

SPIRITIST CORNER

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL: AN INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITISM



Many religions preached the immortality of the soul from the beginning. Because they also preached some teachings that did not convince reason, the belief in immortality was discarded along with those teachings and treated as superstition. As a result, many people choose to believe that physical life is the only true life.



When faced with painful experiences, those people feel confirmation that there is no God or supreme intelligence but that doesn't bring any comfort or help in acting with resignation through those situations.

Others accept all the religious rules, dogmas, symbols, practices, and the belief that the soul is immortal, but when experiencing pain they also don't bring consolation and a rational reason for it.

Through Spiritism, I have found comfort, consolation, and reasoning for painful experiences building resilience to continue the pursuit of spiritual progress.

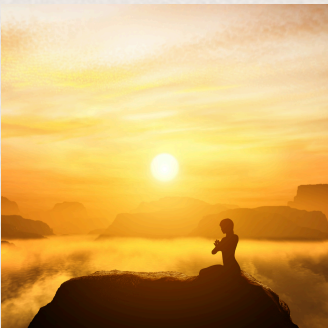


What is Spiritism?

Spiritism is not a religion but rather a philosophy, a science, and a way of life. There are no ministers and group meetings consist of studying and sharing ideas about the spiritist philosophy along with prayers or vibrations.

It was codified by Allan Kardec during the mid-19th century bringing the idea that physical death is not the end and the soul is immortal.

When not incarnate in a body, the soul lives in the spirit world but undergoes repeated reincarnations into the physical world to progress toward intellectual and moral perfection.



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Allan Kardec, (Denizard Hippolyte Leon Rivail) was born in Lyon, France, on October 3, 1804. He completed his initial studies in Lyon and then furthered his schooling in Switzerland. He received his bachelor's in letters and science, and then a doctorate in medicine. A renowned linguist, he was fluent in German and English and spoke some Dutch.

He moved to Paris and opened an Institute for teaching with his uncle and that's how he met his wife, Amelie Boudet, who was also a teacher. They married on February 6, 1832.

Kardec experienced some challenges when his business partner, who was addicted to gambling, ruined the business. They sold the institute and Kardec invested the sum received with a close businessman friend, who in turn, filed for bankruptcy. That did not discourage Kardec and he worked hard as an accountant for three businesses and wrote books in the evening on grammar, arithmetic, and pedagogical studies. He also organized free courses in chemistry, physics, astronomy, and comparative anatomy from 1835-1840.

Kardec also taught those subjects at Lycee Polymathique in 1849. Many of his works were adopted by the University of France and sold profusely creating a modest income for his work.

It was in 1854 that Mr. Kardec first heard about "turning tables" from the magnetizer Mr. Frontier, with whom he maintained a relationship due to their studies in magnetism. According to Mr. Frontier, the fascinating part was that the table was made to turn by magnetization and could communicate. If it was asked something, it would respond.



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As a skeptical scientist, he approached the phenomenon with the intent to thoroughly explore it using scientific methods and realized that there was intelligence behind the phenomena. As every intelligent effect must have an intelligent cause, it became evident that there was communication with unseen beings that were once alive but after physical death were able to retain their individuality.



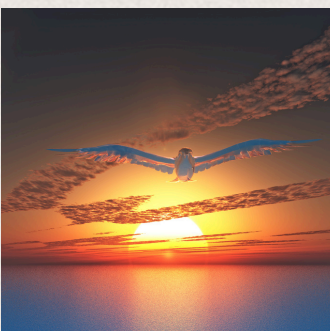
That doesn't mean that after we die we become all-knowing, all-wise and all-powerful. It solely means that our spirit goes on at whatever level of development it has attained and will continue to progress through various reincarnations. Through spirit communications, he discovered that in a previous incarnation, he was a druid named Allan Kardec. The spirit suggested that he adopt that name to distinguish his spiritist writings from his educational work.



Kardec wrote five foundational books: "The Spirits' Book", "The Mediums' Book", "The Gospel according to Spiritism", "Heaven and Hell" and "Genesis".

Everything that exists has a cause, the first cause of everything we call God.

Voltaire said "The world intrigues me. I cannot imagine that this clock exists without a clockmaker."



The Spiritist definition of God is that "God is the Supreme Intelligence, the first cause of all things" (Allan Kardec, The Spirits' Book).

Except "No one has ever seen God", says John in one of his epistles (John 1:18) because "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24)

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Since God cannot be perceived by our bodily eyes we know him through his works (the creation) and we can feel him spiritually through his infinite love.

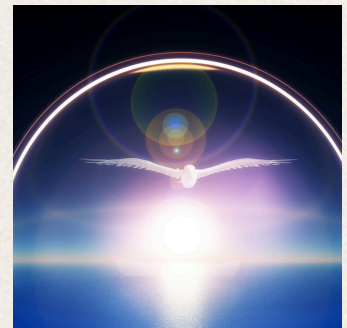
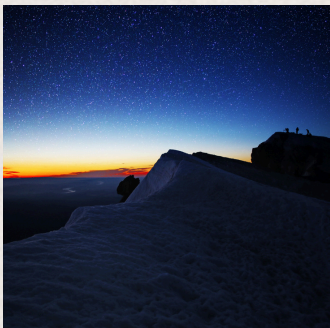
**The universe was created based on a trinity of elements:
God, spirit, and matter.**

The spiritual element is composed of the spiritual principle that evolves to the point of individuality and intelligence by interacting with matter. It is then that it becomes a spirit. That spirit when incarnated in a physical body is called the soul.

The material element or material principle is called Universal Cosmic Fluid and is the primitive matter in its most elementary state and through changes and transformations give shape to innumerable types of bodies in nature.

There is no emptiness in the universe. Every space is filled by this fluid like an ocean and spirits live in different states of this fluid, more ethereal (imponderable) or more material (ponderable) based on the level of spiritual evolution.

The spirit (spiritual principle) to incarnate in a body (material principle) needs an intermediate which is called the Perispirit. The Perispirit is a more ethereal form of matter that may be visible during apparitions, but consciousness only exists in the spirit.



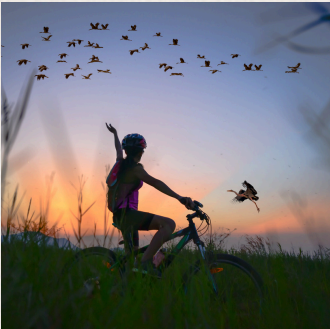
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One thing that was very hard for me to understand in religion was why would an infinitely good God allow suffering. Why would he create evil beings like demons that were free to roam the earth and then create perfect beings like angels that had to rebel because they were slaves of God and jealous of us, humans, stuck in the middle, so imperfect but possessing free will?



Spiritism is founded in the belief that God creates all spirits alike “simple and ignorant”.

We evolve from mineral to vegetable, to animal, and then to human in a very slow process. Somewhere between animal and human, we develop intelligence and consciousness.

The plant doesn’t have intelligence and acts purely on instinct. The animals also act mostly by instinct, but various species show some intelligence but still lack consciousness. Humans are intelligent and develop individuality and consciousness but need to progress not only in intelligence but also in morality. Humans are also still influenced by animal instincts. The challenge is to develop intelligence and morality while also conquering our animal instincts, passions, and attachments to the material world over spiritual development.



Sometimes our suffering is a reaction to one of our actions: we touch the fire = pain, we remove the hand = the hand is preserved and we learn the lesson to not touch the fire, if there was no pain the hand would be consumed by the fire).



Sometimes our suffering is a way we choose to pay retribution for errors we committed in past lives. We cheated on our spouse in a previous life so we choose to either be with

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someone who will cheat on us or we may choose to suffer by not finding a partner in this life to give us a sense of bringing the scales back to balance. Each spirit will choose how to obtain balance, not an external entity or God. Sometimes we may choose to dedicate ourselves to doing good deeds because "love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8)

Sometimes suffering is caused because we are still living in an imperfect world with imperfect people (like us) and imperfect people make mistakes. Whoever makes a mistake will eventually be corrected, in this life or the next. The challenge is not to react to a mistake by making a mistake ourselves because then we will also be corrected.

Sometimes suffering results from a mission we took to help another soul: a spirit we love will incarnate for a short period or with challenges (physical, mental, behavioral, etc.) and we choose to be beside them to support them even though we didn't need to.

One thing is for sure: God loves us just as much when we act like demons as when we become angels. Parents don't send children to preschool expecting them to come back from the first day and explain quantum mechanics. Parents cherish whatever scribbles they bring home.

God doesn't expect us to become perfect in one incarnation. One incarnation is but a brief second in the life of the spirit. God loves us more and is more patient than any parent could be and one day we will all be angels and serve not because we are slaves but because serving others is the ultimate act of unconditional love.

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To know more about Spiritism visit www.Sisco-ohio.org

