

SPIRITUAL TELEPATHY

SOULS ARE ENERGIZED AND ELEVATED BY DIVINE INFLUENCE.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

Spiritual Phenomena Has Its Facts As Has the Material World—Gospel Telepathy a Subtle, Mysterious Influence, Which Should Induce All Good Men and Women to Think None But Good Thoughts.

Entered according to Act of Parliament of Canada, in the year 1894, by William Bailey, of Toronto, at the Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

Los Angeles Cal., March 6.—In this sermon the preacher discusses the psychological phenomena of mind influencing mind and shows how the soul may be elevated and energized by divine influence. The text is Acts x., 11, "And he saw heaven opened and a certain vessel descending."

Theory is often little more than the fine art of guessing. It is sometimes the way of concealing the fact that you do not know a thing, by using scientific language.

What is specific gravity? "That is the physical law," you answer, "which Isaac Newton discovered. Sitting one day under an overhanging tree branch in his orchard, he felt a puff of wind upon his cheek. The overhanging branch swayed, and a fall pippin, like a lump of gold, dropped into his lap. Then the English sage began to wonder why that apple came down to earth instead of flying away, as though it had the wings of a bird, toward the stars. As a result of these ponderings Newton generalized all the causes of cohesion and gravitation which bind this earth into a compact mass and called them "specific gravity." But, my friend, with your learned answer you have not explained to me anything. In reference to the laws of physical cohesion you have only given me two big words to express what I did not know before and what I do not know now.

As in the material world, so in the mental and spiritual world there are facts and phenomena which we know to be certainly true, though we cannot tell the "why" and the "wherefore" nor the causes which produced these results. For instance, we are nearly all ready to grant the power of human telepathy, or the influence of one human mind upon another human mind even at a distance. Sitting in a public meeting some night you exercise the power of will upon a person, and soon he will turn round and look at you, although that person could give no rational reason why he turned and looked. Indeed, so powerful sometimes is this influence of one human mind over another that many students of criminology have come to the belief that some murderers who wield the dagger or aim the pistol may be merely the helpless and pliant instruments of unknown criminals who have impelled them to commit their murderous deeds. Mesmerism, hypnotism, bewitchery, enchantment, are merely long names defining this mysterious power, which almost everywhere in the intellectual world is beginning to be recognized, and men are asking whether it may not sometimes de throne the supremacy of the individual will.

As one human mind has an influence over another human mind, we also know that there is a spiritual telepathy, a subtle, mysterious influence which the other world exerts upon our own. Visional messages as direct and unmistakable as that which came to Peter upon the housetop of Simon's house in Joppa may also come to us. We may be unable to explain how the divine manifestations come to the human mind. God will speak to us now if we will only let him, as surely as he spoke in many cases to his servants of old. If we look to God continually for guidance, to us, too, shall the promise be fulfilled, "Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee saying, This is the way, walk ye in it." The purpose of this sermon is not to analyze the causes of divine telepathy so much as to suggest ways in which God may be speaking to his children in these days.

Gospel telepathy, in the first place, comes to God's children as it did to Peter upon Simon's house-top, in broad daylight. By that I do not mean that it necessarily comes to us as it did to Peter at the sixth hour or when the sun is highest in the meridian, but I do mean this: When God speaks to man he speaks to him when he is rational, when he is wide awake, when his senses are on the alert, not when he is cooped up in some dark, deceitful retreat of a spiritualistic medium or when he is tossing about on his couch at midnight in uneasy slumber as the result of his digestive organs having been overloaded. There is a vision of the spirit and a vision of the flesh. There is a vision which comes from God and one that is, like the nightmare, the product of our own brain under the disturbance of physical or mental conditions. There must be careful discrimination lest we accept foolish fancies and mischievous impulses as the voice of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

I speak very emphatically on this subject. As Charles Dickens had his "Bleak House," with its Ghost's walk, and Nathaniel Hawthorne his "House of the Seven Gables," peopled with the evil spirits of past generations, unless we beware we may have the temples of our minds filled with the weirdest fantasies, created entirely by our own unregulated imagination or by evil associations and not by the vision of God. What right has any man to apply to himself the Ninety-first Psalm of David, as did a man some time ago in one of our eastern cities? He pondered over these verses day in and

day out: "For he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." Then, in order to demonstrate his belief in this saying, that man jumped from the top of a four storey building and broke nearly every bone in his body. Do you suppose a vision like that came from God or from the devil? What right has a man when in doubt about any matter to go to a fortune teller or to a sorcerer or a professor of divination and to regard the voice of a professional charlatan as the voice of God?

There is a vision sent by God. There is also a Satanic telepathy. Christ, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, was tempted by the visions of sin as well as we. In the fourth chapter of Luke we read that the Satan took Jesus up to a high mountain and in vision showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world and said: "All this power will I give thee and the glory of them, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I will give it. If thou, therefore, wilt worship me all shall be thine." Then Satan took Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple and asked him to cast himself down from thence, to prove that he was the Son of God. But Jesus, instead of obeying the Satanic vision, turned unto the devil and answered, "It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God." If being so pure and holy as our Lord was approached by temptation and assailed by a tempter who based his wicked suggestions on passages of Scripture, how careful should we be when a vision comes to us, as it came to Peter on the house-top, to make sure that the vision is heaven sent for our guidance and not a temptation from the enemy sent to our own destruction.

How to explain this manifestation I know not. I would give you the simple facts and let you judge for yourself. We were en route from Beirut to Athens by way of Smyrna. It was about 3 o'clock in the morning. I was awakened by my companion sobbing in his berth. "What is the matter, Trou?" I asked. "Oh," he answered, "something has happened at my sister's home. I had a strange vision about it. I was not asleep, but this vision has come upon me as an overwhelming reality. 'You sense, man?' I answered. 'You are not a fanatic, are you? You were asleep and had a bad dream; that is all.' I did not believe in God's visions then as I do now. My friend said nothing, but that vision made such an impression upon him that he took note of the time and the latitude and the longitude we were then in. From Athens we went directly home. So overpowering was his conviction of the reality of that vision that instead of going at once to his Philadelphia

home he stopped first at a friend's residence not far from where he lived. "How are the folks?" said he. The friend answered: "What! Did you not receive any message lately? Why, your sister lost both her twin boys in one day. They both died of diphtheria within an hour of each other." My friend asked the time. They died about the same time the wonderful vision came to him in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. I ask you not to give a tenuous interpretation of the message. You cannot. I cannot. From a human standpoint was not that vision very strange? Can you interpret it from any supernatural causation?

But why be surprised at the incident I have related? You have heard of many similar occurrences. You had a divine vision in your own life when the undertaker rudely broke into your home. When the doctor said she was dead, at first you were almost broken hearted. You were like a madman. You paced up and down the room saying: "Oh, God, how can I get along without her! Oh, my God, my God! What shall I do?" Hardly had you uttered that agonizing prayer when a strange peace came into your soul. She seemed to come back to you. She seemed to put her arms about your neck and to say with her old terms of endearment: "Husband, papa, sweetheart, son, I am all right. Christ has surely taken me away for a little while. I cannot come to you, but you shall come to me." Was it a dream? Was that message merely a Satanic mockery or was it a divine vision coming to you as one came to Peter on Simon's house-top? When you saw her joy and happiness was it not the same kind of a divine vision as that which came to St. John when he cried out in Apocalypse: "Who are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

The divine telepathy often comes as a direct command for practical gospel work. As Peter on Simon's house top by his vision knew that Christ was sending him forth to carry the gospel to all the world, whether Jew or Gentile, so by a divine vision we know that God wants us to go forth to spiritually save that man and do this or that work. We know it just the same as we know what our earthly employer wants us to do when he gives us a bundle of checks and tells us to go and deposit them in the bank. By divine telepathy we knew what God wants us to do. God is bidding you to go forth to spiritually save that man and that man, to do this gospel work and that gospel work. Within you to-day you may hear the call. With your wide open eyes in broad daylight you may see the divine vision.

This gospel call for practical work is the more impressive and imminent because God's promises are never haphazard; they are never purposeless or meaningless dreams. They always have a very practical interpretation. When Peter looked off from Simon's house top he saw a great sheet let down from the heavens, filled with "all manner of four footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air." That vision was a symbol of the fact that Jesus died to save the Gentile as well as the Jew, the despised barbarian as well as the Jewish high priest, the uncircumcised as well as the circumcised. Hardly had the vision ended when Peter heard a loud rapping at the lower gate. "Who is there? Who is there?" was asked. "I am a messenger from Cornelius," is the answer. "I am not a Jew, but a Gentile, sent by a holy angel to thee. Wilt thou come and tell him about Jesus Christ?" The vision and the knock at the door were one summons. Then it was that Peter knew his vision was divine and that he was called to a duty which he might have shrunk from if he had not seen the preparatory vision. No longer was the offer of salvation to be made to the Jews only; no longer were the messengers of Christ to regard the Gentiles as common or unclean. So much the vision had taught him, and so Peter went with the men and preached Christ to the Gentile centurion, and he found that the gospel was the power of God unto salvation to the Gentile as well as to the Jew.

God's plans are never haphazard incongruities. When the good Ananias one day in the city of Damascus had the command in a vision that he should place the hands of holy ordination upon the bitterest enemy of the Christian disciples he at first doubted the divine authenticity of the vision. Ananias looked up at first into the heavens and in surprise said: "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to the saints at Jerusalem. Not him! Not Saul! I cannot ordain Saul of Tarsus." But hardly had the good Ananias entered the house to which God had directed him when he brought him a staggering, stumbling blind man. It was Saul! It was the arch enemy Saul! Then Ananias knew that his vision was divine. So, O man and woman, the divine vision comes to you for practical gospel work. You feel it. You know it. Why? Because while I speak there arises before your mind some one man, some one woman, some one child, you can save. You are like Peter standing upon the house top. You are listening to the messenger of Cornelius calling you to carry the news of salvation to some waiting soul.

But there is still another fact about God's visions which it would be well for us to dwell upon. The divine telepathy comes to the despised man's home as frequently as it does to the ruler's palace. Who was Peter's host at the house where he had this divine vision? He was Simon the tanner. He was in all probability the most despised man in all the coast capital at that time. Among the Jews the tanner was a social outcast. The harlot, the

murderer, the insurrectionist, were more respected than he. The condemned criminal might be pardoned of his crimes even though he was the thief who waylaid the poor man on the road to Jericho, but the tanner's calling was never forgiven. As men shrink from contact with the leper, whose touch might communicate his loathsome disease to the healthy person, so the Jew shrank from contact with the tanner, whose presence in a home brought ceremonial contamination. The door of hospitality was always slammed shut in the face of the tanner.

By the old Jewish law, if a husband died without any children, his brother was compelled to marry the widow. But a widow was not compelled to marry that brother if he was a tanner. Not even the Jewish law would compel a woman to suffer such an ignominy. If a man married a woman without telling her he was a tanner, she could have the matrimonial bonds instantly annulled, as soon as the deception was found out. Of course, there had to be tanners among the Jews, as there must be hangmen for this present generation; yet, so bitterly were the tanners despised in ancient times that by the eastern law no tanner was allowed to build his tannery nearer to the outskirts of a town than fifty cubits. It was to this despised home that the heavenly vision came, opening the gate of the Christian church to the Gentile nations. Your home, O man, O woman, may be humble; it may be located in what the aristocratic people call the slums; it may even have been associated with the vicious pollution of society; but even there the voice from the heavenly mansions may be heard. "I came not," said the compassionate Saviour, "to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." You may be a social outcast, as much shunned as Simon the tanner, but in your house, too, you may hear a voice saying, "Come, now, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

One more thought is suggested by Peter's experience. This vision of the sheet coming down from the heavens filled with all manner of four footed beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air came to Peter when he was comparatively a young man. It came to him not only as a message of salvation, but also as a command, especially for young men and women, to go to work. He was then a young man in the thirties. My young friends, note the importance of this fact. It means that God is appealing to the young and the physically stalwart to consecrate our energy and vigor to his service. "I never hear my pastor preach," said a young girl, "but I am always filled with the desire to say, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?'" So I never read an account of the Joppa vision, but I always feel this a message especially for me and for the young people to whom I speak to do something. Oh, young men and young women, will you not be roused, as Peter was aroused, with the thought that you may become gospel messengers to a sinful world? Will you not catch an inspiration for glorious Christian work by standing upon the house top of Simon the tanner?

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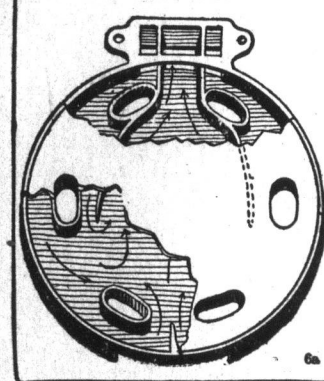
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