

## Historical Account

# **The Encounter with God: Prophecy, Spiritualism and the Old Testament**

*Patricia Doyle*

*Abstract: Despite many examples in the Old Testament of positive experiences with the spirit world, spiritualism is still viewed by millions of modern Christians with distrust. Sincerely believing that the Bible is the infallible "Word of God," they quote Old Testament passages as proof that faithful Christians should never participate in spiritualism. Yet biblical prophecy, a form of mediumship, is greatly admired by these same Christians. This essay examines these contradictions and the origin of the ancient Israelite ban on the cult of the dead. Explored also is the connection between spiritualism and prophecy, and the nature of Divine revelation.*

"Now if people say to you, 'Consult the ghosts and the familiar spirits that chirp and mutter; should not a people consult their gods, the dead on behalf of the living, for teaching and for instruction?' Surely, those who speak like this will have no dawn!... They will ... see only distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and they will be thrust into thick darkness." (Isa 8:19-20, 22)

"When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you must not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. No one shall be found among you who... practices divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or one who casts spells, or who consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks oracles from the dead." (Deu 18: 9-11)

In our modern Christian faith, there is a great deal of negative sentiment regarding spiritualism, which comes from Old Testament sources like the ones quoted above. This view has been accepted by large numbers of contemporary Christians, especially fundamentalists, who proclaim that the Bible is the infallible "Word of God." They often take passages such as these out of context to use as proof that a faithful Christian would never engage in mediumship or spiritualism.

Yet there are also a number of examples in the Old Testament of unsolicited positive experiences with spirits. Indeed, if one examines the Old Testament tradition, a definite pattern emerges: that the prophets whose writings were preserved in the Old Testament, and the patriarchs who preceded them, came from outside the status quo and were mediums or channels of information from higher spiritual realms or God.

This contradiction in the Old Testament raises a number of questions: What is the origin of the negativity regarding mediumship in the Israelite faith, and, hence, in the Christian faith? What are the similarities and differences between prophecy and spiritualism? How do you discern between a false prophet and a true prophet? What are common characteristics of true prophets? What is the nature of Divine revelation?

First, let us consider the origins of the ancient Yahwist ban on the cult of the dead. According to Norman Gottwald, Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies at New York

Theological Seminary and author of *The Tribes of Yahweh*, the major developments in cult, social organization and religious ideology for the Ancient Israelites took place during the inter-tribal period, by the mid-eleventh century B.C. He describes the Mono-Yahwism of the early Israelite tribes as being composed of various commonalities, including *sanctions against* religious mystifications like ancestor worship and speculation about life after death.

The dead were dead and were not to be lavishly memorialized, worshipped, or communicated with.... It is equally true, however, that the spheres of death were not negated in the sense of being repressed from consciousness. Instead, these spheres were integrated into larger domains in which Yahweh did have a role to play, in such a way as to acknowledge the existence of death . . . while simultaneously depriving [the] phenomena of the magico-religious potency which [it] often had in other Near Eastern religions. (Gottwald, 614-615)

It was not until late in the post-exilic age, after Alexander the Great, that Israel began to acquire any hope of an afterlife. Then, because of many influences, like persecution and martyrdom during the exile, they began to question whether life continued after death. Intermarriage with pagans and the beliefs of neighboring nations also slowly influenced the Israelite faith to include a belief in continuance after death and of the individual as an entity, as opposed to just part of a clan or nation.

The Books of Ezra and Nehemiah show that by the fifth century B.C. the Israelites were losing their special sense of identity as a covenant people. They slowly drifted into pagan marriages that cost many their faith . . . a faith that had given them a special identity and put great emphasis on the election of Israel as a chosen people by Yahweh, the One and Only God. They needed to be holy and separate as a community to give witness to other nations. This extremely nationalistic stance did not allow for foreign influences. They were not to intermarry because it would dilute or negate their faith, possibly to the point where the Yahwist faith would get lost and they would take steps backwards, not forward, in their knowledge about God.

It was not until the second century B.C., in the Book of Daniel, that we see for the first time in the Old Testament an expression of a belief in resurrection of the dead and being judged at death, an idea that originally came from Zoroaster. Before this time, during all but the last 200 years of the Old Testament period, for more than 1800 years, the Ancient Israelites thought death to be *totally final*. Their worldview included no joy after death. The grave was thought to be a pit or swamp, where a person returned to the dust of the earth. (Psalm 16:10; Job 34:14-15; Boadt, 250-251) Death was destruction and emptiness, with no memory of God and no praises sung. (Hosea 13:14, Isaiah 38:18; Psalm 6:6) Sheol, the dwelling of the dead, was believed to be a place of stillness, darkness and total helplessness where the spirit resided after the grave had taken a person's body . . . a place of no power and no hope, with bodies lying row on row. (Isa 14:10; Eze 32:17-31; Boadt, 250-251)

This was *not* the thinking of the other nations in their region. Greek culture believed the spirit dwelled in the body and when the body died the spirit went to the spirit world. In Egypt the dead were thought to live on in much the same way they had in life, and their belief in a blessed afterlife was highly developed. Converted by Zoroaster in the early sixth century B.C., Persian belief was filled with good and evil spirits and "angels," most of whom were assistants of the One God who was lord of all, Ahura Mazda. Zoroaster also introduced the concept of a moral judgment at death determining

one's placement in either heaven with its eternal reward in a paradise of all good things, or hell, which was described as a lake of fire. (Boadt, 433-434)

Since the Ancient Israelites did not believe in any life after death, of what use would it be to communicate with the dead? There would be no power in it, no hope . . . only darkness, helplessness and emptiness.

There are some exceptions to this almost complete rejection of the spirit world, however. One exception is that the Ancient Israelites often explained illnesses that came about without any apparent external physical cause (such as the plague or pneumonia) by accusing evil spirits of creating the sickness. The Old Testament suggests a belief that evil spirits associated with human suffering existed. Psalm 91 talks of pestilence stalking victims, and Leviticus 16 talks of the desert demon Azazel, to whom Aaron offers a "scapegoat" offering each year as atonement for the sins of Israel. Certainly no one would want to communicate with these evil spirits.

There are also examples in the Old Testament of people interacting with higher spiritual entities, especially angels. The story of Jacob's ladder in Genesis 28:12-13, for example, illustrates a dream where angels are seen ascending and descending on a ladder from heaven. Another important example is the angel in Genesis 22:11-19 who comes to save Abraham's beloved son Isaac from being sacrificed by his own hand. In 1 Samuel 28:6-20, Saul, in desperation because the spirit of God had left him, calls Samuel from the dead through the medium at Endor, even after banishing all the mediums in his own nation. Other examples are Balaam (Num 22:23-36) and Hagar (Gen 16:7-15), who encountered angels with important messages.

Gottwald states that one reason for the Ancient Yahwist ban on mediumship was likely a direct reaction against the Egyptian emphasis on the afterlife and the huge amount of communal resources that went for the cult of the dead. He points out that the Egyptian preoccupation with ancestor worship and memorialization of the dead were ways of securing loyalty to the sociopolitical status quo, and that these practices were "socially enervating and economically draining." The lavish expenditures made on the cult of the dead did not jeopardize the living standards of the ruling class, who continued to enjoy luxury and opulence. Actually, it allowed the ruling class to put a larger surplus of wealth, which came from the populace, into self-indulgent, squandered efforts to assure immortality. This made a very negative impression on the Moses generation.

By renouncing the grip of the dead upon the living, Yahwism struck a blow at the ideological supports of stratified society and at the same time released the economic products for direct consumption by the living instead of wasting them in sacrifices and memorials to the dead.... In short, the Israelite uprising in Canaan had the double effect of abolishing in one stroke both the ruling class and the ideological specters of the dead that buttressed class rule. (Gottwald, 694)

A close look at prophecy and examination of prophets reveal certain common qualities or characteristics. Ernest Sellin and George Fohrer, biblical scholars and authors of *Introduction to the Old Testament*, give an excellent definition of prophecy:

A prophet or prophetess is . . . consciously aware of having been singled out and called, who feels constrained to proclaim messages and perform actions suggested in the form of divine revelations during a state of spiritual inspiration, possibly accompanied by mild or intense ecstasy. (Sellin & Fohrer, 343)

Johannes Lindblom, scholar of Old Testament prophecy for nearly 40 years and

author of *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* says that it is typical of all prophetic personalities to feel that what they have to say “is given them from above, that they are only mouthpieces of another, speaking to them and through them.” (Lindblom, 43)

Compare these definitions with the definition of medium in *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* by Robert Wilson, Hooper Professor of Religious Studies and Professor of Old Testament at Yale Divinity School:

The term “medium” is found frequently in the anthropological literature. The term is used as a broad designation for anyone who acts as a channel of communication between the human and divine realms. People come to the medium to ask questions of the spirits, and the spirits, in turn, speak to the inquirers in a recognizable way through the medium. Because the word “medium” is usually defined functionally, the title can be given to various types of religious specialists and need not be applied to one particular type. (Wilson, 25)

Wilson, who uses comparative anthropology to understand the social dimensions of prophetic activity, further states, “The prophet, shaman, medium, and diviner are all characterized by the fact that in some way they serve as intermediaries between the human and divine worlds.” (Wilson, 28)

According to these definitions, the prophet and medium sound basically identical, but they are not. In fact, prophecy is a form of mediumship, but mediumship is not necessarily prophecy. C.H. Dodd, British biblical scholar and author of *The Authority of the Bible* states: “The prophets, however one is to explain their experience, were distinctly conscious that a word came to them from beyond the limits of their conscious personality and brought them new truth – ‘thus spoke Jehovah’”. (Dodd, 271) New truth from God . . . Divine revelation . . . this is the territory of the prophets.

Israel did not have a monopoly on prophecy. Other cultures around them had prophets who did not speak their own thoughts but were mouthpieces for God as well. In Numbers 22-24, the story of Balaam is an example of a foreign prophet being a mouthpiece for God. Even though he was paid by the king of Moab to curse Israel, only blessings came out because God put the words in Balaam’s mouth. “The word God puts in my mouth, that is what I must say.” (Num 22:38) Modern archaeological science has provided proof that a seer called Balaam did exist – an inscription dating from @ 700 BC was found in the Transjordan that reports sayings about the future made by Balaam, the seer.

Other archaeological evidence includes five letters from the great Babylonian city of Mari from around 1700 BC which speak of the appearance of a “messenger of God” and of a “prophetess.” Klaus Koch, an Old Testament scholar who made major contributions to the growth of biblical studies and authored *The Prophets*, writes about this appearance of prophets in the Mari letters:

They belong to a class of men and women associated with the temple of a deity, from whom they received messages through omens, dreams, and ecstatic experiences; they pronounced these messages as oracles. In the following period, too, there were priests and priestesses in Babylonia that supported the king by means of “spoken dreams.” For Assyria there is evidence for another kind of ecstatic prophecy through individual priestesses known by name, especially in the Ishtar temple of Arbela. (Koch, 344)

Lindblom also makes the point that prophetic phenomena are not peculiar to particular races, countries, or religions. They are found everywhere in the world and at

all stages of religious development. He states that even though it is true that ecstasy is contagious between individuals, it is not accurate to say that ecstasy or prophecy in itself is commonly borrowed by one people from another: "These phenomena have arisen in different regions quite independently. The prophetic endowment is deeply rooted in human nature; what may be borrowed from other quarters is the behaviour and the forms . . . the external manifestations." (Lindblom, 32)

Sellin & Fohrer talk about the development of the prophetic oracle consisting of stages. The first stage consists of a moment when the prophet is transported to another sphere where he experiences the "spirit" or "word" of God in a personal experience of God. In this moment, the prophet has a "secret experience," including visions like in Isaiah 6, auditions like in Jeremiah 4, and sudden inspirations like in Isaiah 7:

The secret experience takes place in the full light of spiritual and intellectual consciousness but can be accompanied by an ecstatic experience.... the prophet is gripped by a power that he cannot escape. What he experiences or perceives he is constrained to put into words and to proclaim (Jer 20:9; Amos 3:8). Therefore, immediately after his secret experience the prophet begins to ponder over it. (Sellin & Fohrer, 349-350)

The second stage consists of the prophet's interpretation and exposition of his unique experience according to his own faith, and the experience is interpreted and incorporated into the prophet's previous picture of God, enlarging and enlivening it. This interpretation, says Sellin and Fohrer, usually distinguishes between true and false prophecy . . . but from whose perspective?

The problem of false prophecy, of knowing who among the various voices speaking for God was actually speaking the truth, became a very serious problem during the days of the Old Testament prophets, and is a problem that continues to this very day. After all, they both speak with authority, saying, "Thus says the Lord." Who are we to believe? What distinguishes a true prophet from a false prophet?

One proof, which Jeremiah used against Hananiah, in Jeremiah 28, was that the words of a true prophet would eventually come to pass. 1 and 2 Kings contain numerous examples of this theme of prophets being validated by the fulfillment of their prophecies. (Ahijah in 1 Kings 11-12 and 1 Kings 14-15; Jehu in 1 Kings 16; Micaiah ben Imlah in 1 Kings 22; Elijah in 2 Kings 1; Elisha in 2 Kings 7; and Hulda (a prophetess) in 2 Kings 11 and 23) The Deuteronomists used the same criteria for dealing with prophetic disputes: "If a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord but the thing does not take place or prove true, it is a word that the Lord has not spoken." (Deu 18:22)

However, this test can only be applied in retrospect, and not at the time the prophecy is spoken. And what happens when Jeremiah or Isaiah predict something that does not happen? Does that mean they are not true prophets because of it? Are they allowed to be human as well as a divine mouthpiece for God? And what about the possibility of a false prophet who just happens to predict something that comes true? Does that automatically make them a "Prophet of God," to be followed in all respects? Certainly not. Perhaps they made an educated or lucky guess. Or perhaps God is testing loyalty, as this statement in the Book of Deuteronomy, written during the seventh century B.C., suggests:

If prophets or those who divine by dreams appear among you and promise you omens or portents . . . [which] take place, and they say, "Let us follow other gods" (whom you have not known) "and let us serve them," you must not heed [them . .

. the Lord . . . is testing you . . . to know whether you indeed love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. The Lord your God you shall follow, him alone you shall fear, his commandments you shall keep, his voice you shall obey, him you shall serve, and to him you shall hold fast. (Deu 13:1-4)

So we cannot rely solely on the fulfillment of prophecy as proof of a true prophet. A proof put forth in 1 Kings 18 was that the presence of Yahweh would be with the true prophet and absent from the false one. Yahweh was a *living* god, not a dead one like Baal, the king of the nature gods worshipped by the Canaanite cults. Elijah beautifully demonstrated this at Mt. Carmel when he challenged the prophets of Baal in a contest to the death when he stood up against the pagan queen Jezebel who had been persecuting and killing the prophets of Yahweh. All the false pagan prophets were slain on the spot when Elijah proved Yahweh to be the living God & Baal to be absent.

1 Kings 19 reports that Elijah, like Moses, was granted a vision of God. He experienced a great wind, earthquake, and fire, but God was not in these events. Then there was sheer silence and it is in this silence that God revealed Himself--in the voice of the Spirit heard by prophets, not in the powers of nature. If God is to be found and known, one must *not* look to nature because God is not found there. God wants his people to know Him and wants them to go to the highest source for truth and not be distracted by lower forms of His creation when it comes to guidance regarding man's moral and spiritual development. The worship of multiple gods who were little more than the personification of elements of nature would be empty and fruitless worship. It would be somewhat like trying to know what a butterfly is like by looking at an anthill. According to the pre-exilic prophets Hosea and Isaiah, God abhorred such empty worship. "I desire loving compassion and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God and not burnt offerings." (Hos 6:6)

Not much was known about the prophets until the middle of the eighth century B.C. when a breakthrough occurred in ancient Hebrew prophecy. Amos, and other writing prophets after him (Isaiah, Hosea and Jeremiah), gave us the opportunity to study their actual words. Before then we only had scanty stories about prophets, and these were often exaggerated to legends. Their backgrounds seem to be unimportant, except for their "anointing" or "call" (1 Kings 19:16). This calling goes a long way in giving a prophet credibility. A vision also grants the prophetic status according to 2 Kings 2:10-11. (Vision reports: 1 Kings 22:19-22, Amos 7:1-9; 8:1-3; Zech 1:7-6:8; Dan 7-12)

The Call of God is what gives the prophets inspiration, drive and energy to do the will of God. It gives them their spiritual purpose, their job. Indeed, the experience with God must have been so glorious and transforming (Moses "shines" after being with God) that it would inspire them to perform miracles, like Moses and Elijah, and withstand loneliness, persecution and the possibility of losing one's life, like Jeremiah. (Call reports: Exo 3-6 (Moses); Isa 6; Jer 1; Eze 1-3) Gerhard von Rad states in *The Message of the Prophets*:

This was more than a new profession: it was a totally new way of life, even at the sociological level, to the extent that a call meant relinquishing normal social life and all the social and economic securities which this offered, and changing over instead to a condition where a man had nothing to depend upon, or, as we may put it, to a condition of dependence upon Yahweh and upon that security alone. (Von Rad, 37)

This new way of life meant completely surrendering to God – giving God control over your life and words, even if it meant having to wait a long time as Jeremiah had to wait 10 days once for an answer from God (Jer 42:1-7), and even if it meant endangering your life. When Jeremiah went to the temple to give God’s warnings, his words so angered the people, priests and temple prophets that they threatened his life. He was immediately put on trial and the priests and temple prophets pushed for his death. In Jeremiah’s own defense, however, he said he had acted on God’s command. After all, would he have come of his own free choice to tell his own nation that God was going to wipe them out if they did not repent of their sins and surrender to the enemy? He knew it would be considered treason. The people and the royalty became convinced that he was a prophet and he was spared.

The idea of being “lifted up” into the heavens was the ultimate test of the true prophet for both Jeremiah (Jer 23) and Micaiah (1 Kings 22). The prophet is lifted up into a higher spiritual realm and becomes aware of a revelation which God intends to bring to the world in that particular time and context, a communication to build up the faith of the people or contribute to what is known about God, as when God revealed to Elijah that He comes in the voice of the Spirit given to prophets. Revelation, by definition, is secret in nature, between God and His chosen prophet. “Surely the Lord God does nothing, without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.” (Amos 3:7)

Gerhard von Rad, German theologian who pioneered the “tradition history” approach to biblical studies (emphasizing the role of oral traditions in the formation of the Old Testament, an approach that has dominated the study of the Bible), discusses another common characteristic of the prophets . . . that the presence of the “spirit of Yahweh” was a part of their very constitution. In 2 Kings 2:9 Elisha requests Elijah for possession of it, and only after it had rested upon him is he considered a prophet. His associates attested to this presence of the “spirit of God,” and this legitimated him in their eyes. (Von Rad, 36) We have another example of the “spirit of God” coming upon Saul after he is anointed as the first king of Israel in 1 Sam 10:6: “Then the spirit of the Lord will possess you, and you will be in a prophetic frenzy along with them and be turned into a different person.” Von Rad writes:

. . . the prophets, in their new and completely unprecedented situation, were faced with the need to justify themselves both in their own and in other people’s eyes. The event . . . forced him to justify his exceptional status in the eyes of the majority. This makes clear that the writing down of a call was something secondary to the call itself, and that it served a different end from the latter. The call commissioned the prophet: the act of writing down an account of it was aimed at those sections of the public in whose eyes he had to justify himself. (Von Rad, 34-35)

Von Rad further states that the importance the prophets attached to their call makes it quite clear that they felt apart from the religious status quo. In fact, Jeremiah used strong language against false prophets who claim to have visions or dreams, but only repeat official formulas and old phrases, maintaining the status quo:

Thus says the Lord of hosts: Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, they are deluding you. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord.... I did not send the prophets, yet they ran; I did not speak to

them, yet they prophesied.... They plan to make my people forget my name by their dreams that they tell one another, just as their ancestors forgot my name for Baal. (Jer 23:16, 21, 27)

There is universal agreement that visions and auditions came to the prophets from outside themselves, and that they came suddenly and completely, without premeditation. (Von Rad, 39) All true prophecy and mediumship must start outside oneself. However, there are many influences outside one's self and all sorts of spirits with a wide range of spiritual development and beliefs. As far as the *quality* of mediumship is concerned, a person's education, motives, intentions, deep inner longings and desires become involved.

Say to those who prophesy out of their own imagination: "Hear the word of the Lord!" Thus says the Lord God, Alas for the senseless prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!... They have envisioned falsehood and lying divination; they say, "Says the Lord," when the Lord has not sent them, and yet they wait for the fulfillment of their word! Have you not seen a false vision or uttered a lying divination, when you have said, "Says the Lord," even though I did not speak? (Eze 13:2-4; 6-7) (See also Jer 14:4.)

Sometimes a "mental" medium supposes or imagines they are imparting knowledge originating from an outside source, but it is only coming from their own mind. There is generally a hidden motive or agenda that is primarily self-motivated, not God-motivated. Perhaps the person's desire is for self-aggrandizement, self-indulgence or any number of other impure or sinful motives, which may include manipulating, controlling and deceiving others. Everyone is a channel or medium for something and everyone is effected by outside forces. Which ones they listen to depend on multiple influences such as motivation, drive, education, experience, and health, just to name a few. What is the medium a channel for? Why? How do you recognize mental mediumship or lower spirit mediumship, especially when the medium is saying it is coming from God or an angel of God?

One must always question what is being spoken and, ultimately, rely on one's own soul perceptions in relationship with God. An intense, unwavering desire for truth is paramount. Perhaps mental or lower spirit mediumship will lack that ring of truth one would expect from higher quality mediumship . . . perhaps not. If questions or doubts come up, they should be allowed to kindle a bright flame of scrutiny in pursuit of what really is true. If one believes in One God, then it follows that all of creation, which emanated from this single source, must also partake of truths or laws that govern their existence. So, therefore, all truth, which comes from the same source and permeates throughout creation, should harmonize together as one chord or chorus. An untruth, therefore, either immediately or over time (usually over a *long* period of time), will be perceived as the discord or disharmony that it actually is. The truth will join into the chorus of universal harmony; it will stand the test of time; it will prove itself; it will stand up under the light of intense scrutiny; it can be tossed, turned and thrown every which way and still land on its own two feet.

To know if a revelation is from God one must first know and trust one's self and the Divine image in which we are all created. One should go to the highest source, God, for the answers. "Among all the wise ones of the nations and in all their kingdoms there is no one like you.... the Lord is the true God; he is the living God and the everlasting

King.” (Jer 10:7, 10) To do this, one must actively pursue this goal over time. To know anything takes time and devotion to the subject, and the quality of the answer will be affected by the degree of persistence, earnestness and sincerity of the seeker. A resolute desire for truth must be the underlying motive.

Divine revelation leads to an alteration of faith, an evolution of our understanding about God, which has taken place throughout the centuries, and can be seen in the biblical portrayal of the patriarchs and prophets, who were each individually lifted into a higher spiritual realm and shown a vision. For example, with Abraham, religious faith evolved to the conception of only One God. With Elijah the Hebrew faith evolved to realize that God, the Creator, could never be identical with creation. God’s revelation through Jeremiah was that each individual would have the privilege of knowing God (circumcision of the heart). Joel was the first to look forward to a time when everyone would be like those rare beings who are endowed with the spirit: “I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit.” (Joel 3:28-30)

Gerhard von Rad states this concept of progressive revelation as follows: “the prophets...who speak to us in these accounts were men who had been expressly called upon to abandon the fixed orders of religion which the majority of the people still considered valid.” (Von Rad, 34-35)

Harry M. Buck, Professor Emeritus of Religion at Wilson College and author of numerous articles and books including *People of the Lord* says:

The revelation of God, then, is not something sealed off from the rest of history or the world. It requires interpretation and response, and it is a continuing revelation, not ceasing at a particular point in history but going on and on, until it can be said in the Fourth Gospel, “Greater works than I [Jesus] do shall you do, because I go to the Father.” (Buck, 166-167)

In our scrupulous care to avoid the pitfalls of false prophets, we must be careful not to close ourselves off to the evolution of faith through true prophetic revelation. Mediumship or spiritualism is not necessarily wrong, especially if God or a high spirit sent by God comes through. If God has “spoken” to mortals in the past, and we can certainly point to examples of true prophets throughout our entire human existence, then certainly He will continue to do so, just as certainly as day follows night. We must develop our discernment so that we can recognize the mediums that channel their own minds or lower spirits from the true Prophet of God, who, as a result of an experience with God, has an important message to impart to mankind, strengthening and healing our faith by adding to the knowledge and understanding of God.

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Correspondence should be sent to:  
Patricia Doyle  
pdoyle888@yahoo.com