

The James LeSueur Spirit World Experience

Compiled by Glen W. Chapman- September 2001

James S. LeSueur

"In January 1898 I left for a mission to Great Britain. On my way I called at the Brigham Young Academy to visit my brother Frank LeSueur. We spent some pleasant hours together, for we loved each other dearly. Just before parting, we held each other's hands and made a covenant that we would follow the Lord's bidding and do anything he desired of us, thus bringing honor to our father's name. I was to go into the Jersey and Guernsey Islands, where our ancestors had come from, and during my spare time as a missionary, I would gather genealogical information regarding them. We discussed this and decided that we would do our part in the redemption of our dead. Now I admit that these are rather strange covenants for two lads - as he was but seventeen, and I only nineteen years old - but thus it was. And then we parted, unaware that we were never to see one another again in mortality.

After twenty-six months service in the mission field, and after having also secured the pedigrees of hundreds of dead in my father's ancestry over many centuries, I received this cablegram from the President of the European Mission:

"Released. Outlaws killed Frank. Can you call Anthonie, Glasgow, Thursday?"

Frank had been called on a mission by the First Presidency but had not been assigned a field, and was to leave after my return home. What a shock this was for me! I had so looked forward to the few months we would be together after my mission and before he left, and now our plans were shattered. For a short time, I felt that being deprived of his company like this was poor pay for my diligent service, but then I remembered having found relief in prayer before. So, I called on the four elders laboring in Guernsey to kneel with me in prayer. Each of them prayed for my comfort and consolation, and then I prayed. After pleading for the comforting spirit of the Lord, I asked why my brother had been taken in this way, and whether or not it was the Lord's will. After pleading earnestly, I heard a voice from above which penetrated my very soul. Clear, _ sweet, and wonderful, it said,

"Your brother is called for a similar purpose as President Woodruff's son."

I recalled immediately how President Woodruff's son, one on whom he had laid a great hope of an eventual earthly career, had been drowned in Idaho. President Woodruff had gone to the temple and asked the Lord why this son was taken, when an angel of the Lord stood before him and asked this question,

"Which of all your sons would you prefer to --have charge of the missionary work of preaching the gospel to your kindred in the spirit world?"

President Woodruff spoke the name of the son who was drowned and the angel passed out of his sight.

So then I knew that my brother, Frank, had been called to take charge of the missionary work among my kindred who had passed on. He had been a faithful student at BY Academy and after his return home was called to be a missionary. Therefore he was judged, prepared, and worthy to be the ideal one to take charge of my family's missionary work in the next life. My heart's cries were assuaged and I felt to praise the Lord for I knew of no relative who would fill that important post in a better way. Frank had a wonderful personality, was interested in everyone and a friend of all, especially the downtrodden and weak. He was very sympathetic and had a keen sense of right and duty. This was apparent in his insistence on going to the call of his country when the sheriff asked him to go with a posse after five outlaws. His last words heard by living witnesses a few hours prior to his being ambushed and shot down by those outlaws were, "The sheriff's ahead and will need our help." He was no deserter and to the last fearlessly did his duty. Here was a real

leader to guide kindred in the spirit world into the way of salvation. I rejoiced in this knowledge.

When I returned home to Arizona, I had a feeling I would see him. I sought for this privilege at his grave side but was not favored. A week or more after my return, my father and I went up to the sheep camps Frank had been in charge of at the time of his death. As we drove from camp to camp, the Mexican herders could talk of nothing else but Frank and how they liked him. At night when my father retired under the pines I went a short distance away, and kneeling in prayer, asked that I might see Frank and get an idea of the work he was doing. I felt that my prayer would be answered.

Returning to the camp bed, I retired, and my spirit left my body. Looking down, I saw my body on the bed beside my father. Then I saw a personage standing a few feet from my spirit, dressed in white and I knew he was my Guardian Angel. He said, "Come, go with me."

We passed into space above a great distance, and then out over the forest, the plain, over hills, dales, water, cities, and in an incredibly short time came into a large city which I knew to be a city where the spirits of those who had passed away were detained while awaiting preparing for the resurrection morning. A beautiful city it was, passing all description with its tall, white buildings, its clean flower-bordered streets, its peace and loveliness, its perfection. We passed through the streets with people going here and there and then came before a four-story building which covered an entire block.

"We will go in here, said the angel.

A door opened and a young lady beckoned us to enter. I looked at her wondering who she was, for I did not recall having seen her before. The personage accompanying me said,

"This young lady is a relative of yours, who while living in mortality was killed. She is now assisting in missionary work among your relatives who have died without a knowledge of the gospel, and are assembled to hear the gospel preached."

I looked over the audience, estimating that there were about ten thousand present by comparing the congregation with the assembly at conference time in the Salt Lake Tabernacle. There was a look of expectancy upon their faces as though they were awaiting something to begin just like I have seen at our great conference.

Presently, I heard a person begin speaking and I looked toward the speaker and listened to a sermon on the first principles of the gospel. The speaker explained the principles just as I had heard missionaries present them, excepting baptism, which he said was an earthly covenant that should be attended to while in mortality. However, inasmuch as they had died without being baptized, the ordinance could be attended to for them by proxy, someone living in mortality could take their name and act for them. He explained that there were temples erected upon the earth where kinsmen and friends were being baptized vicariously for the dead; and that if they accepted the baptism and confirmation that was done for them, it would be as valid as if they had attended to it in person while in mortality.

When the speaker had finished he turned around and looked up at me, and I saw that it was my brother, Frank. He looked supremely happy and I felt that I would be willing to go through any sacrifice if I could live to be worthy of such happiness. Then he bowed and smiled at me so joyously that a wonderful thrill passed through me. I shall never forget it.

A young lady was standing beside him, also dressed in white. She bowed and smiled at me in recognition of my visit, and I looked at her very carefully, wondering who she was. The angel said,

"The young lady standing by and assisting your brother is to be his wife."

I looked at her once more, realizing that if I ever saw her again, I would know her.

Then the angel said, "We will pass into the other rooms."

There was a room in which there were many thousands of spirits, arranged in classes with

teachers instructing and preparing them with sufficient knowledge to later be instructed like the first group that had seemed so interested and eager to receive the information given to them. Faithful relatives of mine who had died were instructors here, and the listeners, too, were relatives who had died without a knowledge of the gospel.

After this, we passed into a third hall where there was confusion and disorder, quarrelling, and loud talking, and it seemed that force was required to control some of those gathered. There were also relatives of still darker times, even darker than the age known as the Dark Ages, when there was so much sin and wickedness and ignorance among the inhabitants of the earth. These required a still more difficult training and long schooling before they could even come to the state of the second group, who were willing to be taught.

Then the angel said, "We will now go back to your body," and at that we passed out of the building along the streets of the city, and with the speed which seemed like lightening over the great expanse of mountains, plains, seas, and in almost the speed of light came down into the mountain camp. I looked around and saw the sheep bedded a short distance away at the great pines, my father lying asleep, and my own body there in bed with no spirit within it. Then I looked at the angel, standing near. He bowed, smiled and bid me adieu, and my spirit re-entered my body. I sat up immediately and told my father of my experience.

Lest you suggest that this was only a dream, let me give you some proof of the actuality of my visit beyond.

Patriarch Charles D. Evans, in Provo, Utah, on the 26th of February, 1896, had promised me that "The Lord shall give thee the gift of prophecy thou shall look beyond this world of flesh into the world of spirits and behold its beauty and order and commune with the dead for their redemption" He also went on to say that "At thy hands shall be the power to bind on earth and in heaven."³ Both these prophecies were fulfilled, for I did in actuality leave my body to visit the spirit world, and I have served in the temples.

At the time of this experience, I knew of no kindred of mine that had been killed, save my brother, and could not identify the young lady at the entrance of the building in the spirit world. However, when I described her to my mother, she said,

"I know who she was. That was Nellie Cdekirk, your cousin who was killed on the fourth of July by being thrown off a horse she was riding. She was acting as the Goddess of Liberty in Vernal, Utah, and her foot caught in the stirrup so that when she was thrown, she did not fall away, but was drug several blocks before the horse could be stopped. When they freed her from the stirrup she was dead. Nellie was the loveliest and best of all of our relatives."

So it was Nellie who was helping Frank and hundreds of other relatives of mine to teach and help our dead kindred come to an understanding of the truth.

And who was the young lady with Frank that the angel said was to become his wife? A few weeks after this manifestation, a Sister Kempe came from an adjoining town and told my parents that her daughter had died a short time before. On her deathbed she had told her mother that Frank LeSueur had come to visit her in his spirit form and asked her if she would become his wife. She had agreed to do so. Then he told her to tell her mother that she was going to die and that after she did, her mother was to come and ask my parents for consent to having her daughter, Jennie, sealed to Frank. I was called into the consultation, and when I heard it I asked for a photo of the young lady. As soon as I saw it, I recognized the likeness of the young lady with my brother in the spirit world. The sealing was taken care of and those two happy souls are now working together in that most joyous work of soul-saving.

My life has been changed by this experience, for it has been my utmost desire to do all I can for the redemption of my dead, and to help others throughout the church in genealogical and temple work. To me this effort is vital, actual, and without supposition, for I know that the work we are doing for the saving of souls in the spirit world is indeed moving forward. I have seen the

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(James A. LeSueur, A Peep Into The Spirit World, in The Journey Beyond Life, pp.147-157)