

8. Ghosts: Foolish Delusions or Great Significance?

Prepare for something incredibly shocking and unheard of.....
namely an objective, unbiased viewpoint. Since the words spirit and ghost are synonymous, everyone who believes we have a spirit believes in ghosts. Spirits of departed folks perceived by the living would be poltergeists. However, I shall use the familiar term ghosts.

There are two general camps: one promotes belief with supporting arguments, while ignoring facts that contradict belief. Oftentimes unsubstantiated rumors prevail instead of facts. The other promotes disbelief with supporting arguments, while ignoring facts that support belief. Personal attacks abound, with words like “screwy,” “bolus,” and “nutter,” and that from a best-seller. I’d hate to read the worst-seller. Unlike others who stubbornly push the position they already believe, I follow the evidence wherever it leads.

Although I’ve always believed in an afterlife, I considered believing in ghosts synonymous with being stupid and gullible. I’m a rationalist, a fan of those who expose science myths, fake mediums, and various scams, and belonged to a church that considered spirit manifestations impossible. Despite disbelieving in ghosts, subsequent claims of others cause me to re-examine the evidence with a critical eye.

Spirits and an Afterlife

Since limbs, faces, bones, blood, and organs are successfully transplanted from person to person, yet the recipient is still the same person, no more or less, we cannot be any of these parts alone. The heart, supposedly from which springs decision making and emotion, allegedly sends more signals to the body than the brain does. However, one can live without a fleshly heart by having a mechanical heart.

Many assert that the brain is exclusively the true person, no more or less, since brains cannot be transplanted. However, human brains are by far the most complicated physical structures in existence. Inability to successfully transplant brains could be due to limited technology.

After sitting dormant for years, computer hard drives have complete function totally independent of any screens, keyboards, speakers, mice, and printers by simply plugging them in. Likewise, after sitting dormant, automobile engines function independently of the car, simply by igniting the spark plugs. I saw one in action; a mechanic had a V-8 engine revving on a stand, violently shaking with flames shooting out. Yet you can never restart one brain cell, let alone a full brain. Besides, a child born with no brain (anencephaly) lived for three years.¹

Electrical impulses course through living bodies but not dead ones. Yet dead bodies can never be even partially revived by any electrical impulse. So there’s nothing left of the physical body to be the source of life. Hmmmmmm, interesting.

Furthermore, if we were our body alone, we would be extremely complicated physical structures and combinations of chemicals, nothing more. Logic dictates that mere chemicals or physical structures, no matter how complicated, necessarily lack creativity and free will. Even the random “choices” that computers make must originate from an intelligent outside source. Yet computers still have no creativity nor free will. Hmmmmmm, extremely interesting.

So two reasons make merely natural life impossible; logically, it must be SUPERNATURAL; we must have a spirit. And for those who believe in God, who must be Spirit, why would His children be flesh robots not sharing His spirit nature?

Besides, physical bodies die only because cells deteriorate; there’s no reason why spirits would deteriorate. If spirits deteriorated, God would deteriorate. And since, by process of elimination, spirits enliven the body, not vice versa, spirits live on after death. To wit: life after death, or an afterlife.

Summarily, there not being an afterlife is as logical as squares with only three sides. I also believe that higher animals have spirits; how else can free will be exercised? We may meet departed pets in the afterlife.

Science and the Supernatural

Supposing that the spirit world is scientific resulted in the belief that spirits are made of physical substances such as “ectoplasm,” which facilitated attempts to weigh spirits with scales, the study of psychoacoustics, and other means of physical proof. These misguided attempts invariably fail. It’s actually vital that spirits aren’t subject to physical calculations since everything physical deteriorates. **For ghosts to exist they would have to transcend science.** Although spirits aren’t subject to physical laws, their ability to manifest in the physical realm makes sense. Consider that some aspects of the adult world are incomprehensible to children, but adults can make themselves understandable to children. Likewise, airplanes can be temporarily driven across roads that cars use although cars can never fly.

Ghost Hunting

Concerning ghost hunters, their photos of orbs have some-times been exposed as light reflecting off dust particles and mist, including reflections and lens flare, while small temperature variations in rooms and sensations of being lightly touched are often natural, mundane phenomena. Even forceful pressing sensations can often be attributed to the body’s complex composition of contracting muscles, tendons, nerves, and arteries. Electromagnetic field readers commonly used by ghost hunters showing “anomalous” readings can often be attributed to common events, such as passing aircraft causing rudimentary electrical currents. Another explanation for these anomalies could be buildings built on layers of piezoelectric material such as quartz, combined with stresses caused by shifting plates.

Electronic voice phenomenon which can’t be heard while tape recording but is found to have been imprinted on the tape, can also have a mundane explanation. Tape recorders and virtually anything metallic, including dental fillings, have been known to pick up radio broadcasts. And photos or videos can be inconclusive; modern technology is a hoaxer’s delight; many things can be created or superimposed. Yet can everything be explained away?

Mediums

Harry Houdini thoroughly exposed the spiritualist community of Lilydale, New York as fraudulent in the early twentieth century. Instead of disbanding, they simply discontinued the techniques that Houdini debunked, and adopted different techniques. Yet tens of thousands of Americans continue to flock to Lilydale.²

Concerning “reputable” mediums, they invariably state that a departed friend or family member is better off, not in a worse or boring state as would sometimes be expected. Secondly, mediums invariably claim to contact spirits from another realm much faster than we reach living people by phone or e-mail in the same realm. And how do they know the departed person’s spirit number or address if there are such things?

Thirdly, among the mega-billions of people who ever lived, there is never contact with the wrong spirit, miscommunication, or garbled communication, as would sometimes be expected. Fourthly, the departed are supposedly always happy to hear from the seeker. Moreover, the personality of one hundred percent of departed persons harmonizes with one hundred percent of mediums, completely violating human nature.

Fourthly, **most people throughout history were so old-fashioned, they make today’s “conservative” folks look like liberals.** So if you’re truly channeling spirits for years, your values would

reflect theirs; otherwise they'd stop connecting with you. If not, why not? Since most mediums are Modernists, this alone indicates they are fake.

Finally, imagine you are a spirit enjoying the company of God, angels, or other spirits. Why would you suddenly snap to attention, going far out of your way to talk to a total stranger? Logically, all mediums either prey on people for money, are egotistical attention-seekers, or use wrong-headed attempts to comfort people through deception. Avoid this nonsense.

Phenomena Commonly Mistaken for Spirit Activity

While driving, a large grey figure hovered before my car. It turned, stopped, and maneuvered as one intelligent entity while I stared. Yet as my car approached, I saw that it was a mass of millions of tiny black bugs moving as a school of fish; the whitish background combining with the black created the grey-ness. This revealing incident explains many cases of outdoor ghosts.

Unidentified noises and voices in a house can usually be explained by other people or animals inadvertently or purposely making them. Unless I'm completely alone in a building, I first assume someone else is making them. Even children have perpetrated elaborate pranks and fooled adults.

One misconstrued phenomena, mice running rapidly across attic floors, sounds exactly like invisible entities making fluttering wing sounds across the room below. Likewise, audible footsteps across empty rooms often originate in someone walking across the floor below; wooden houses act like tin can telephones. Single loud bangs can be attributed to animals, falling acorns, and houses shifting on their base. Even architectural masterpieces, such as the Eiffel Tower, naturally "breathe." Mysterious knocking can often be attributed to discombobulated woodpeckers.

Small objects, cabinets, and drawers moving, opening, or closing can be attributed to houses slightly off level. Doors mysteriously opening or closing are often activated by an earth tremor or wind having entered in and acting upon it. Various unplugged appliances are known to inexplicably start up. But anything dependent on electricity can harbor a dormant electrical charge, which may become agitated, thereby activating the appliance.

Apparent body and facial images in smoke, vapors, photographs, and simmering waters are easily attributed to "matrixing" or pareidolia, the brain's uncanny ability and propensity to organize chaos.⁽³⁾ For example, romanticized art and prose such as John T. McCutcheon's *Indian Summer*,⁽⁴⁾ and an Indian memorial in my hometown which states "Occasionally you may glimpse our shadows." A former classmate claimed to see his late grandfather's image in soups. For this, he was angrily chastised for giving in to mental illness. A kind approach would be to assume he saw his own distorted reflection, making him wistfully "see" his grandfather; perhaps there was a strong family resemblance.

Unintelligible sounds can be falsely extrapolated into distinct words, while common feelings of dread or being watched can be attributed to inaudible infrasound, which causes imperceptible eye or stomach vibrations.

A Mystery

Over two hundred times I've experienced a phenomenon consisting of brilliant spontaneous appearances of light, usually yellowish, sometimes white, and always indoors. They sometimes flashed and instantly disappeared, but often appeared in one section of a room, sped more or less horizontally like a miniature shooting star or comet, then vanished. Several times they hovered, enlarged, and changed direction, which direction of travel varied. They never connected to a window as light shining in from outdoors would. Although usually pea-sized; one exploded into the size of a blanket. After peering at one hovering near the ground, it shot into my face, illuminating it like a flashlight. Others illuminated objects

behind them. One appeared, ascended in a straight line thinner than a toothpick, began to corkscrew up, then vanished.

Sparkling sounds, electric shocks, or anything akin to typical static electricity have always been absent. And there's been nothing wrong with my eyesight. Many others have mentioned experiencing this phenomena on the Internet, sometimes two people witnessing the same event simultaneously. This phenomena has also been captured on videotape. And these experiences aren't akin to the phenomena of ball lightning. Although ball lightning occurrences are often more amazing than these experiences, they are always precipitated by violent storms.

Some believe that these light flashes are the effect of spirits stirring up electricity in the air by traveling past, causing electromagnetic field disruption, instead of spirits appearing themselves. Others consider these a stage in the development of a spirit's manifestation. However, that's problematic, since they're not known to be observed turning into full body manifestations.

Although I entertain the notion that spirits were present, a scientific explanation may exist. I've scoured the Internet and have read about auroras, lightning, nocturnal lights, and related luminous phenomena, fruitlessly looking for scientific explanations. But that doesn't mean none exists. Theories are supplanted or modified as new advances emerge. As of yet, the greatest minds are unable to explain numerous extraordinary phenomenon with science.⁽⁵⁾ Regardless, whether they are physically or spiritually originated, the wonders of God's creation are great.

Shadow Ghosts

As a child, I experienced a dark grey mass coming out of the upper corner where two walls and the ceiling met; another time by a curtain. These experiences terrified me, along with other feelings of spirit activity. But later, I read about ghosts from books. They chronicled dubious cases, with silly images looking like tobacco smoke. After reading about the hoax debunkers Harry Houdini and "The Incredible Randi," I no longer believed in ghosts, viewing my experiences as a child's overactive imagination. From there I found a church that explained that ghosts cannot be because Scripture says so (rather, their interpretation of Scripture).

Later, I learned that my grandfather claimed that a spirit entity occasionally visited him in the form of a vaporous grey mass traveling along his apartment floor. He even identified the spirit by name, but I don't remember it. My uncle later confirmed this, witnessing it himself. He described its shape like that of a cat, which came to a standstill on the couch. The shape also "seeped" through solid window glass. Concerning my own experiences, a dark entity spontaneously appeared in my room and disappeared into the upper tri-corner of the walls and ceiling. I've seen other black patches too. Another time, I saw a small dark grey patch the size of a piece of broken licorice with fiery edges appear, speed, and disappear, after being accompanied by previous knocking, seemingly following along the ceiling, the wall, then the dresser. Two other times a dark grey patch appeared, sped sideways, and disappeared. Windows and doors were closed to the outside each time.

Incidentally, their shapes seem insignificant like random paint blotches. An abundance of such cases, identified as shadow ghosts (which are either black or grey, not white) have Internet documentation. In some reported cases, the shapes almost had human forms, but others were irregular like my experiences. In the daytime I've seen invisible versions of this; a section of air was distorted like looking through gasoline vapors, which distortion sped across the room.

Supernatural Voices, Sounds, and Flash Images

Distinct supernatural voice types either traverse the air or reverberate within one's head. They either sound like natural human voices, or hypothalamic voices seemingly consisting of syllables sans larynx which whiz past and spiral, some of which cannot be described without experiencing them yourself.

Concerning the voices I've heard, some sounded like animal noises, while others were clearly human, including an unrecognizable voice, which bid me goodnight and addressed me by name, using clearly enunciated English, upon my slipping into bed. I have also been bidden good morning. Numerous times somebody said hello or hi. Seemingly, a mischievous spirit made sound effects of the most diverse and interesting types on numerous occasions, while sensations of being struck violently, shocked, burned, or cold air hitting my face also occurred, sometimes accompanied with flash images in my mind which corresponded to the sound effects or sensations. Sometimes someone yelled menacingly.

The first names of various people were spoken a dozen times. Twice I received both a first and last name: Bobby Christie (written in a flash image) and Eunice Greene (spoken). However, the idea that ghosts inhabit the exact place where they lived or died is a clichéd stereotype; there may have been a trillion people who ever lived; I need much more information to pinpoint an exact person for absolute proof.

Once, while pondering a theological problem, I got frustrated and gave up. Just then, a voice sounding like a toy balloon would if it could talk squeaked "Keep going!" I tried again, but again quit. Then another voice, also sounding like a squeaky balloon, chimed in. In unison they squealed "Keep going!" Afterwards, I looked up what the early Church fathers thought about the subject; same conclusion but different wording. Sometimes I've been admonished for inappropriate thoughts; once I was told to pray. Numerous times oversleeping caused a relentless barrage, forcing me to get up. Other times, hostility towards me or my religious faith was expressed; I said to be gone.

Once I was asked, "What happened?" I said "What do you mean?" A flash image appeared, consisting of an arm with a wristwatch on, holding a cell phone. I explained that by pressing the antennas on my ladybug keychain, the wings open to reveal a pocket watch; and instead of having a cell phone bill, I'm saving money for something else. Once someone asked me how old I was, and I replied. I then asked "Who are you?," and the name of an organization appeared on a plate in a flash image. Once I repeatedly requested a regular conversation. In response a flash image of a TV enveloped in static appeared. Perhaps this meant that they couldn't come through. On other occasions, flash images of someone I never saw before appeared in my mind as clear as a photograph; perhaps it was the person who passed on.

Sometimes when I thought intensely about something or left my writing out, somebody said a couple words in commentary. Several times someone said my name, and I've gotten yes and no answers to my questions. Towards the beginning of when the voices started, I asked somebody where they were. They responded "Right here." Yet puzzlingly, after six months of hearing these voices, somebody asked me if I lived alone.

The most I've ever heard at once is a ten syllable sentence. Receiving only one or two words is far more common than clear intelligible communication. It has been postulated that people may learn how to fully communicate with spirits in the future. This might not happen, and only broken communication with the spirit world or tiny glimpses may be possible, since we're only allowed to "See through a glass darkly" (Corinthians 13:12) in our present life. Furthermore, **thousands of high functioning people claimed to hear voices, including the Greek philosopher Socrates and Saint Joan of Arc.**

There's a theory that people hear voices because the government harasses people with signals from cell phone towers. This is seemingly impossible without someone having undergone brain wave analysis to identify their frequency. Besides, brain wave frequencies aren't like radio or tele-

vision frequencies, which operate because the receiving devices are unchangeably fixed. Brains alter their physical makeup over time, the result of learning and aging (neuroplasticity), making this scenario impossible.

Then there's the perennial charge of mental illness leveled at thousands of people with higher functioning and morals than their judgmental accusers, who know absolutely nothing about how the human brain works, and who would rather slander people they don't even know than accept the supernatural. In my case my brain functioning is greater after years of experiencing this phenomena than before experiencing it.

Full Body Manifestations

Apparently, full body manifestations are images which spirits are allowed to present, not carbon copies of their former bodies, in which case they'd be naked. Besides, visual manifestations are invariably clothed completely, implying that immodesty is sinful. This sentiment was consistent until the mid 20th century.

Once, upon entering my second floor bedroom, I saw a woman enter from outside through the middle of the bottom section of the wall and the closed window. Besides her image being completely solid and sharply defined, it was even brighter than the surrounding room. She appeared middle-aged, her hair pinned back, and was wearing a full length blue dress resembling twisted drapery and clasped on top. It didn't immediately register exactly what was happening, so it seemed like she entered through an unfinished hole in a wall under construction. At first, since my mind could not grasp a stranger entering my room at night unannounced, I assumed she was my mother. As she walked straight towards me, looking directly at me, I realized she was a stranger, and, assuming an intruder, my body tensed up tightly. In shock I yelled "Heeeeyyy!" Then she quickly vanished. Because of my current religious dogmatism, I thought this was a sensory overload, albeit one I'd never forget.

Establishing the authenticity of my visitation was my mother's similar visitation, identical in numerous details. The difference was that in this case, the image was, though solid, completely colorless. My mother discovered her gliding on the ground floor. The image turned her head, and upon seeing my mother, our visitor's facial expression turned into one of surprise, and she quickly vanished. It is impossible to share the same illusion without some prior consultation; we both kept our experiences to ourselves for years. My mother eventually told her story because she mistook my experiences of merely feeling connected to God for supernatural events. In addition, I saw six solid bodily manifestations on different occasions years later. On one image, only the person's top half was visible, while once, a man and small boy appeared together. The man projected his arm through the couch and my side, which got my attention, leaving me with an unusual sensation of crackling energy. The man's image was solid, the boy's slightly fuzzy. I said hello and extended my hand, but they quickly disappeared.

Other eyewitnesses of both solid and transparent ghosts, include presidents Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (on several occasions), Roosevelt's valet Caesar Carrera, Eleanor Roosevelt's assistant Mary Eben, Winston Churchill, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, President Coolidge's wife Grace, president Lyndon Johnson's wife "Ladybird", President Ford's daughter Susan, President Reagan's daughter Maureen and husband Dennis Revell, and several others, the latest being George W. Bush. On several occasions Abraham Lincoln's ghost appeared.(6) And hundreds of apparitions of the saints have been reported by devout believers throughout Christian history.

Sometimes after hearing about a full body manifestation, the experience is reduced into something vague, seeing an "it," or kind of seeing something. That's not what we're saying. These experiences are as if you opened your front door and I stood there staring at you, or as Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus on the mount of transfiguration.

Standard of Proof

The standard of proof needn't be spirits levitating objects or picking up pencils and writing, since human spirits are considered incorporeal. Upon death, the spirit departs the body, which body serves the needed purpose of physical amalgamation. If human spirits could do everything their bodies do, having a body with hands, muscles, ligaments, et cetera, would be redundant.

By their very nature, there is no proof for ghosts per se. However, very few life experiences can be proven. After hearing someone relate any given life experience they had, I could cast doubt or aspersion on that experience, and say "Prove it." Rather, with enough people claiming to have experienced any given event, and after establishing that the details of such experiences accurately coincide, we conclude that such events actually occur.

Although skeptics complain that they never experienced anything, everyone coerced into embracing the supernatural through manifestations might create massive hordes of religious hypocrites. The essentials of Christianity are loving God and others; ghosts don't make people loving. The Devil himself may have experienced more manifestations than anyone. However, supernatural experiences can bolster one's already present faith and love.

Regarding claims of full body manifestations, there are three possibilities: the person experiencing it was either a liar; was delusional, or if neither, by process of elimination, a true spiritual manifestation occurred. If skeptics demonstrated that some people out of the hundreds of claimants throughout history were either liars or delusional, that leaves the others as genuine. Even if skeptics could reasonably show that *most* claimants are either liars or delusional, that too would leave the others as genuine. And even if 99.9% of claimants were liars and delusional with .01% genuine, that would paradoxically be proof of an afterlife. For disbelievers to be correct, they need an amazing 100%, all or nothing!

Liars

Per Christianity and liars, Christianity is a religion of honesty. Furthermore, the character of the Christian God is such that He cannot lie, while the Devil is the father of lies. Believers can lie, but by concocting elaborate lies, they wouldn't be promoting Christianity, they'd be working for Satan. And Christ's Atonement no longer protects someone who purposely and habitually sins after they have become a Christian. "If we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Hebrews 10:26). Rather, that person, unrepentant, cannot attain Heaven and will be damned. However, neither skeptics who deny the existence of supernatural events and malign and ridicule those who've experienced them, or New Age believers, who describe experiences which contradict Christianity, are not under this compunction that devout Christians are. Seriously consider this.

Delusions

Since delusional people project their own phenomena, they typically make assumptions about what they experience, such as seeing red dripping from the ceiling and declaring it blood, or seeing strange creatures and declaring them demons. Contrarily, those experiencing external phenomenon seek to find the phenomenon's nature. Delirium tremens, delusions caused by alcohol intoxication, come about only in extreme stages of medical emergency. Delusions are also exposed for what they are by seeing fantastic imagery not pertaining to theology, such as flying poodles playing saxophones.

Voices and manifestations from delirium tremens, LSD use, and "mental illness" occur anytime, anywhere, causing major life disruptions. This is the exact opposite of what I'm referring to;

phenomena strictly occurring in a particular locale, such as someone's home, where spirits can apparently locate you, and which never cause any interference with someone's driving, job, social life, or activities, as if they willingly respect the person's boundaries or are under compulsion to do so.

People actually see with their brains, not their eyes, demonstrated by a blind man seeing images via wires inserted into his brain. Since that's the case, brains may be able to experience other senses directly as well. Therefore, purposely concentrating and trying to experience various phenomena should be discounted as mental projections. As with live people, if someone is truly contacting you, force shouldn't be required. Contrarily, manifestations sometimes display something far different than expected for someone projecting their own phenomena via wishful thinking. For example, it should always be much easier for your brain to project visual hallucinations of someone you were familiar with in real life, or a composite of several familiar people, as in dreams. So if manifestations are of people completely unfamiliar, this authenticates such phenomena.

Hearing voices is perpetually called having "auditory hallucinations." For argument's sake let's say that's true, meaning we actually talk to ourselves. Now why can't we predict what will be said? What about cases when the voices sound like someone we've never heard or voices outside of the human range, instead of sounding like us, someone we know, or something we heard in a song or on TV? Why are words and expressions spoken that we don't use, including foreign languages? If it's all wishful thinking, why do the voices often sound muffled or garbled as frequently as when listening to live people? Why can two voices speak at once? Can a ventriloquist speak at the same time his puppet speaks? Furthermore, high functioning subjects with no physical or mental disabilities or abnormal conditions whatsoever have been hooked to machines. When hearing voices, the machines registered that the part of the brain controlling language was being stimulated; which is exactly what happens when someone is being spoken to.

Some people might think we are crazy. However, while a man urinates over a bridge, those who think we're crazy might stand under it and say it's raining. So **don't let others bollix things up and besmirch the character of our best and brightest before examining the evidence.** Actually, everyone who believes in the legitimacy of the famous "Long Island Medium"(7,8) should consider me someone who channels spirits. That's because my lack of showboating, failed communication, much of my spirit contact being hostile, and ultra-conservative values should also convince many who reject mediums, since as explained previously, this makes me much more believable, not less.

Ghost Theology verses Disapproving Churchgoers

Ghost phenomena may be independent of anyone's faith, gifts, or abilities. Besides, Scripture and logic support the notion of ghosts and ongoing consciousness of the spirit. Many assume that human spirits are completely unconscious until Christ's second coming and the world's end. But consider that we sleep because our bodies are tired; cells constantly die and our bodies must rejuvenate. Spirits would have no such need for sleep. Again, spirits enliven bodies; bodies don't enliven spirits. And although our bodies sleep, we still dream. Perhaps some spirits move about in a dreamy state. Certainly spirits sleeping in dead bodies or coffins is contrary to Christianity.

Most early Christians believed that all human spirits are trapped in "Hades" until the end of the world. However, they also believed that these Hadean realms were in "a vast deep space in the interior of the earth." Yet we now know that no part of Earth's interior can be hollow. Also, early Christians already conceded that spirits occasionally wander while their bodies sleep. "[Human spirits] are not confined to the still hours of sleep. They possess constant motion, travel over land and sea, trade, get excited, labor, and play....."---*Tertullian's Treatise on the Soul Chapter XLIII*; AD 210. A visible spirit of someone still alive is called a wraith.

Many churches today also teach that spirits are held in these Hadean compartments, called Paradise and Tartarus, based on terms in Scripture. Yet the terms Hades, Paradise, and Tartarus come from Greek mythology. Hades is not a synonym for the Hebrew Sheol. Sheol was originally considered a shadowy existence of neither punishment nor joy. Perhaps Jesus and Peter chose those terms simply because they were familiar to their listeners, who were familiar with mythology. I take those terms figuratively, as signifying a better or worse emotional state after death.

In Luke 16's parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the chief text from which arises the theory of Hadean compartments, Jesus illustrated three things: that the righteous will be rewarded and the wicked punished, that we must care about others, especially the disadvantaged, and that one's station in life is unimportant. Teaching about compartments for spirits is irrelevant to Christ's message. Besides, Hadean compartments contradict the Christian teaching that all of humanity will be separated, judged, rewarded, and punished according to how they lived AT THE END OF THE WORLD.

Divisive Christian believers insult other believers, insisting that any spirit contact today is Satan's deception. Instead, today's big deception is that there is no afterlife or spirit realm. If demons caused phony spirit contact, even the phony contact would demonstrate that there is an afterlife and spirit realm. The Devil would be working against himself.

Many believers consider all spirit manifestations demonic because ghosts among us contradicts their dogma that all spirits of the departed are stuck in Hadean realms, Hell, Heaven, Purgatory, or wherever. Yet by taking these terms as literal places, demons couldn't operate either; they're "held in chains of darkness" (II Peter 2:4). Others propose a compromise, in that ghosts do appear on Earth, but are actually elsewhere. But this would make God a deceiver in making people think that ghosts reside on Earth.

Perhaps these doctrines arose because people like to put others in boxes. After birth we are put in a plastic box in the maternity ward. We grow up to be boxed in a cubicle at work. Locking people in concrete boxes is the most common punishment for crime. Others are boxed up in mental institutions. The elderly are boxed up in nursing homes. Finally, our body is boxed up and put in the ground. Ghosts surrounding us violates people's comfort level; anti-social impulses trump the social.

Consider Luke 24:36-39: After Christ's death, when He appeared to His disciples, they assumed it was His ghost. He didn't say "Cut your superstition," or "No, all spirits are trapped in the Hadean realm." Rather, His disciples handled Him and He ate something, showing that it was His physical body and reaffirming that departed spirits don't have bodies. So not only did Jesus believe in ghosts, He knew about them.

Today, most people who claim to have had spirit contact are non-Christians such as neopagans. However, their religions are very new. Christianity is relatively old; our ship has collected barnacles over the years. Many have barnacles in their mind. Consider Hebrews 12:1: "We are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses....." We know this refers to spirits of departed people, not angels, because of its context; it is intimately connected with chapter 11. The word compassed is translated from the Greek word *pērikēimai*, meaning to lie all around, enclose, encircle, or hang about.

Ghost theology is more logical, easier to believe, and is not counter-scientific as is common theology. You need not believe in supernatural housing for spirits (made of spirit bricks?; force fields?; ectoplasm?). And you needn't believe in the current existence of Heaven or Hell, which have no evidence for their existence. All you must believe in is spirits alone. And while popular notions are often convoluted, self-serving, and illogical, ghost theology is simple and pure.

I believe that trillions of ghosts of everyone who ever lived inhabit Earth. This is consistent with the popular belief among early Church fathers in that all departed spirits are confined to Earth. We could also consider Earth a type of Hades. But again, we now know that vast Hadean compartments are not *inside* the earth. And although the vast majority of spirits either cannot or choose not to connect with living people, there are probably several ghosts in the room with you right now as you read this.

Reincarnation and Other Views

Seemingly real spirit manifestations bolster the Abrahamic concept of an afterlife, not reincarnation. Reincarnation postulates that spirits, after exiting the deceased, circuitously inhabit various bodies, irrespective of their being male, female, or animal. This system demotes bodies into mere temporary vehicles, instead of integral components complimenting the complete individual. After researching the clothing style of the first spirit who appeared to me, I discovered that this dress was only concurrent with ancient time periods, such as the Grecian Empire's. This demonstrated that spirit's affixation to an ancient period and the importance of her former body, instead of body-hopping throughout history as reincarnation proponents assert.

Reincarnation also suffers from lack of credibility; hypnotized Americans constantly claim past lives of royalty and fame, instead of boring peasantry, the lives of the vast majority throughout history. In India, children seemingly recalled numerous specific details of lives of those who passed on. However, most Indian people had virtually identical houses, accessories, accommodations, expressions, lifestyles, and ways of thinking, rendering declarations about a past life quite insignificant. Furthermore, claimants of reincarnation usually identified past lives as having been lived less than fifty miles away, with chances of both families knowing each other. Why would spirits be stuck in the same region, instead of being able to roam the nearly thirteen thousand kilometer wide planet?

Thirdly, this belief facilitates problematic suppositions such as someone having been both another person's spouse and child. This idea that your body is NOT you clashes with the idea that your body amalgamated with your spirit IS you, affecting various attitudes toward our present life. For example, along with reincarnation often comes the idea that bad circumstances result from one's misdeeds in a past life. Therefore, people tend not to help the downtrodden so as not to interfere with karma. This contrasts with Christ's message, that the downtrodden may be especially blessed, yet we're also obligated to help them.

Despite these problems, I would still entertain the notion of reincarnation ala one of my favorite television series *Drop Dead Diva*. As in the show, I would expect many adults to have died, their spirit transferred into another adult who just died. Then we would have heavy testimony by those people, their friends, and families that those people's memories, personalities, and abilities were altogether removed and completely replaced by entirely new personalities, memories, and talents.

Why not, if reincarnation proponents postulate that human spirits can inhabit the widest variety of different animals, and human infants regardless of sex or race? Notably, spirit's default from transferring into adult humans protects the theory of reincarnation from being proven false. However, this construct smacks of the fallacy of unfalsifiability: a popular tactic to conceal facts. So taking all considerations together, reincarnation is false beyond a reasonable doubt. Reincarnation is thoroughly refuted in book form, covering numerous other points not discussed here.⁹

Some atheists claim to believe in or have seen ghosts. The prevailing view is that these manifestations are energy, according to the theory of quantum energy. However, all physical objects possess energy. After washing machines, cars, computers, or robotic arms go to the junkyard, their images never appear. And according to eyewitnesses, full body manifestations seemed unenlightened or confused, yet unlike movie portrayals they don't jump in front of moving cars and cause accidents, disrupt work, and are always fully clothed. Evidently manifestations are systematically regulated by a higher being. And again, the inability to measure or explain them through natural means makes them supernatural; their origin thus requires a supernatural source.

Angels

Angels (and demons) are also considered bodiless spirits, although they may take on a body. Though belief in angels is integral to several religions, modern angelic manifestations are unsubstantiated. So-called angels basically fall into two camps: people who unexpectedly appear in a crisis and quickly leave, and those who are obviously supernatural, akin to ghosts. Since neither group identifies themselves as angels, assuming they are angels is presumptuous. Besides, angels are supposed to have superhuman power, which these cases don't demonstrate. Another problem is that the person who was aided or comforted usually did something careless, causing them to need aid, or a family member could have aided them, instead of someone who lacked a family, or did everything they could to help themselves, but to no avail. Angels, by definition, are messengers. So if no message was communicated, they were not angels. The conspicuous absence of angel manifestations in modern times may be due to people's tendency to worship angels. Maybe to prevent that, angels are scarce.

Concerning guardian angels, where are they when millions of people are starving to death, catching terrible diseases, enduring lives of slavery, getting limbs blown off by bombs, being sold into prostitution, and are so depressed that they're suicidal? Believing that on extremely rare occasions departed people (ghosts) contact living people is one thing, but believing that *everybody* not only has regular contact with superhuman spirits, these spirits are intimately involved with everyone's life (guardian angels) is another. Let's cut the idyllic thinking, which becomes an excuse not to help people, and take responsibility to help our kinsfolk as best we can.

Conclusion

Ghosts of departed people have never been the focus of traditional worldviews. This is because they are overwhelmingly overshadowed by the magnificence of the Great Holy Ghost. Manifest spirits simply point to God. Though believers walk by faith, not by sight, a little sight can sure help. This dissertation should inspire your faith in the supernatural, and moreover, in "the Father of spirits" (Hebrews 12:9), GOD Himself.

