

Purported Angelic Visitation to R. C. Evans

Whenever any man who has been long connected with the latter-day work departs from it and breaks off his associations with the church, there arises in the minds of the Saints a query as to the cause for his departure from the truth. In the case of R. C. Evans the interest is more than common, because he was for so long connected with the church and held such honorable place among the Saints. There has come into our hands a stenographic report from the hand of Sister Blanche Allen Needham, of a recitation of purported angelic visit, by R. C. Evans, which he offers as a reason for his withdrawal from the church. The report is attested by a number of Saints who were present and heard the recitation. We feel that this report throws considerable light upon the spiritual condition of the man who was once blessed of God as the recipient of many truly spiritual blessings, and by permission of the committee having under consideration the difficulties in Toronto, Canada, we submit the same for the information of those interested in the reasons that impelled R. C. Evans to leave the church.

Your brother in Christ,

Walter W. Smith,
Editor of Zion's Ensign.

Independence, Missouri, July 8, 1918.

Manifestation

Recited by R. C. Evans at Broadway Hall, Toronto, Sunday
Morning, June 9, 1918, Purported to have been
Received by him June 3, 1918.

R. C. Evans speaking:

The trouble through which we were passing in the church had caused me loss of sleep and I felt the Spirit of the Lord was leading me. I had left my home on purpose not to let my people know that I was fasting in order to get myself ready to stand before God. About ten o'clock Monday morning, I felt impressed to leave my library and go to my bedroom. I knelt beside the bed and, as I knelt, I felt the Spirit of God upon me. As I prayed, I saw a light reflected upon a large mirror on the other side of the room. The light increased until it flooded the room with a brilliancy that is not describable. I turned my face toward the foot of the bed and there suspended, as white as the sunbeam, I beheld a personage who stood with his arms outstretched above him. I extended my hands in greeting attitude, when he smiled and I felt he was a messenger from the Lord. I remained in a kneeling position until he departed from the room. I was the first to speak. I addressed the angel as follows:

“Unworthy as I am to speak to such as thou, I beseech thee, permit my great need to come before thee. Please impart to me the will of the Lord concerning *me* at this time.” Whereupon the messenger said:

The angel speaking:

“The leaders of the Reorganized Church are teaching many things that are not in harmony with the will of the Lord. It is the will of the Lord that you present your resignation to President Frederick M. Smith tonight and thus sever your connection with that organization.”

Comment by R. C. Evans:

“Now do you blame me for presenting my resignation?”

The angel speaking:

“Bid the people to fear not to withdraw from that organization, for in many things the leaders have corrupted themselves before God, they have placed their trust in the arm of flesh and are seeking to walk according to the wisdom of this world and to conform to the spirit of this world.”

Comment by Evans:

“F. M. has been learning year in and year out how to conduct the things of God from men who do not believe the Bible at all. How can they teach them? He has changed the church according to the customs of this world.”

The angel continues:

“The honest in heart shall not be deprived of the Spirit. Many are now disturbed, but when they hear the message that will come forth from *thee* they will rejoice and thrust off the yoke of bondage and come forth and perform the work that God has

declared shall be accomplished before the coming of the Lord.”

Comment by Evans:

“Mark you, I believe God called Joseph Smith, but just how long after that call he began to sink into unspeakable iniquity I cannot tell. I do not know just when it occurred. I know before we get through we will find many things we have believed are untrue, the evidences come to me we have been mistaken in his conduct. I know one man who picked up an old book out of publication, paid one hundred and fifty dollars for it and, thank God, that was not the only one. I have that book that wakened me up to a realization that we had been deceived on many things. I found a book published when Ed Kelley was *supreme lawyer* of the church, with the confession that Joseph Smith made concerning the church with regard to spiritual wifery and polygamy, he destroyed the type, bought up all the books they could buy, but I bought one. These are some of the reasons why the angel commanded, for the leaders were leading the people astray.”

The angel continues:

“Be of good cheer” (R. C.—And God knows I needed that) “for thou art beloved of the Lord,” (R. C.—If you will go through the entire Bible you will find this expression but twice, to Daniel and John, “the Beloved.”) “and he has watched over thee and led thee to this place. I am he that was sent by the Lord to ordain thee a bishop, and for this reason, that

none may doubt the authority by which thou shalt perform the work of the Lord.” (R. C.—Note the *pungency* of this reason.) “And now I am commissioned to command you to organize the Church of Christ so those who have and may hear the voice of the Good Shepherd may be safely cared for within this fold and shall be of assistance to each other.

“The church is not your salvation. No man receives either priesthood or salvation from a church organization. This is but a means in which the people may be instructed in the things of God and a *place* where those who love God may meet together and partake of the sacrament. The church is a place of meeting, but there is no salvation to it.

“It is written, ‘A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.’ The church cannot give you anything. Even Jesus glorified not himself to be made a high priest, but was called of God a high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Again, it is written, ‘No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron.’ Therefore, it is the Lord’s to confer priesthood, and because of this the organization merely gives the right to represent the church upon the earth. Know then that if the Lord can confer priesthood, that no man or church organization can take priesthood from the man thus called and indicated of God.”

Comment by Evans:

“That is in keeping with the law in all the books of the Reorganized Church, that they cannot give a man priesthood nor take his priesthood from him.”

The angel continues:

“Even so upon faith and repentance a man is baptized for the remission of sins. No man forgiveth sins, but God only, and man being born of water and of the Spirit is born from above and becomes a child of God, being translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, and is made heir to the promises of God. This has been accomplished when there was no church organization on the earth.”

Comment by Evans:

“Were Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith not baptized before there was a church organization? Were they not given the priesthood without a church organization? Let me say right here that the third man Joseph Smith baptized, I refer to David Whitmer, declares that God commanded him by open revelation to leave the church because the Prophet had gone into iniquity, and he was commanded to denounce him and he did so. David Whitmer said he had as much proof to prove that Joseph Smith believed and practiced polygamy as he had that George Washington lived and was President of the United States. God has restored the priesthood, and the badness of one man or five thousand cannot make God back up in his preparation for the coming of Christ, and to this end the angel has commanded me to organize the people.”

The angel continues:

“Remember that you were baptized into Christ and not into the church. In this way you put on

Christ and so it has been written: 'As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Therefore we are buried with Christ by baptism. As Christ was raised up from the dead even so we also should walk in newness of life.'

"The church cannot take the priesthood from you; it can say, We will not allow you to represent us. So, when you are baptized you are not baptized into the church but into Christ: you die to the world; you are in Christ a new creature."

"If ye shall walk in all humility with the Lord, I will reveal unto thee those things which shall be a blessing to humanity."

Comment by Evans:

"Who is a prophet unless a man through whom God speaks? What has Fred M. given from the Lord? I would sooner have no prophet than a false prophet, but if it is a fact that God has spoken through me time and again and you people know it, why say there is no prophet? God will raise up prophets."

The angel continues:

"And the great promises made to thee in the past shall all be fulfilled."

Comment by Evans:

"The messenger passed away and I found myself upon my knees at the side of the bed. I arose, wrote my resignation, called my wife into the library and read it to her. This was the most supreme moment

of my life. Thirty-seven years ago on the 9th of June I took this woman by the hand. Thirty-seven years later I ask you to take my hand and follow God out of corruption into the great white light of God.

“She looked me straight in the eye and said, “I believe it to be your duty,” whereupon I signed the resignation and presented it to F. M. Smith the same evening, and while I sever from the organization to which I have belonged for forty-two years, I still contend that I am a child of God, a member of his church, and a priest called of God unto the office of bishop under the hands of an angel.

“Do you believe that to be a revelation from God and covenant with me to stand by it? Rise to your feet.”

(There were approximately two hundred and fifty present. Only about one half dozen remained seated.)

Reported by Blanche Allen Needham.