive things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, for they are spiritually discerned, 1 *Cor.* 2: 14. It is the work of the Spirit of the Almighty to give the benighted spirit of man the understanding of the things of which are spiritual.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours in hope of a spiritual resurrection,

A METHODIST.

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REPLY.

MY DEAR SIR:—The existence of the Spirit—the influence of the Spirit—and the manner of the influence of the Spirit—are three distinct propositions. You and I agree that the Spirit exists. We agree also in the influence of the Spirit as respects the fact of such influence. But we are at variance concerning the manner, method, or mode in which men are influenced by the Spirit or the way in which spiritual power is imparted. My attention will therefore be confined to your present letter only so far as it treats of the peculiar way in which you believe the Spirit invariably works.

You begin in the Old Testament. You are found even beyond the flood. I have long concluded that we have had two dispensations since that time. But suppose I admit, for argument's sake, that the people who lived prior to Noah, and also prior to Nehemiah, were guided, converted, or saved by the Lord's Spirit exerted upon them directly, nakedly, and without the agency of language, what, let me ask, could it avail in the present investigation? Even should you prove from the writings of Moses and the Prophets that all conversions to God in days of old, were effected by the Spirit without instrumentality, it will be necessary to furnish a second suit of arguments from the new oracles, in support of the doctrine that men are converted in these days by a Spirit immediately from heaven.

Still, for the purpose of showing all courtesy, I shall attempt to join you, and share your company, although I should risk a long passage, and perhaps a little tediousness before a final return. The words, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," are quoted by you to prove that God employed or exerted his Spirit without the medium of language or the instrumentality of words. Now, my dear Sir, look over this passage again, and point out where you find this idea; for I confess that I am incapable of finding a hint in these words relative to the manner of the striving of the Spirit. There is not ground in this passage even to infer how the Spirit strove. With you I say