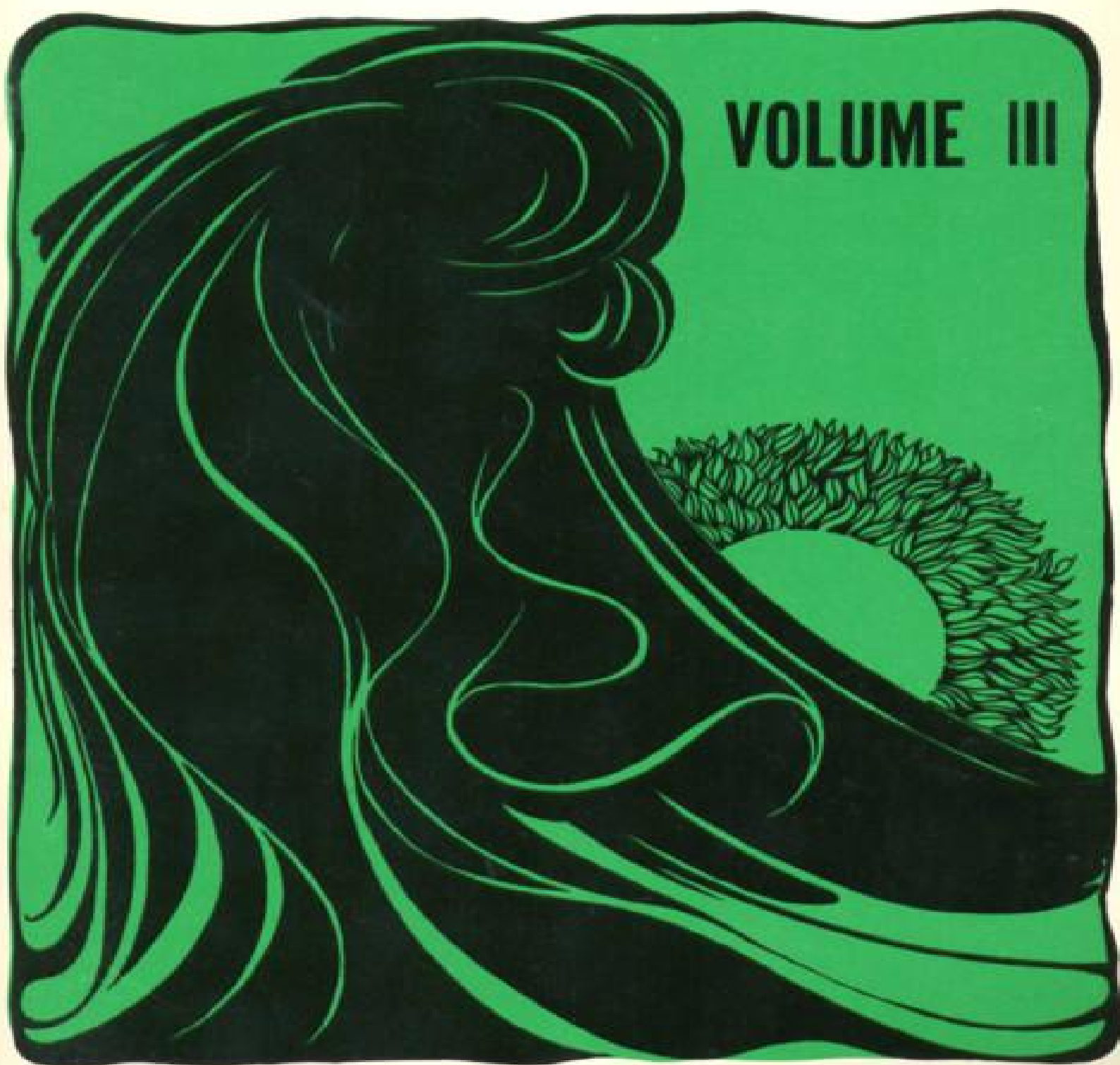


SATAN, FALLEN ANGELS AND DEMONS SERIES

SATAN'S

DEMON MANIFESTATIONS AND DELUSIONS

VOLUME III



Gordon Lindsay

Volume 3—Demon Manifestations and Delusions This is the third in a series of books on Satan, Fallen Angels, and Demons. The Scriptures definitely teach that Satan and his host of evil spirits, under certain circumstances, are able to produce visible various spirit phenomena. The one purpose of these manifestations is to deceive people into believing they are of God and thereby leading them into error.

For example, Pharaoh's sorcerers were able to duplicate the feat of Aaron who cast his rod upon the ground with the effect of its becoming a serpent. Aaron's rod, however, swallowed up the rods of the magicians showing that God's power is always supreme over the devil's.

Spiritualism or spiritism which in Bible language is witchcraft, has considerable popularity among people who have little knowledge of the Scriptures. The Bible describes the sad fate of Saul who visited the witch of Endor who was a spiritist medium.

In this volume the writer describes a number of experiences in which demon spirits succeeded in deluding people. Some of these recovered from their delusion; others, unfortunately, did not.

A chapter is given to the subject of the various spiritist phenomena, such as automatic writing, spirit photographs, communication with the dead and sorcery with its materializations.

The last chapter deals with means by which evil spirits can be detected. It gives certain tests whereby the true nature of the spirit may be ascertained. This is in line with the Scripture in I John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

In these days of delusion it is extremely important that the believer should be able to discern between truth and error. Many false prophets are arising in the world, leading many astray. A careful study of this book will enable the reader to distinguish between the true and the false.

SATAN, FALLEN ANGELS, AND DEMONS SERIES

VOLUME 3

Demon Manifestations and Delusions

by Gordon Lindsay

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CHAPTER 1

Spirit Phenomena as Revealed in the Scriptures

The Scriptures definitely teach that Satan and his host of evil spirits are, under certain circumstances, able to produce visibly certain spirit phenomena—phenomena which cannot be accounted for by natural means. These manifestations almost all depend upon the demonic possession of, or control of a human body. Without embodiment, evil spirits are greatly, if not altogether, restricted in their activities on earth. Satan was able to deceive Eve by embodying himself in a serpent. (This beast we remember, was at that time quite different in form, than after it was cursed.)

Satan's preternatural manifestations have one purpose, that is to deceive people into believing they are of God, and thereby leading them into error. Had Eve known that it was none other than Satan himself who was conversing with her, she would have fled for her life. But being deceived, she listened and hearkened to his smooth words.

THE MAGIC OF EGYPT

Pharaoh's sorcerers were able to duplicate the feat of Aaron who cast his rod upon the ground, with the effect of its becoming a serpent. Aaron's rod however swallowed up the rods of the magicians, (Exod. 7:8-12) showing that while Satan may imitate certain phenomena of the power of God, nevertheless God's power is always supreme over his.

The enchanters of Pharaoh were also able to turn the waters of the Nile into blood as did Aaron. (Exod. 7:22). The purpose of this act apparently, was Satan's desire to confuse the issue, and to make it appear that Moses had only the same kind of magic as possessed by Pharaoh's witch doctors and magicians. Likewise the Egyptian magicians were able to produce frogs by their enchantments, as did Aaron and Moses. (Exod. 8:7). There was a limit to the power of the magicians, however, for when they tried to duplicate the feat of Aaron's rod bringing forth lice, they failed. (Exod. 8:18). At this point these enchanters apparently became convinced that the power of Aaron and Moses was of God. (Verse 19) Pharaoh was too stubborn to concede this and invited further judgments upon his land. The magicians' magic by this time had played out, for when the plague of boils came, they were stricken sore (Exod. 9:11) and could get no relief from their own enchantments. In certain cases it appeared that the magicians had power to invoke a curse but apparently no power to remove the curse.

WITCHCRAFT—SPIRITUALISTIC MEDIUMS

Witchcraft, the unlawful intercourse of human beings with evil spirits was practiced in the earliest times. The law of Moses was stem against this practice. The decree was, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." (Exod. 22:18). During the time King Saul was obedient, he carried out this law, and banished witchcraft from the land. However, after a long series of disobedient acts, the time came that the Lord forsook Saul and "answered him no more." The ill-fated king then decided to consult the witch of Endor, a woman possessed with a familiar spirit (I Sam. 28:7) in an attempt to communicate with Samuel, who was already dead.

A familiar spirit, is the so-called "control" by which spirits impersonating the dead pretend to communicate with the living.

In most if not all cases, it is nothing but a base deception. Evil spirits know the habits of certain individuals during their life time, are able to cleverly impersonate even the tone of the person's voice, and the audience is deluded into believing that they are actually listening to the dead person represented. A cruel deception, yes. But those deceived are responsible for being misled, by forsaking the commandment of the Scriptures which expressly forbids attempted communication with the dead. In the case of Saul, judgment came upon his house, for his sins, one of which was this attempt to communicate with Samuel through the mediumship of a witch:

"So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it." (I Chron. 10:13).

There are many Bible scholars who believe that in this one case, God overruled the impersonations of the familiar spirit, and brought the real Samuel up from Sheol. The text lends some evidence to this view, but if so, it is the only exception ever recorded.

There is the instance in the Book of Acts of a girl possessed by "a spirit of divination which brought her master much gain by soothsaying." (Acts 16:16). She was what might be termed in our day as a fortuneteller. The Apostle Paul moved by the Spirit of God, rebuked the unclean spirit that possessed the girl, and she no longer was able to carry on her soothsaying. The Bible plainly shows that these so-called psychic manifestations are in reality caused by evil spirits.

Satan demonstrated one of his more remarkable powers, by being able to take Christ, apparently bodily, up onto a high mountain and show him all "the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them in a moment of time." The Lord answered him, however, by the Word of God, indignantly rejecting his suggestion to worship anyone other than the Lord God. (Luke 4:5-8).

The Apostle Paul, expressly states that at the time of the Coming of Christ, Satan will be permitted unusual manifestations of his power. The peoples of the earth having rejected Christ, they are now permitted to be deceived by a false one ...

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (II Thes. 2:9-12).

We may therefore anticipate that the manifestation of Satanic supernatural phenomena will greatly increase in the earth at the time of the end. This is of course exactly what is even now taking place. Jesus himself warned of the appearance of such preternatural phenomena, and that "signs and wonders" of false prophets and antichrists would be of such a nature "that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matt. 24:24).

The Book of Revelation also reveals that many unusual Satanic manifestations will occur during that time. (Rev. 13:13-14).

It will not be possible for the elect to be deceived, however, since by their study of the word of God, they are forewarned.

Careless earthdwellers however will be fair game for the devil's delusions, and will be snared by him in great numbers. It is therefore important that we be aware of, and understand the devil's manifestations which are taking place in these days, that we may be on the alert and be able to detect them when they appear.

CHAPTER 2

A Study of Cases of Delusions Caused By Seducing

Spirits

The following are a number of selected cases that have come under my own personal observation in which activity of seducing spirits was evident. Many more instances might be cited but these will be sufficient to suit our purpose.

1. THE CASE OF INDIAN BILL

During the time shortly after my conversion I made it a habit to set aside certain periods for seeking the Lord. My heart was hungry for a deeper revelation of God's wisdom and power.

Sometimes I would give hours, even nights waiting upon the Lord. During this period I was joined by another brother, who often spent considerable time with me in prayer. He was almost a full-blooded Indian and we called him "Indian Bill." Indian Bill seemed quite sincere and it was not until some time later that I learned that he indulged periodically in heavy potations of strong liquor, at which time he became quite another man.

Actually I believe that he desired to be a real Christian, but when temptation pressed him he would yield to it, thus opening the way for the operation of demon powers.

Being a new convert, I was rather naive in my understanding of spiritual things. At the time, I supposed that most Christians were only a little less than perfect, and altogether I possessed a very inadequate knowledge of the cunning and subtlety of Satan.

One night while we were praying, Indian Bill began to hear a voice. The voice claimed to be of God. It then informed him that he had been specially favored of God to receive certain "revelations." Bill was far from an educated person, and the "revelations" certainly indicated that another intelligence than he, was doing the speaking. In fact, most of the subjects discussed were well beyond the ken of my companion's knowledge. Such subjects as heaven and hell were minutely discussed, and the conditions of those places described in detail.

I had a novice's fascination by all this and at the time had no doubt but that the communications were of God. Having reached the place where we had unreserved confidence in the "messages", the voice then began to play on our human ego.

Foolish dupes that we were, we were elated over the thought of being the recipients of what seemed to us to be revelations as great as those in the

Bible.

After a time the voice began to speak to us against certain ones in the church who, it warned, would not accept these revelations. We were told that these people were jealous and that under no circumstances should we give them heed.

Then came the climaxing "revelation." Indian Bill was told that he was "Elijah" returned to earth! (Poor Elijah! How many people in the course of history have supposed that they were Elijah, and have gone to extreme efforts to prove the alleged identity!) Indian Bill was soon convinced that he was Elijah and the voice warned me that I must accept him as God's special prophet. Naive as I was, now for the first time I began to entertain suspicions. When the young man began to publicly declare his office as that prophet I at last saw that something was decidedly wrong. It might appear to the reader that I should have become suspicious sooner, but it must be remembered that I was just a young convert, and was fair game for the enemy.

Nor did I at that time, know about my companion's addiction to alcoholic beverages and his periodic relapses—which made possible the operation of seducing spirits.

Nevertheless, inexperienced as I was, I became convinced that the voice must be a seducing or familiar spirit, and I was shocked to realize that I had been so easily taken in. I then earnestly plead with my companion to seek God for deliverance from the deceiving spirit. In justice to him, I must say that he was willing to listen. We knelt together to pray. But the voice with great urgency warned us that we must not doubt, that all was well, if we did not doubt. Finally it said, "I will prove to you that I am of God." At that very moment a guitar standing in the corner made a sound as if a hand had been drawn over the strings producing a set of cords! This was repeated several times...

However, I was no longer deceived. I realized that actually we were having a demonstration of spiritualism, and that the spirit speaking through Indian Bill was evidently a seducing spirit. I then challenged the voice, declaring it was not God but was in fact a familiar spirit. Immediately there was a

surprising result. The devil unmasked, plainly confessed, "Yes, I am the devil. God has permitted me to deceive you because you have committed the unpardonable sin! You are forever lost!"

For several days I was almost ready to believe this, and I went through great anguish of soul. I thought perhaps I had committed the unpardonable sin. However, God came to me with the following Scripture: "Let not your hearts be troubled.

Believe in God believe also in me." The Lord then made me to know that He had permitted me to go through this experience for a purpose. That I must not trust every spirit, but I must try the spirits and learn the difference between the true and the false. It was a valuable lesson to me in the years to come and one that I never forgot.

CASE II—THE CASE OF THE "UNPARDONABLE SIN" DELUSION

The following case, the events of which also took place shortly after my conversion made a strong impression upon my mind. The victim in this instance was a person close to our family. In fact, we considered her our grandmother, because she had taken care of mother, after her own mother had died. The delusion that she came under was the one just referred to. The devil told her she had committed the unpardonable sin, and she believed it.

Years previously, grandmother and her husband had lived in prosperous circumstances. That was before the time of the automobile, and grandfather operated a prosperous livery business. Apparently, however, he was not too shrewd a business man, and his assets gradually declined. At length they had to move into a small house and get along in a very modest way. This was extremely mortifying to grandmother, who could never forget the days of their prosperity. Having been used to fine things she constantly brooded over their reversal of fortune.

Instead of being thankful for the blessings she had received as all Christians should be, she allowed herself to get into a state of chronic frustration. Somehow she felt that God had not been exactly fair to her.

In the end it was too much. As the result of her constant worry, she broke down completely. Her mind became irrational and she fell under the delusion that she had committed the unpardonable sin. The devil's trump card is to tell discouraged souls that they have committed this sin, when they have not.

Actually grandmother had been a good Christian woman, but her constant brooding over financial reverses made conditions favorable for the enemy to get control of her mind.

Despite her delusions, I have no doubt concerning her salvation. Long before, as a true believer she had placed her soul in the hands of God, and God is not the one to forsake His children in adversity. Too bad that she had not placed her mind also in the hands of the Lord. She allowed fear to dominate her, and like Job of old, her fears came upon her. As is the case of many other Christians she failed to enter into the place of trust in the providence of God. The penalty of this failure was that the last years of her life were lived under a cloud.

CASE III—SATANIC DELUSION OF A FALSE RELIGION

Some time ago, in another publication, my wife related a story which is one of the most bizarre of our entire experience.

As many of our students may not have read the story, I am including it here. This sad event which my wife relates, shows the extent and power of demon delusion when the person deliberately ignores Bible warnings to test the spirits, and human pride blinds the individual to the nature of the deception.

She was a beautiful girl—a rather tall, slender blond.

Her grace and charm won her many friends. Her musical talent gave her an open door of service. When she stood before an audience, there was a natural poise about her, that was both fascinating and relaxing. But above and beyond all this, there was a genuine consecration to the cause to which she was dedicated—so much so, that she spent many of her Sunday afternoons, at the church praying for the young people, whose meetings she

led at 6 P.M. Her entire family was spiritual and a credit to our church. To sum it all up, she was an outstanding leader, with a bright future if she continued to wholly follow the Lord.

After knowing this girl for several years, our close contact with her was broken when we left that part of the country for other fields of labor for the Lord. We heard, indirectly, that she had gone to Los Angeles to attend Bible School.

But while in school, she made the mistake that many before her had made—that, of getting her eyes on people, instead of keeping them on Jesus. She became lonesome, disillusioned, and discouraged—a fertile field for the Devil to begin sowing his seeds of doubt and discontent.

Next, she began attending a church whose standards were considerably lower than those she upheld in her home town. Then came the report that the pastor was keeping company with this blond. How could this be?

He, a married man with a family? But it was true! And finally, the news that they had run away!

But the wife had somewhat to say. Soon the police were on their trail, and shortly after apprehended them.

The minister was put in jail and convicted of stealing, as the car he had used to make his getaway, was in his wife's name and thus was her personal property.

And there in that jail was born one of the most satanic-inspired, false religions. The minister instead of confessing and forsaking his sin, decided to go on a fast.

To get an individual to repent is a Herculean task, unless the Spirit of God is given place to work. The guilty would rather do most anything than to confess and forsake his sin. It has been said that the two hardest words to say in the American language are, "I'm sorry."

But Gods Word says, "Obedience is better than sacrifice."

Finally, as the fast continued, a voice spoke and said, "You must start a new religion. All other religions are wrong. The Christian faith is error. Christ is a bastard.

You must overthrow them all. You must start this new doctrine now. Call this true religion Y—."

Immediately, he sent for his newly acquired wife. As he told her of his "revelation," a strange power came upon her—a strong delusion from hell—and she embraced this cult, utterly forsaking Christ! But he had to serve out his term in the penitentiary. Who was to carry on in the meantime? Why she, of course!

And so it was, after our party had just completed a large salvation-healing revival in Los Angeles which ended in the Shrine Auditorium, with some 7,000 attending in a single night, we picked up the local paper and there beheld an announcement of a Sunday afternoon service by this strange cult. I felt I must attend and see for myself, as the reports were hard to believe about one who had been so close to us.

Making my way into a large auditorium of one of the downtown hotels, I slipped into a seat near the rear of the room, breathing a prayer that I would go unnoticed. Several hundred people were present.

Soon the service began. Someone led some songs, all of which were unfamiliar to me. I looked anxiously for our friend. At last, she made her way to the platform.

There she stood, beautifully clothed in a long, shining garment, with a cluster of flowers on her left shoulder.

All eyes were upon her!

What I was to see and hear during the next hour, even yet brings cold chills to me, and will remain indelibly imprinted on my mind as long as I live! All at once, a spontaneous praise and worship of Y— broke forth from the people, as they rose to their feet with hands stretched toward heaven. This occurred again and again. I felt at times I must run from the building, so

oppressive to me were the powers of darkness, but I decided to weather it, sitting silently with my hat somewhat pulled over my face to avoid recognition.

And then came the sermon—a bitter attack against Christianity. The blond mistress stood there and cursed and blasphemed Christ, again and again, calling Him "bastard," while the congregation shouted, "Praise Y—!"

She read scriptures from the Bible concerning the Holy Spirit, the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection. She would describe the event in a lewd manner, and pervert it into a sex joke, amid a mighty roar of "Praise Y—" from her adherents.

At long last, the service came to a close.

Refreshments were served, but I could not partake as they were offered to "strange gods." Then it was that I stepped in line to shake hands with the speaker. When suddenly she recognized me, her face became an ashen white, and she began to tremble. Calling me by my first name (which she had never before done), she asked,

"Were you in the service?" I replied in the affirmative. I then asked her to accompany us to dinner, as Brother Lindsay was to join me momentarily. She declined with many and varied excuses, but I insisted.

Another hour passed, and it was apparent that our guest was stalling for time, hoping we would leave. She disappeared into a dressing room, outside of which we stationed ourselves, as the minutes ticked wearily away.

Finally, at long last she emerged with several "attendants," who, she informed us, must accompany her. We drove to Clifton's Cafeteria and there persuaded her to leave her "escorts" in the car while we went in to eat.

Once inside, there was a coldness in the atmosphere.

Nevertheless, we tried to be friendly and encouraged her to talk. Finally, she opened up. She was, not too many years hence, to give birth to the true Messiah, out in the desert, in a haven that was even now being established.

As for Christianity, she had forsaken it because it was dying.

Then it was that Brother Lindsay asked her if she had heard of the large meeting our party had just closed in the Shrine. No, she hadn't heard. Nor had she heard of other similar campaigns in various cities with many thousands attending. We assured her that the real Christian revival was just getting underway, thousands were getting saved and healed, and God was pouring out His Spirit on all flesh. Her face registered surprise and bewilderment as we continued to show her the error of her decision. Then nervously, she arose quickly, shook hands with Brother Lindsay, threw her arms around me, hugged and kissed me, and walked away to join her escorts."

When we arrived back at our apartment, we prayed earnestly for her salvation if she had not already crossed the line, and asked God to bring a halt to this terrible delusion which was spreading as a new religion. We stayed in the city an additional two weeks. Each Saturday, we would look for her ad. Each time it stated, "Due to the illness of—(the young blond)—no service would be held." We learned later that week, from a relative of hers, that immediately after she left us, she developed a throat trouble and was unable to talk. We felt God had at least temporarily closed down the services while we were in the city.

For a long time we had no further news concerning this cult, though occasionally we got a letter in our office from one who had fallen into the Devil's trap. "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." II Thess. 2:10-12.

Now comes the most startling development: I had been seeking information concerning the status of this movement and also the sequel to what had happened to this young woman.

I was dictating a letter to a Los Angeles newspaper for possible information, when our secretary, who had recently been a resident of Denver, suddenly paused and looked up in an excited manner, exclaiming, "Why I know what happened to that woman!" This of course took me by

surprise, that our secretary would have any knowledge of the matter. And what she told me, shocked me beyond words! Nevertheless, she affirmed that it was true, so we wrote to the Denver News from which we have gathered the following information.

THE TERRIBLE FINALE—MURDER!

We learned from this newspaper that at the time this young woman disappeared from our knowledge, she had entered the entertainment field, and in 1950, was known in Houston as the "Blond Bombshell," in the various night clubs, where she sang and played. After several years of nightlife, she decided to turn again to her strange religious delusion. However, by this time, and we quote from Denver's Rocky Mountain News, March 4, 1957, "she separated from her husband—and divorce proceedings were under way.

"Miss—leased her offices in Denver, a week ago with plans to lecture and write on psychic phenomena stressing the use of extra-sensory perception. She planned to establish headquarters here for the Kingdom of—, a religious cult.

"She told police she was working late Friday when she was accosted by a tall Negro man. She said the man raped her after smashing a pop bottle over her head and striking her in the mouth and stomach. The assailant then knifed a janitor who came to her aid.

"One day later, on Sunday morning, Miss—was found by her hostess, with her feet resting on the bed and her head and shoulders on the floor. It appeared she suffered a convulsion. Death occurred at 6:30 A.M."

The Rocky Mountain News carried inch tall headlines on the front page of Monday's paper—with a seven inch photograph—saying, BLOND MYSTIC DIES AFTER ASSAULT. So ended the career of one who might have been greatly used of God, had she followed in His footsteps.

(This is a terrible story but it is an entirely true one. The strangest thing about it was the apparent gullibility of so many people in accepting this obviously blasphemous new religion.

We verily believe that we were brought in touch with this new cult of Satan just in time. No amount of reasoning could seem to change those who were caught in its toils, as we learned that night. By turning the whole matter over to God. (I Cor. 5) at the crucial hour of its inception it apparently resulted in halting its spread. As we learned later this woman ceased her role as high-priestess of the cult and went on the stage. When at length she tried once more to set up a headquarters for the cult in Denver, she was murdered within a week. If such delusion can get such a grip on people in these days of enlightenment, what will happen when the antichrist is revealed with his supreme deceptions?)

CASE IV—THE DELUDED EVANGELIST

The last case which I will relate is that of a deluded minister.

His former wife who was also involved in the story is now dead, and we feel free to give the details, of course withholding the name. Here was a man who possessed above average ability, and his ministry up to the time he gave heed to "seducing spirits," showed considerable promise. However, there was a certain instability in his nature and it soon was apparent that he was moved by an ambition to ride higher and faster than his ministry warranted. Such individuals unfortunately are often open to self-deceptions.

I had noted with some misgivings his occasional reports of alleged conversations with the "Angel Gabriel." Now, visits of angels are not to be considered absurd. The ministry of angels is clearly both an Old Testament and New Testament doctrine.

However, angels usually appear to the humble, and their visitations are hardly for the purpose of providing promotional material for an evangelist. Nevertheless, I was at a loss to say anything to him at the time, as I did not want him to think that I was skeptical of supernatural manifestations. I decided to do what the Scripture advises, "Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good."

Then a tragic thing happened. The evangelist and his wife and another girl were involved in a serious automobile accident.

The girl was instantly killed, and the wife, barely escaping with her life, was completely paralyzed from her waist down. We were all shocked by the accident, and of course sincerely hoped for the lady's full recovery. The evangelist seemed confident that his wife would be healed. He confided to us that the miracle would be of such a startling nature that it would astonish the church. Nevertheless the months dragged by and the woman did not receive deliverance. Apparently the nerves of the spinal column had been severed and nothing short of a creative miracle would restore the woman to a normal condition.

It was at this time that I received a letter from this evangelist relating a vision that he had, and that the "Angel Gabriel" had talked to him about his wife's healing. According to him the angel had informed him of the very day she was to be healed!

Accordingly he had made arrangements for photographers to be on hand at the time.

To me the elements of the story did not ring true. The evangelist apparently was sincere in his belief in the "revelation"

he had allegedly received. But the fact that the date was set, and photographers were to be alerted seemed to me an ominous sign.

The following was the pertinent part of his letter:

"Dear Brother Lindsay,

"I have some news for you—I do believe is direct from heaven. I've never written a letter like this before.

I'm positive it is the hand of God. The Lord has shown me many wonderful things about our future ministry—auditoriums packed tens of thousands—greatest revivals I have ever seen or heard about ...

"On the morning of October 31, 1951, at about 5 o'clock I had a marvelous revelation... I was caught up into the heavens. Among things I heard was X—walking, and I heard the date of her miracle healing. I'm not to tell

anyone according to the words spoken, only the miracle will definitely be this fall ... You remember I told you the Angel Gabriel came to me a week or so before the accident ... Gabriel told me he would return at the appointed time ... X—will walk and preach again...

"I am writing you a sealed letter. I know you will not open it as it contains the date of X—'s healing... I wrote you and no one else knows of this date and I'll phone you the hour she walks! I'll have cameras ready and get pictures . . . I know this will be a great stir and a victory for God."

When I received this letter I had an overwhelming feeling that here was a man who was receiving communications from seducing spirits. That he was so under their influence that nothing could be done to warn him. All I could do was to wait until the deception became evident. Several months passed and as I did not hear anything, I finally opened the sealed letter which I discovered had been notarized. In the letter were the words:

"I was caught up into the heavens and saw visions of God. At that time a voice spoke to my anxious soul and told me the exact date of my wife's miracle recovery. The very date of her healing will be Nov. 24, 1951 ... X—will walk in just 16 days from today... . As I received the great heavenly vision I saw my dear wife walking for the first time in nearly 2 1/2 years. She was with me in revivals and standing beside me in the pulpit—her paralyzed body and nerves well again."

The date set came and went, and of course nothing happened. This should have been a warning to the evangelist that he was being deceived. There was no excuse now for him not being on the alert. But was this the case? Alas, no! He was open for more "revelations" of an even more deceitful and unscriptural kind. Some months afterward news reached us that an "angel" had come again and this time told him that the reason his "dear wife" was not healed was because she was not right with God. The thing for the evangelist to do was to divorce her at once and marry another woman. If he did this then the blessing of God would again be upon his ministry. And alas, that is exactly what this foolish evangelist did.

I do not know if he is still receiving these "revelations" but one thing is certain—since that time he has no longer been in active national ministry.

Now and then we hear word that he attempts a meeting in this city and that. But his past soon catches up. His act of leaving his poor invalid wife to shift for herself and to be an object of charity was of such an inexcusable nature that most doors have been permanently closed against him. Such is the fruit of turning one's back on the plain statements of the Scripture and giving heed to seducing spirits.

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:8.

Having considered these various cases which typify the demon-inspired obsessions and deceptions which ensnare so many today, we shall now take note of what is perhaps the greatest religious delusion of our day, namely spiritism, or spiritualism as it is more commonly called. Here we find a cult whose main distinction is the supposed powers of its mediums to communicate with dead, but which is actually an organized imposture carried out by demons. The communicating spirits are none other than familiar or seducing spirits, who pretend to be the departed loved ones of grieving survivors.

CHAPTER 3

Spiritualism

There is a genuine reality to spiritualism, the same as there is a reality to Satan. We know that the devil exists although he is never up to any good. Although much that goes under the name of spiritualism is fraud and trickery, nevertheless some of the phenomena manifested in the seance room is genuine, in that demon spirits rather than human manipulators are the source of it.

It is to be noted that practically all the phenomena of sorcery and black magic manifested in Bible days, is being repeated again today. Usually, though not in all cases, the manifestation of spirit phenomena requires the presence of a medium with

"psychic powers"—which is actually the working of what the Bible calls a familiar spirit. However, mediums often find that regular seances are extremely trying, and in time are apt to result in mental deterioration of the subject. Hence, and this is something of common knowledge, trickery and deception is rather the rule than the exception in the practices of the average spiritualist medium. It is much easier for them to secure the same effects through sleight-of-hand and legerdemain, than it is to go into the trance and be under the power of the "control spirit," whose messages and conduct are often erratic and even embarrassing. Indeed it is almost ludicrous to note that special magic equipment is regularly advertised in some of the spiritualist journals!

Investigators of spiritualism have met up with so much trickery among its practitioners that some of them have come to the conclusion that it is all sleight-of-hand. In this however they are mistaken. The power of spiritualism as it exists today, lies in some very genuine manifestations of preternatural phenomena.

It is genuine in that it exists, though entirely false, in its pretensions, since the supposed communication with the dead is actually the work of deceiving spirits, who simulate the voice and personality of the person they are impersonating.

In this chapter we shall briefly discuss the various common spirit phenomena which are manifested in spiritualistic séances or elsewhere. This is more important to understand than many think. For this traffic with evil spirits is actually the same as the sorcery recorded in the Bible. Uninitiated persons, even Christians, not understanding these things may assume everything supernatural is of God, and mistake what is actual sorcery, with the power of God, as people did in Philip's day.

(Acts 8:9-11).

AUTOMATIC WRITING

One of the common methods used by occult artists is the automatic writing supposed to be produced by the spirits of the dead. Much of this is plain deception of the most brazen kind.

Trick slates are used, which with a little clever jugglery, are shown to contain elaborate writing upon them. So adept are hand artists in this kind of deception that it is very difficult for the uninitiated to detect the fraud.

Nevertheless, there is some genuine automatic writing, not slate writing, that is probably done by spirits. Some mediums when perfectly relaxed, find their fingers without conscious guidance will write intelligible messages. These usually purport to be from a dead friend or loved one of their client, though occasionally a message will be received from some historical character such as Caesar, Napoleon or Abraham Lincoln.

THE OUIJA BOARD

The Ouija board craze appeared during the time of World War I, when so many people lost loved ones. The fad, then quite popular, has about died out now, but the Ouija board is typical of the apparatus that is used by novices to obtain spirit messages. People who secured the instruments were taught to yield to the "universal psychic powers," and if they were properly in tune, the planchette pointer would dance around on the numerals and alphabet, and spell out words. Usually nothing but garbled gibberish would be received; however, on occasion apparently intelligible messages would appear. In such cases of course, the messages came not from the dead but from impersonating demon spirits.

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHS

Many of the supposed photographs produced by mediums are nothing more nor less than plain fakes. Sometimes the demonstration will include "paintings" supposed to be done on the spot. Mediums will present for inspection an ordinary blank canvas, and then without taking it really out of sight of the person, be able to produce an oil painting, which upon examination appears to have been done so recently that the paint is still wet. In most cases the painting was there all the time with the blank canvas over it. Casually, while the medium diverted attention, she cleverly removed the blank canvas. The rubbing of a little "poppy oil" on the painting made it appear freshly done.

Despite these patent frauds there are apparently some genuine photographs which cannot be explained by natural means. Sir Conan Doyle, the famous scientist, and author of Sherlock Holmes, after using every scientific precaution, became convinced that certain mediums were able to produce genuine spirit photographs by supernatural methods. Doyle later became a patron of spiritualism. Again, seducing spirits are responsible for such phenomena.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE DEAD

By far the most popular and widely known practice of spiritualism is the pretended communication with the dead, which has led so many people astray who are ignorant of the Scriptures—for the Bible condemns this practice in the severest terms.

One of the first commands in the Mosaic Law to Israel was "Thou shalt not suffer a witch (a medium) to live," (Exod. 22:18) the witch being identified with the modern medium of spiritualism. Elsewhere throughout the Old Testament, serious warnings are given to those who would seek advice from the dead, through consulting these mediums.

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?" (Isa. 8:19) The supreme warning against this practice is found in the story of Saul, when he sought counsel of Samuel through the Witch of Endor. This account was put in the Bible to expose the fraudulency of spiritualism. Saul, during the early years of his reign had banished those who dealt with familiar spirits. "And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits and wizards out of the land." (I Sam. 28:3).

But toward the end of Saul's career, when because of his backsliding everything was going against him, and he no longer received any word from God, he decided on a desperate expedient. With the Philistines coming against him, and the prospect of defeat apparently certain, he decided to consult a witch. Upon inquiry, a woman with a familiar spirit, was discovered at Endor. Disguising himself, Saul with two companions went to the witch's cave in the nearby mountains, to seek counsel of this woman.

The cave being dimly lighted, the medium did not immediately recognize who her visitors were.

Notwithstanding, she had strong misgivings, when she learned of their mission, having been previously forbidden by Saul to ply her trade on pain of death. The king however reassured her on oath that no harm would come to her, and so after some hesitation she was persuaded to make the attempt to "bring up Samuel" for her visitors.

Here we see the familiar workings of the seance. The woman, her fears somewhat allayed, now went into a trance. The "spirit" by which Saul asked the woman "to bring up Samuel" is what mediums today refer to as the "control." This "control" impersonates the particular dead person with whom communication is desired.

So subtle are these impersonating spirits in the spiritualistic eance that the very intonations of the voice of the departed person are perfectly simulated. Messages are given to the anxious visitor purporting to be from some person—often a departed loved one. When a message comes through, usually the inquirer is too agitated or excited to be capable of testing or checking its authenticity. William S. Sadler in his book, THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM, who has investigated spiritualism extensively shows the fraudulency of these spirit communications:

"Again and again have I tried, through mediums, when supposedly in communication with some deceased scholar, to get the spirit to dictate to the medium something pertaining to the spirit's professional specialties when here on earth. For instance, I have a deceased friend, a physician and a very dear friend, and in my investigation of spiritism I have supposedly been many times in communication with this physician—but never have I been able to get the spirit to dictate some passage from some medical authority that I might suggest. Never could I get the medium to spell out medical terms properly, never could I get the medium to name the diagnosis we made of a certain case which we had in consultation or to cite the authorities investigated at that conference which led to the making of the diagnosis. In a score of ways I have given these mediums an opportunity to prove that they were in communication with bona fide discarnate spirits, but in every instance they have wholly and completely—yes dismally—failed.

"I have talked with George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Paine, Socrates, Plato, Milton, and other of the great minds of past ages, but in no case have I ever secured from mediums anything from these old masters that would bear the least semblance to the product of their minds when living on earth—and mind you, I communicated with them with reference to the very things they thought about and discussed when living. I did not ask questions pertaining to their present state in the spirit world. I did not ask for a description of the landscape and geography of spiritland. I asked them about the very things they authoritatively discussed when living, and they unfailingly defaulted in their efforts to show any degree of familiarity with those subjects in which they were specialists in life.

"Hodgson, Myers, and others have left sealed messages, written in cipher, and so far no medium has ever been able to interpret them, no one has ever approached an interpretation of these code messages.

But so far that test has failed every time.

"If we could call up the spirits of the departed, and they were really true to their professed identity, we might hear something worth while. As some one suggested not long since, it would be interesting to get Isaac Newton on the wire and hear what he thought of the Einstein theory of relativity. We would likewise be glad to hear from George Washington on the League of Nations; what Gladstone thought about the Irish Treaty; or from Abraham Lincoln on the Four-Power Naval Pact.

It would be interesting to hear what Alexander the Great might have thought of the military strategy at Verdun.

But, strange to say when the mediums do bring out these dignitaries and sages of a past age, they are much more likely to talk about substitutes for coffee, removable dental bridges, or to discuss some other trifle, the purport of which is to try and convince those present that spirits are real because they can tell you about something you have lost or which has been stolen, etc.

The whole business is too trivial and juvenile to be worthy of the serious attention of sober-minded, thinking men and women.

"There was a Jewish fellow who went to consult a medium, and she told him his mother was present. He talked with his mother's spirit, and she gave him messages from other relatives who had passed over, and at the end the medium asked if there were any other questions he would like to ask his mother, and he said:

"You know Mother, we used to have such nice visits in Hebrew, and now if I could just have a little talk with you in Yiddish, then I'd know it was you." But the ghost could not talk Yiddish.

Now back to Saul and the witch of Endor. The usual procedure of the seance, was in this case cut short. In this one and only instance, it appears that God permitted the real person (Samuel in this case) to speak. The woman realized that the one speaking was not her usual "control spirit" at all. It was apparently the real Samuel, who delivered a most solemn rebuke to the ill-fated king.

"And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the Lord hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David ... Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." (I Sam 28:15-17, 19).

The familiar spirit of the woman, apparently, was not a factor at all in this case of bringing up Samuel. God took the matter out of the devil's hands. Familiar spirits may impersonate the dead but they cannot produce the dead. This is the only case in the Bible where God allowed a man to communicate with a person that was actually dead and then only to condemn the proceeding and pronounce judgment on the one who had sought such counsel, as a warning for all time to come. Most alleged spirit

communications are couched in terms to leave a favorable impression, but in this case the real Samuel gave forth a stinging rebuke to the inquirer.

In the case of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:29-31), the departed rich man begged Abraham to permit Lazarus to go and warn his five brethren not to come to the abode where he was.

But his petition was denied. It was not God's plan. Abraham said that if people will not repent from the warnings of the Scriptures they will not repent though one rose from the dead. There is no need for Christians to resort to spiritualism to learn about the state of the dead, for the Scriptures have given a full revelation on this. To play with spiritism in direct disobedience to the command of the Scriptures is to invite a demon to come and make its abode with the person who is so foolhardy.

MATERIALIZATION—SORCERY

According to the theory of spiritualism, the spirit of a human being is a sort of "ectoplasm" surrounded by an aura which under certain circumstances is able to leave the body of a live person. According to spiritists, contact must always be kept by the "ectoplasm" with the body, at least by a slender thread, otherwise the person dies. Some professional mediums apparently have power at times to project this so-called

"ectoplasm" and, with the assistance of demon power, are able to actually materialize an object so it can be felt, and even be transported to a distance. In most cases that which is materialized has no permanent existence in the natural world, for it soon melts or dissipates. This is nothing more nor less than sorcery, a practice that the Bible particularly warns against.

There have been cases of materialization reported in religious services here in America, and uninstructed people have even been led away by this phenomenon, believing it to be some special manifestation of God. Many such "signs and lying wonders" will appear at the time of the end, and it is well for God's people to be on the alert against them.

The manifestation of these occult powers which on occasion of sustained devil-worship, may produce remarkable materializations, is witnessed in an

article that was published both in Harper's and the Reader's Digest magazines some time ago, telling of Tibetan sorcery:

"I stirred, looked around me—puzzled, for something I'd never experienced before was undeniably coming into that holy Tibetan forest. Something was beginning to fasten itself upon me like invisible hands, to possess me against my will. I tried to shrug the feeling away. And the scientific side of me looked about for some explanation.

"The circle of conjurers began to sway softly from side to side. The chanting continued to swell. And I began to think of all that Old Sherap had told me of what I must see there. Yama, King of Hell, and his satellite demons and devils. I watched the spot where the demons were supposed to appear, trying to see something where reason told me there was nothing.

"I do not know what my camera would have seen. I only know what I thought I saw. Yama, King of Hell, was appearing little by little! He did not come in through the trees. He was not a Tibetan, masquerading. One moment he was not there, and the space empty. Then he began to grow before my very eyes!

"All the circle of sorcerers saw it at the same time.

Wilder and wilder became their chanting. It was not like a dream. Beyond the Grand Wizard, all around us, I could see the poplars and the pines. I saw the sorcerers, noted their faces deliberately. I made special note of Old Sherap beside me, with his 12 feet of hair coiled like a black snake atop his head. But Yama was coming at our call. As fervently as any other Nukhwa, I was intoning in the deepest voice I could manage: 'Yamantake!'

"It was the glaring bulging eyes I saw first. At the height of an average man from the ground, they stared at us, filled with malevolence. To right and left of the eyes were strange mists, which shifted and began to take form until, like some evil power bursting suddenly into bloom, they became all the 34 arms of Yama, with 34 hands each grasping some implement of destruction.

"The main head grew into being about the eyes.

Then appeared other heads, until there were nine, all shrouded in transparent bluish flames, which danced and flicked about unceasingly. Then the shoulders, over each of which hung a garland of human skulls, which rattled horribly at the least movement.

"I shivered. I glanced away. When I looked back I expected that Yama would no longer be there. But he was, staring at me with his bulging eyes. His lips now were visible, and they were huge, and libidinous—and the teeth like the fangs of no animal on earth."

The remainder of the account relates how the Tibetan priests were able to control the materialization by pitting their will against it and forcing the devilish monstrosity to finally dematerialize and vanish.

When God creates, His creation remains. Sorcery materializes and then dematerializes. The oil made by Elijah and Elisha remained to be used for useful purposes. The serpents that appeared as the result of the Egyptian sorcerers' art were swallowed up by Aaron's rod. The substances and illusions found in spiritualism work best in the darkness of the seance and usually vanish before critical examination.

To note even briefly, the many peculiar phenomena that have appeared in recent years in connection with spiritualism and occultism would require a large volume indeed. Sufficient to say, the Bible is very emphatic in its condemnation of these practices which openly involve the activity of demon powers.

Against sorcery, witchcraft, wizardry and all kinds of black magic, the Word of God gives dire warnings. Those who meddle or tamper with the dark powers do so at extreme peril to their own souls. Better to play with forked lightning than dabble with evil spirits. As we have said, the Scriptures give full information concerning the state of the departed dead, and there is no need for anyone to seek guidance from familiar spirits whose information would be false in the first place, and second, very likely will lure the person into bondage to evil spirits from which they can never escape.

So much for the matter of spiritualism, one of Satan's greatest deceptions and most potent means to bring people under the influence and control of demons.

CHAPTER 4

Discerning of Evil Spirits

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (I John 4:1).

We now come to another important and practical matter: How can we discern the presence, or operation of evil spirits?

How can we distinguish their manifestations from those of the Spirit of God. For there are times when as in the case of Aaron's rod and the magicians' rods, it is not always easy to identify that which is divine and that which is not. The Scriptures, however, have given us a number of methods by which the test can be made. There is no need for anyone's being confused in this, if he is willing to take time to learn what the word of God has to say on the matter. Let us therefore, follow the example of the people of Berea, who were able to recognize the difference between the truth and error, because they searched the Scriptures daily:

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11).

We shall now consider those tests that the Scriptures have given us, which will provide us with the necessary knowledge whereby we may be able to discern between false spirits and the true.

TEST I—DOES THE SPIRIT DENY ANY OF THE WORD OF GOD?

For the first test, we go back to the tragic story of Eve in the Garden of Eden. As is well known, Eve foolishly allowed herself to be deceived by

Satan who had embodied himself in the serpent. Had she realized that this was her archenemy, Satan, who was seeking her ruin, she would have fled from him in terror. As it was she yielded to his subtle suggestion, later to discover her terrible mistake and to pay for it at a cost that staggers the imagination. What was it that Eve had neglected to do, which might have saved her from such a tragic error?

It could be pointed out that she made her first mistake by being near the prohibited tree. Deliberately she wandered to its vicinity and thus put herself in a position where she could become a victim of temptation. That she realized she was probably doing wrong is evidenced by the fact that she made the visit without the knowledge of her husband. Multitudes are like Eve, in that they deliberately go where temptation is. They play with fire with the naive idea they will not be burned. Thus do people today insist on dabbling in all sorts of black arts and mysticism, and it is not surprising that many of them get enmeshed in their toils.

Nevertheless, Eve made her greatest mistake when she allowed doubt to enter her heart concerning the veracity of God's word. The Lord had said, "In the day ye eat thereof ye shall surely die." The serpent insinuated that Eve was simple to believe this. He did not call God a liar outright, but raised the question, "Yea hath God said?" That insidious suggestion should have been enough for Eve, to have caused her to flee from her enemy. The devil is a liar by nature and sooner or later, though he appears in sheep's clothing, he will inevitably reveal the cloven hoof, by casting doubt on the word of God. Yet how often do people allow themselves like Eve to be led on into serious delusion, because they temporize with the devil's suggestions rather than hold to the word of God!

Elsewhere we cited the instance of an evangelist who was led astray through seducing spirits. These spirits had told him that a spectacular miracle was going to take place in his wife's healing from paralysis, a healing that would attract national attention. It was to occur on a given day and hour. Photographic equipment was arranged for to take the pictures. When this prophecy failed to come to pass, the spirits then told him that the miracle could not take place because his wife was out of the will of God. That his marriage had not been made in heaven, and that he must divorce

his wife at once and marry another—a young girl—then his ministry would be crowned with success. The unfortunate minister chose to believe the seducing spirit rather than the word of God. The sad result was that his own ministry was practically destroyed. This man should have recognized, when his words did not come to pass that he was possessed of a lying spirit. The test of a true prophet is given in Deuteronomy.

"And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." Deut. 18:21-22.

When he found that what he prophesied did not come to pass, this minister should have faced up to the fact that he was possessed of a false spirit and should have cried unto the Lord for deliverance. Instead, he continued to listen to its lies.

A seducing spirit can usually be detected because its nature is to lie and to make statements in direct contradiction to the word of God. If the person however has allowed himself to come strongly under the influence of a lying spirit he is in grave danger of rationalizing the lies, rather than believing the word of God.

Often, apparently good professing Christians will be led astray. They are told by these spirits that God has honored them by giving them a "new revelation." It may be a "revelation" on deity, on water baptism, on the "immortality of the flesh," it makes no difference. If they choose to believe the seducing spirit rather than the word of God, their usefulness as a Christian is ended or at least diminished. Indeed their own soul may actually be in peril.

TEST II—HAS CHRIST COME IN THE FLESH?

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of

antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." (I John 4:2-3).

This test is perhaps not so much a direct test of an evil spirit but of a prophet or teacher influenced by a seducing spirit, who may be introducing some new doctrine or cult. The spirit which is in the background behind the false religion will usually cause the human leader to either contradict or distort the truth of Christ's deity. In other words the teaching will generally deny or throw doubt in some way upon the fact that Jesus was born of a virgin, and is the Son of God indeed. Mohammedanism, a historic example, concedes that Jesus was a prophet, but only in the sense that Mohammed was also a prophet.

We do not have space in this chapter to examine the various popular cults in detail, and we shall not mention them specifically here. But the names of a dozen or so which are more or less familiar to the public, in some way or another, fall into the category referred to in I John 4:1-3. Invariably these teachings strike at the most vital point of the Gospel—the deity of Jesus Christ. One particular cult for example, that emphasizes mental healing, denies that the physical universe exists at all. That all is spirit, and therefore there is no physical body. Consequently, there being nothing physical, there can be no actual sickness, pain or death. Such a philosophy of course must deny that Jesus came in the flesh, that He suffered on the Cross and died, and that He arose again in a glorified body. Large numbers of people have fallen into the delusion of this cult. Yet had they carefully read the New Testament, they would never have become a victim of such an error.

Other cults teach that Jesus of Nazareth came in the flesh, but they do not believe that He was the Christ, the acid test of all doctrine is whether it accepts the fundamental truth that Jesus is the Christ. All teachers that are of God will, without equivocation, make that same confession that Peter did when Jesus asked him, "whom say ye that I am?"

"He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?"

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:15-16).

Another well-known cult teaches that Jesus was only a created being, like other men. But that because he faithfully obeyed the commandments of God, He became the Anointed One of God, and in that sense He was the Son of God. This also is false. Christ is not a created being, but the eternal Son of God, who through the incarnation, became also the Son of man.

The spirit behind Modernism, Unitarianism, Universalism, New Thought and a score of other such religions is to deny in some way the deity and divinity of Jesus Christ. Wherever doubt is expressed concerning this fundamental cornerstone of the gospel, one may be certain that seducing spirits have been operating.

TEST III—BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM

Is the power to perform miracles an infallible test of a man's standing with God? Is the fact that he speaks with the tongue of men and angels proof that he has the true Spirit? If he exercises the genuine gift of prophecy, is that of itself proof that he is right with God? If he has once been anointed of God, does that make it certain that the man now has the Spirit of Christ? I Cor. 13, has something to say about this:

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." (I Cor. 13:1-3).

Ordinarily, divine gifts may be taken as the signs of a man of God. But they are not infallible signs, because unfortunately he who possesses them is still a free moral agent and may fail in the charge that has been given him. He may yield to self-exaltation and as Paul declares, be transformed into a "false apostle." The love of money may cause him to err as did Judas, one of the Twelve, who performed miracles, but who alas, in the end, became a traitor and betrayed his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Samson was

anointed of God, but because he yielded to the fleshly lusts, he at length, was shorn of his power and fell into the toils of the enemy. (Judges 16:20-21). Balaam spoke some of the most beautiful prophecies, even prophesying of the coming of Christ, (Num. 24:17) but because of his love of money, he commercialized his gift and in the end died under the judgment of God. (Josh. 13:22).

Jesus gave a grave warning concerning these things, in Matthew 7:22-23:

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

What then is the true test of the prophet of God? Jesus gave it in the 19th and 20th verses when He said, "By their fruits ye shall know them":

"Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:19-20).

MOSES AND THE MAGICIANS

How should we judge a prophet who puts forth claims to be sent of God and who, backs his claims with a sign, as for example the casting of a rod upon the ground and causing it to turn into a serpent? It is to be remembered that the magicians as well as Moses and Aaron had power to turn their rods into serpents. How can we distinguish between that which is of God and that which is of the devil, when their signs appear so nearly similar? Before we answer that question let us first ask some others. "Does that prophet who puts forth his claims, possess as Moses did, the same spirit of humility? "Now the man was very meek, above all men which were upon the face of the earth."

(Num. 12:3). Is he an intercessor as Moses was, who was willing to give his very life for the salvation of his people? Or rather does he go abroad as Pharaoh's servants, fighting and beating the people of God? Certainly if the man can show that his fruits are the fruits of the Spirit, we may then judge his signs, whatever they are, as being of God. On the other hand if he seeks

his own self-aggrandizement, as did Pharaoh, or he plays with sorcery, as did the magicians, he must be counted on the side of Satan.

It is to be noted that while Aaron's rod remained, the serpents of the magicians were swallowed up. In our previous lesson on spiritualism we showed how spiritists, on occasions are able to cause solid objects to materialize. This is not the power of God, but is sorcery. Sorcery often is able to perform a materialization but which has no permanent existence in the natural world. Flying saucers which appear and disappear, fall into this category. When Elijah produced oil and meal, they lasted all during the famine to sustain the widow's family. (I Kings 17:14-16). When Elisha brought forth oil it remained to pay the debts of the wife of one of the sons of the prophets. (II Kings 4:1-7). When Christ multiplied the loaves and fishes, even the fragments which were not eaten, remained to be gathered up for future use. (Matt. 15:32-37). The magicians of Pharaoh made serpents but *they vanished before the power of God!* Spiritualism and religious sorcery may produce materializations, but such materializations will vanish—and this is the mark of sorcery. Let the people of God beware!

TEST IV—THE GIFT OF DISCERNMENT

Thus far we have considered tests for the "trying of the spirits" which any Christian, familiar with the word of God, may use. If they are applied carefully and prayerfully, it is inconceivable that a believer could be led away by any of Satan's delusions, however subtle. For all practical purposes he needs nothing more than these three tests to discern between the true and the false. Nevertheless there are those who have been given a special ministry that brings them frequently in contact with evil powers, which it may be necessary at once to identify, especially where more than one demon is present. For those with such a ministry God has provided a special gift called the "discerning of spirits." This gift is mentioned in I Cor. 12:7, 10:

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given ... discerning of spirits."

This "discerning of spirits" is a gift of wider scope than is generally realized. As there are evil spirits, so there exist also good spirits. Sometimes

God permits His people, to discern or see good spirits. Elisha prayed for his servant that he might be able to see the protecting army of angels, and immediately his eyes were opened:

"And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." (II Kings 6:17).

The discerning of spirits also includes the discerning of human spirits. Sometimes it is important to know whether a false human spirit is present. Philip, the evangelist, supposed Simon Magus was a true believer and baptized him in water. But when Peter came, he discerned that Simon was a sorcerer, and exposed him at once. (Acts 8:9-23). Jesus knew that Judas was a hypocrite although the latter cleverly hid his real character from the rest of the disciples. (Matt. 26:21-22). Gehazi thought he had deceived Elisha concerning the talent of silver and the changes of raiment.

But Elisha knew all that his false servant had done. (II Kings 5:20-27).

The discernment gift, however, is particularly designed to detect the presence of demons. On occasions these spirits will feign to be the Spirit of God, and thereby escape detection.

A particular trick which demons sometimes use, is illustrated in the case of the soothsaying girl who attended Paul's first campaign in Europe. This girl had a spirit of divination and through her soothsaying and fortune telling brought her masters much gain. This girl would follow Paul and cry out, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation." (Acts 16:17).

Perhaps some of the followers of Paul supposed that the girl had the Spirit of God and that what she said was a genuine testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul, however, at once discerned the presence of the divining spirit, and also recognized that her testimony, far from doing him any good, was actually doing harm and in fact identifying him with these practitioners of the black art and familiar spirits. Paul thereupon cast out the evil spirit so

that the girl was no longer able to harass him, nor was she able longer to tell the fortunes of those who visited her.

Paul and Silas got thrown in prison for this and God had to send an earthquake to free them. But that is a familiar Bible story and need not be repeated here.

While not every one is given the gift of discernment, nevertheless God has provided abundant means so that no one need be deceived or deluded by seducing spirits. Unfortunately there are many people these days who fail to heed the Scriptural warnings and use the tests of truth and error that God has given.

Consequently not a few are ensnared by these false spirits which are being increasingly manifest in these last days. (I Tim. 4:1).

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