Departed Loved Ones Are Guardian Angels



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Note: Some core ideas are taken from my earlier book *Heaven is Not a Distant Place* © 2019. Here, these ideas are expanded and developed further, with detailed explanations and examples, and supplemented with notes and sources. A full, annotated bibliography is provided to help readers further increase their knowledge.

To Julie, Papa, and all my Angels

With eternal love

Departed Loved Ones Are Guardian Angels

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For those who have never felt angelic protection or guidance and never received spirit communications (whether or not they have lost loved ones), it is important to remember that most people cannot perceive the majority of spirit phenomena and yet they exist. Swiss doctor Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, a leading researcher on death and dying, has drawn a parallel to a dog whistle that humans cannot hear but we readily acknowledge that dogs can hear it. She has written that similarly most people lack the ability to perceive higher vibrations from the spirit world but in fact they are all around us and it is wise to recognize this.[1]

Unusually open-minded for a religious leader, catholic monsignor Jean Vernette mentioned in an interview with a near-death experience (NDE) researcher that after-death communications (ADCs) have been reported throughout history and that studies on ADCs have been conducted since the early 1880s. Possibly arising from personal experience, Vernette is convinced that our departed loved ones are close to us and watch over us. But he recognizes that many people do not understand this fact, and points out that just as artistic inspiration cannot be repeated in a lab, and yet we know it still exists, ADCs and testimonies of NDErs are not reproducible in a lab but are "knowable...through the heart."[2]

Ignoring or denying the spirit realm and its connection to people on earth is a reductionist view (reducing everything to what one can see, touch, and measure) and severely limits the denier spiritually. People who need *proof* that the soul exists after death are corralling themselves into a tiny corner of the universe, intellectually confined and shortchanged in terms of wisdom. (As a scientist myself, with a Bachelor's degree in Physics, I feel privileged to *know* that life and love are eternal. I offer Appendices B and C to help reductionists expand their understanding and their horizons.)

For readers unfamiliar with the literature on spiritually transformative experiences such as ADCs, NDEs, and death-bed visions (DBVs), I have included four appendices which: (A) define ADCs, NDEs, and DBVs, (B) discuss verification of such experiences, (C) describe other phenomena which confirm the reality of the spirit dimension, and (D) explain why a few people find spiritually transformative experiences to be negative. You may wish to read these appendices before diving into my main thesis, which follows directly.

My conviction that departed loved ones are guardian angels to those left behind is based on years of scholarly research into the literatures on ADCs and NDEs, drawing new and thoughtful implications across the two streams. It is also based on amazing personal experiences described in my book, *Ongoing Miracles*, available on Obooko.

A thorough examination of the ADC literature reveals that the spirit dimension is close to us and that departed loved

ones watch over us. Thousands of bereaved people have received ADCs from departed loved ones conveying that they are happy in the spirit dimension (or heaven) and yet they are always *with* the bereaved, watching over them. For example, when a grieving widow thought to herself how very sad she was since her husband "went away," her husband's spirit responded telepathically that he had not left her. He told her he was still with her *and* in heaven.[3] In another example, a soldier's spirit appeared at the foot of his parents' bed and told them he was fine and with God. When the mother asked where exactly he was, he said he was right next to them, and then faded away.[4]

Several soldiers killed in World War I communicated through ADCs that, although in the sprit realm, they were close to their loved ones on earth and would continue watching over them.[5] One soldier specifically told his parents that departed spirits minister to those left behind with undiminished love and that they like being connected to and watching over their loved ones on earth.[6] Another soldier explained to his mother that the ties of deep love continue after death; she could call on him any time she needed him and he would be there.[7] There are many such ADC reports which substantiate that heaven is *not* a distant place and departed loved ones in heaven stay close to us.

The NDE literature also corroborates these conclusions. People who have had NDEs have met departed loved ones in the Light (a word they use interchangeably for God and for heaven) and realized that there is only a thin partition

separating the physical and spirit dimensions.[8] Some knew this because the spirits of their loved ones told them that they had been watching over them.[9] Others met unknown beings of light and some of them discovered (by looking through family albums after their return) that the spirits who helped them in heaven were their own departed relatives who they had not met on earth.[10] Many understood that the two dimensions were close from their personal experience in the spirit world—they could easily look in on people they loved on earth and see what was going on.[11]

One important inference from these two streams of literature taken together is that our departed loved ones in heaven are our guardian angels. The reason I refer to departed loved ones as "angels" is that a careful study of the ADC and NDE literature reveals that there is no difference between spirits who have reached the Light and angels, contradicting archaic religious beliefs that angels and people are different kinds of beings.

Not all departed souls are angels, however. Those who do not realize they have died are not angels, but ghosts, that "behave like living persons with obsessive-compulsive neurosis who endlessly repeat some action which partially re-enacts an event of the past."[12] Souls who have not reached the Light but are trapped in a negative space (due to their own fears or resistance to dying) are also not angels. Nor are the souls that are stuck in extensive life reviews due to the harm they have done to others.[13] All these souls can

progress, however, and eventually reach a higher spiritual plane.[14] It is on the higher plane that they can act as angels.

Most departed loves ones reach the Light (or heaven) and are angels. The ADC literature contains numerous instances of departed loved ones specifically communicating that they were angels, watching over the bereaved.[15] Psychology professor Kenneth Pargament concurs that when people think of a guardian angel today, they are thinking of their loved ones who have gone before them rather than an angel with wings.[16] As one more example, in a book on ADCs, a woman refers to her mother's "angel arms" spreading a "protective veil" over her life to keep her safe.[17]

There are other cases in which departed loved ones have *tried to tell* the bereaved that they are their special angels watching over them. For example, a bereaved couple who lost their daughter heard the radio come on by itself and the song playing was, "How do you talk with an angel?"[18] Although the authors simply relate this incident as an ADC, it is much more than that. The daughter's spirit is telling her parents she is an angel, which is contrary to traditional religious beliefs that angels are different from departed human souls. In addition, she is telling her parents that there are ways to "talk" to an angel, which suggests that they need to be open to all kinds of ADCs from her.

An NDEr who later died gave an ADC emphasizing her role as an angel. She appeared to her little granddaughter as a traditional angel with wings, told her she loved her, and

that she should tell her father (the angel's son) about her visit and describe how she appeared.[19] It is clear that she wanted her son to understand that she was now their angel, but she probably appeared to the granddaughter because children are better able to see spirits than are adults.[20]

Corroboration from NDEs and Mystical Experiences

The NDE literature upholds the idea that departed spirits who have reached the Light are *no different from angels*. People who have had NDEs say that the beings of Light who greeted them were *not* a different kind of entity but simply on a higher plane; and that God is inside every one of us.[21]

As psychiatrist and philosopher Brian Weiss explains, "We are all composed of God, for God is in each of us, the substance of our being."[22] NDE scholar Phillip Berman notes that Jesus said, "we came from the light" and that Meister Eckhart, a fourteenth-century German mystic, wrote, "God is at the center of Man," both implying that the divine light is inside each of us.[23] Philosopher Michael Grosso agrees that we are *all* part of God and that, "the Hindu [Vedic] doctrine of the oneness of Atman [soul] and Brahman [God] is not shy about asserting this lofty equation."[24]

Dr. Sarvapelli Radhakrishnan, Indian scholar and philosopher, wrote that Brahman [God] is an eternal spirit that manifests itself in everyone. It is not apart from the world. It *is* the world. He explained that as a consequence of this manifestation, we are all part of the Absolute [God]. Sri

Aurobindo Ghose, Indian philosopher and mystic, concurred that the Absolute is Being, Consciousness, and Bliss, and we are all part of Brahman. The knowledge that we are all part of God came to him in his mystic experience.[25] Across oceans in another continent, a Princeton graduate who also had a mystic experience said, "A great white light surrounded me completely and was within and outside of me at the same time. I was that light, that light was me. That light was God, and I was God."[26]

NDErs seem to understand this. Many of them say that we all have the same beautiful light within us as the Light that comes to meet us when we cross the threshold—it is just as intense and loving, and there is a feeling of having come home.[27] As British philosopher David Lorimer explains, the Light has "both... intellectual and ...emotional aspects" and it is "not physical light, but rather spiritual light."[28]

An NDEr explains that "we are all aspects of the perfect whole, and as such are part of God, and of each other." Another NDEr clarifies that we all have a direct connection with the divine because we are part of the divine. A third NDEr expresses it as: "God-light is in everyone. We are all one entity."[29]

Berman quotes eighteenth century rabbi Shmelke, "All souls are the same. Each is a spark from the original soul, and this soul is wholly inherent in all souls." Berman also quotes sixteenth century writer de Blois, "[the soul] is then united to God without any medium, ...as iron placed in the

fire is changed into fire, without ceasing to be iron, ...here the soul reposes... sweetly experiencing...God."[30] Similarly, Lorimer writes that in "the experience of the light...there is [a] sense of complete oneness...in which the sense of self is nevertheless retained and expanded at the same time."[31]

This rich literature on NDEs and mystical experiences consistently explains that we are all part of God. It lends further credence to my thesis that departed loved ones are angels and not some lower sort of beings.

Support from Literature on DBVs and Comas

In addition, other spiritually transformative experiences show that departed loved ones are watching over those left behind. Many instances have been reported where the dying saw the spirits of their departed loved ones and became happy or excited about leaving. In fact, several researchers have documented a large number of cases of death-bed visions (DBVs) from close relatives.[32] It was clear to the dying and those tending them that the departed loved ones had been watching over their loved ones on earth and had appeared when it was time for them to transition.

Very often, such DBVs show a shared and happy earth experience. For example, a woman who loved traveling saw her beloved daughter who had died of cancer standing in a line (as if at an airport) waiting for her. Another woman who had lost her young daughter saw the daughter's spirit signing to her before her own death. The mother and

daughter had often communicated in sign language which they had learned to help deaf people in their neighborhood. The woman's husband and son saw her signing "I love you" while looking off in the distance and smiling radiantly. They realized the daughter was there for her mother.[33]

Some dying people say nothing to the people near them, but their expressions show happy recognition, convincing those present that a departed loved one has arrived. In one case, a dying woman reached out, seemed to take something precious from an invisible person, looked down ecstatically as if she was cradling a baby, and then died. The woman who had several children had lost her first baby but the family never spoke of that loss.[34]

People who came out of comas have talked of their having gone to heaven and meeting the spirits of loved ones who told them they were watching over them. Kenneth Ring, who did extensive research on NDEs, mentioned that people in comas have had NDEs and met with known spirits who had passed on, exchanging important communication.[35] Researcher Arthur Ford had an NDE when he was in a coma for two weeks. He experienced the Light and was delighted to meet relatives and friends. He was sent back to earth because his soul purpose was not yet fulfilled.[36]

Failure to Recognize Departed Ones as Angels

Unfortunately, many people have difficulty understanding that our own departed loved ones are our angels watching

over and guiding us. A woman who wanted to help her dying mother find the answers to her questions prayed for help. She found that any issue her mother raised was answered simply by opening books that were lying around; the books would open exactly to where there was an answer to the question or concern.[37] The woman saw these occurrences as heavenly messages, which is certainly correct. But she did not seem to understand that it was their own guardian angels who were helping them with these issues, especially as they would be around to ease the transition of the mother.

The grieving father of a two-year-old killed in a tragic accident found a gold filigree pillbox in the yard. The box, handed down for generations, was in the bedroom and the father wondered how it got in the yard. On picking it up he noticed a tiny angel on the lid for the first time. The grateful father knew his son was okay and was grateful for the little signs he received every day thereafter that his son was well. He said he knew the messages were from heaven because they came "from a powerful and loving source."[38]

Although the father is right in the broad sense, he did not seem to understand that it was his son's spirit who gave him that first sign, and all the ones that followed to help him heal. In fact, his son seems to have carefully chosen the angel-pillbox to show his father that he was now an angel and capable of wondrous feats. But many people do not understand that children's spirits are mature, and that our loved ones' spirits are indeed powerful and loving.

In a similar case, the parents of an eighteen-year-old killed in a car accident prayed for assurance that he was in heaven. The father found a Christmas angel in the middle of the basement floor in June even though the ornaments had long been put away in an upstairs closet. Later, the mother found another Christmas angel (with the son's name on it) on the living room floor. Both parents were grateful that their prayers were answered.[39] But it does not seem that they understood that it was their own son who gave them the messages in answer to their prayers or that he used symbolism to show them that he was an angel.

Even when faced with similar circumstances and similar ADCs, some people intuitively understand the concept of departed loved ones as guardian angels while others do not. For example, a couple's premature baby had many health problems. As the mother prayed for help, she felt her departed grandfather's presence and was reassured that he was watching over them. She knew her baby would recover, as indeed he did.[40] In contrast, a minister (whose wife underwent a very difficult labor) felt his departed grandmother's presence right after his son was born. She even conveyed to him that his wife and son were fine. The man simple-mindedly concluded she had stopped by to see her great-grandson who would carry on the family name.[41] He did not seem to understand that she was there to help at this difficult time as their guardian angel, or that *she* was the one who assured him of his wife and son's well-being.

It is possible that some people have trouble understanding such concepts due to their religious beliefs. For example, a nine-year-old girl dying of cancer was first correctly told she would see departed relatives when she died. But when the girl asked if she could be met by an angel, the attending minister laughed and said if she wanted an angel, he was sure she would have one.[42] Although well meant, this incident shows the common misapprehension about angels being different from the spirits of our departed loved ones. The little girl understandably wished to see angelic beings meeting her, and her departed loved ones would indeed be in that form; but the minister did not appear to be aware of this reality.

Similarly, Louis LaGrand, a grief counselor who has written about ADCs, takes a narrow, traditionally religious view on this issue. He writes that all departed souls are at a lower level than "angels," whom he names from the Bible, and wrongly concludes that most ADCs can be viewed as the work of "angels" (rather than departed loved ones).[43] Kay Woods, another grief counselor, who claims that her views are not based on religion but on extensive research, nevertheless agrees with LaGrand's view of angels and departed souls being of a different nature. She erroneously calls angels "servants of God" and says "we are each assigned a guardian angel." Although at one point she correctly writes, "we are one, not only with other humans, but also with God," Woods also mentions that she attends angel "workshops" and cites different types of angels from religion.[44] LaGrand and Woods are well-meaning in their desire to help the

bereaved, but neither of them understands that angels and good departed souls are *not* different types of entities.

In contrast, a nurse who observed a young patient's DBV realized that angels are not different from human spirits. She saw "two spirit forms" appear on either side of the dying girl's bed and recognized them as the girl's friends (who had also been the nurse's patients and had died a year earlier). The dying girl was joyous, said she was happy to go with them, and stretched out her hands to them. The nurse related that she then saw both "angels" extend their hands to her.[45] It is heartwarming that the nurse correctly recognized that all good departed souls are angels. Indeed, *all* of us have the Light within us, and are part of God, as discussed earlier.

Other Guardian Angels

What about people who have not lost loved ones but nevertheless sense protection or guidance by spirits? It is informative to know that there are other guardian angels in addition to departed loved ones. People who had NDEs (and others who were regressed to their life in the spirit world before their current earth life) discovered that everyone belongs to a soul mate group, in which spirits are bound to each other in eternal love. Some of these are the spirits of the children or grandchildren waiting to be born and they act as guardian angels to their parents- and grandparents-to-be until they arrive on earth. In the spirit dimension, these souls are not children but eternal, mature souls. Other spirits in a soul mate group choose to stay back for a particular

incarnation and watch over the ones on earth.[46] It is obvious that people do not remember these spirits during their earth lives and as a result, if they have not lost loved ones, they attribute any protection or guidance they experience to unknown guardian angels.

Many people recount stories of being saved by guardian angels. They were caught by an invisible force as they were falling, or heard a voice telling them to take an alternate route which saved them from a mishap, or were miraculously shielded from a bullet during war or strife. Others have been awakened by an ethereal voice to escape a fire or to save a baby from being strangled by its blanket.[47] Thousands of such instances are recorded.

There are also hundreds of accounts of guardian angels helping people find their way when they were lost, or to retrieve lost objects through an instinctive urge to look in a particular place. Some people have been guided (through dream visitations or telepathic ADCs) to discover objects or papers which they knew nothing of but which helped them monetarily, legally, or emotionally.[48]

Some people attribute such protection or help to unknown angels and others are convinced it was their own departed loved ones. People in the latter group typically have received ADCs from their departed loved ones indicating that they are watching over them. Some in the latter group have not received such ADCs and yet intuitively understand that their loved ones' spirits are their guardian

angels. Those who attribute it to unknown angels are simply unaware that whether or not you have lost loved ones, everyone has soul mate angels watching over them.

To conclude, it is important to know and remember that our soul mate angels are very close to us, even as they are in heaven or the spirit dimension. Many of these are our departed loved ones. Others are part of our soul mate group and will either come to earth later or will stay in the spirit dimension to watch over their loved ones on earth.

Appendix A
A Glossary of Spiritually Transformative Experiences

Spiritually transformative experiences (STEs) are intense experiences that can drastically change people's attitudes toward God, the spirit dimension, dying, and soul purpose. The changes are typically for the better. STEs include after-death communications (ADCs), near-death experiences (NDEs,), and death-bed visions (DBVs).

An **after-death communication** (ADC) is a message, a sign, a vision, or a felt presence whereby a departed loved one communicates with loved ones on earth. It may be a single occurrence or ongoing, and is almost always perceived as positive and uplifting. It is typically aimed at assuring those left behind that the departed soul is well, happy, and capable of far more in the spirit dimension. ADCs also often indicate that the departed spirit is constantly watching over their loved ones in the physical dimension.

(Various studies in the U.S. and in Europe report that ADCs have been received by 10-30 percent of the general population, and 50-70 percent of widows and widowers.)

A **near-death experience** (NDE) occurs when a person, who is near death due to trauma, illness, stress, or injury, experiences the spirit dimension. Most NDEs are perceived as positive and uplifting, filled with immense peace, joy, and love. A typical NDE starts with an out-of-body experience*, after which the soul feels itself rushing through a tunnel (or another crossover image such as a bridge) toward brilliant light. It then reaches the Light, where there is a sense of merging with God, feeling boundless love, and having perfect knowledge. During the experience, souls meet departed loved ones (or unknown beings of light) and go through a life review (in which they fully experience the result of their actions on earth from the perspective of the recipients of their actions). Most are told that they have not yet fulfilled their life's purpose, and they return to the body. (According to the International Association for Near Death Studies, 4-15 percent of people in the U.S., Australia, and Germany have had NDEs; also, every year, about 282,000 people in the U.S. have an NDE.) [*A spontaneous **out-of-body experience** (OBE) happens when a spirit leaves the body temporarily and can observe the body from an external vantage, as well as observe other people, objects, and activities. Some OBEs are part of an NDE itself, usually before the typical tunnel or crossover experience. Other OBEs occur near death without any other aspects of an NDE. Spontaneous OBEs can also come about without the person being near death.]

A **death-bed vision** (DBV) takes place when the dying person sees spirits (usually known to the person) and consequently is happy about the prospect of dying. About 90 percent of DBVs are from the spirits of very close relatives. Most people who have DBVs stop feeling pain and are ready to go to the spirit dimension. (A century ago, dying people tended to be conscious before death and the incidence of DBVs was high. In recent times, various studies report that only 10-30 percent of dying people are conscious before death, but of these, 50-70 percent receive DBVs.)

Appendix B
Verification of Spiritually Transformative Experiences

There is ample evidence that spiritually transformative experiences (STEs) are real and not hallucinations or products of someone's imagination. Each category of STE is discussed separately below to illustrate verification.

ADCs: Different types of ADCs have been proven to be real: (1) People have received ADCs from relatives or close friends they did not know had died, and discovered later that they had passed on. (2) Bereaved people were given information by their departed loved ones (in dream visitations or through telepathic communications) that was used to uncover evidence that legally cleared the departed person's name or solved problems with gravesites. (3) ADCs have led to discovering newer wills or hidden bonds that helped the bereaved financially. (4) Hundreds of ADCs have

been urgent, telepathic communications that saved the recipients from harm, of which they were totally unaware.

NDEs: Different aspects of NDEs are fully confirmable: (1) While in heaven, some NDErs met spirits of people they did not know had died. They reported this on their return and found it was true. (2) Others met spirits unknown to them and only discovered after their return (on looking through photo albums) that these were relatives they had not met on earth. (3) The experience itself—lucid, organized, and positive—cannot be caused by any medications or drugs, as asserted by several respected doctors.

DBVs: Several types of DBVs are verifiable: (1) Dying people have seen spirits of relatives or friends who (unknown to them) had died recently. (2) Someone else in the room (a nurse or a relative) has also seen the DBV that the dying person sees. (3) The dying have reported "going" somewhere on earth—to a childhood home or to visit a friend, and have recounted what they saw there. Relatives who were present were astonished to discover that what was related exactly matched what was actually going on at the place the dying person said they had visited.

Appendix C
Other Phenomena Verify the Spirit Dimension

People who recovered from comas and those who had OBEs in hospitals (with or without full-blown NDEs) corroborate that the spirit world is very close to our physical

world. They experienced aspects of the spirit dimension such as telepathic understanding of people's thoughts, going anywhere they wished just by thinking of it, and being able to move through physical objects.

They were able to recount *in great detail* what took place in the room they were in, as well as elsewhere in the hospital, *while they were comatose, being operated on, close to dying, or had already flat-lined*. They accurately recounted exact medical procedures (even highly unusual ones), what was said around the patient, and even what some doctors were thinking (given their telepathic, mind-reading abilities in the spirit state).

It is even more remarkable that blind people in comas or OBEs have given the same level of accurate reporting as sighted people. Some of them were congenitally blind and still were able to describe medical equipment, procedures, and physical surroundings in the hospital correctly.

Interestingly, the vision experienced in OBEs (whether by blind or sighted people) far exceeds normal human vision. It includes seeing all around at once (360 degrees), seeing near and far with equal clarity, and seeing in much greater detail than in human vision. This is because in the spirit realm we see with consciousness instead of eyes.

All that sighted (or blind) people recounted was impossible to see (or perceive) from where they were lying down *and* in their condition, and yet all of it was fully

verified by medical personnel present. This type of evidence has convinced many doctors and nurses about the reality of the spirit dimension. It should be proof enough for anyone who doubts that our souls (or consciousness) can exist outside the body.

Appendix D
A Few People Perceive STEs as Negative

All the spiritually transformative experiences (STEs) described above are perceived as positive by most people who experience them. Only a small proportion of people perceive such experiences as negative.

In the case of ADCs, a small number of recipients view these as negative. Some of these people are closed to communications from the spirit world due to archaic religious ideas about avoiding spirit contact. Others in this group think that ADCs imply that the loved one has not yet gone to heaven. So they desperately pray for them to go away (to heaven), not understanding that the departed loved ones *are* in heaven but can continue to communicate with them. Still others who view ADCs negatively have "moved on" with their lives and are uncomfortable thinking about departed loved ones at all.

Different studies report that anywhere from 1 to 20 percent of NDEs are perceived as negative, although many of these change to positive during the experience itself. Negative NDEs are experienced by those who resist death,

either consciously or unconsciously. On leaving the body, they feel trapped in an uncomfortable space and do not reach the Light. Of these, those that get tired of getting nowhere and pray to God for help, immediately reach the Light. A few remain in the uncomfortable situation without praying for help and come back without experiencing anything positive. In addition, life reviews during the NDE can be hellish for some people, depending on the extent of harm done by them to others.

There are reported NDEs of atheists being trapped in a negative space until they asked God for help. On pondering why atheists could not go to God (even if they were good people) I realized three possible reasons for this. First, not believing in life after death, they may have resisted death and experienced negative NDEs. Second, we are meant to be not only good, but wise. And wisdom includes realizing that this incredible universe did not happen by chance but was created by a powerful and loving consciousness. Many renowned and open-minded scientists, including Albert Einstein, have recognized that the universe *had* to have a creator. Third, it makes sense that if someone does not recognize the Source of everything, how can that person go to the Source? It is interesting, however, that as soon as the atheists prayed to God for help, they too went to the Light.

Studies on DBVs found that 10-15 percent of these were perceived as negative. Those that fit this group either did not believe in the spirit world, or were afraid of death, or were not yet ready to die. For those who had repeated DBVs, if

their attitudes changed for the better in the intervening period, the DBVs also changed to positive.

Notes

1 Kübler-Ross, *On Life After Death*, 12.
2 Jean Vernette interview in Valarino, *On The Other Side of Life*, 273, 282.
3 Ford, *The Life Beyond Death*, 158.
4 Martin and Romanowski, *Love Beyond Life*, 70-71, 189.
5 Boylan, *Thy Son Liveth*, 45; Carrington, *Psychical Phenomena and the War*, 255-256, 258, 260; Lodge, *Raymond, On Life and Death,* 229,-2*30,* 233, 325.
6 Lodge, *Raymond, On Life and Death,* 351.
7 Boylan, *Thy Son Liveth*, 29, 35.
8 Berman, *The Journey Home*, 42.
9 Ring, *Lessons from the Light*, 64; Ford, *The Life Beyond Death*, 180-182.
10 Kenneth Ring interview in Valarino, *On The Other Side of Life*, 119; Guggenheim and Guggenheim, *Hello From Heaven!* 254-255.
11 Morse, *Closer to the Light*, 153.
12 Stevenson, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation,* 378.
13 Dabholkar, "Life Review: God's Perfect Plan," 7-14.
14 Berman, *The Journey Home*, 95-97, 114-116; Cox-Chapman, *The Case for Heaven*, 59-61, 64-66; Grey, *Return From Death,* 191-193; Kenneth Ring interview in Valarino, *On The Other Side of Life*, 137-139; Ford, *The Life Beyond Death*,181.
15 Guggenheim and Guggenheim, *Hello From Heaven!* 82, 126, 138, 149, 292; Devers, *Goodbye Again*, 26, 46.

16 Grossman, “Most Say Angels Have Protected Them.”
17 Browning, *Feathers Brush My Heart*, 106, 110.
18 Guggenheim and Guggenheim, *Hello From Heaven!* 177.
19 Ring, *Lessons From the Light*, 269-270.
20 Browning, *Feathers Brush My Heart,* 11-12, 170, 265; Weiss, *Messages from the Masters*, 186.
21 Dabholkar, “Life Review: God’s Perfect Plan,” 17-18.
22 Weiss, *Messages from the Masters*, 234.
23 Berman, *The Journey Home*, 102, 163.
24 Michael Grosso, “The Archetype of Death and Enlightenment,” in Bailey and Yates, *The Near-Death Experience*, 140.
25 Minor, several journal articles, see Bibliography.
26 Berman, *The Journey Home*, 161.
27 Brinkley, *Saved by the Light*, 81, 154; Ring, *Heading Toward Omega*, 54, 62, 227-228; Ring, *Lessons from the Light*, 14, 21, 34, 46, 120, 189, 275; Valarino, *On The Other Side of Life*, 2-3.
28 David Lorimer, “The Near-Death Experience and Perennial Wisdom,” in Bailey and Yates, *The Near-Death Experience*, 362.
29 Berman, *The Journey Home*, 47, 135, 147.
30 Berman, *The Journey Home*, 111, 176.
31 David Lorimer, “The Near-Death Experience and Perennial Wisdom,” in Bailey and Yates, *The Near-Death Experience*, 362.
32 Barrett, *Death-Bed Visions,* passim; Delacour, *Glimpses of the Beyond*, 106, 108; Martin and Romanowski, *Love Beyond Life*, 75-76; Morse, *Closer to the Light*, 49.
33 Callanan and Kelley, *Final Gifts*, 15, 87, 96-97.

34 Callanan and Kelley, *Final Gifts*, 102, 166, 171, 173; Browning, *Feathers Brush My Heart*, 264.
35 Ring, *Lessons from the Light*, 64; Kenneth Ring interview in Valarino, *On the Other Side of Life*, 103.
36 Ford, *The Life Beyond Death*, 180-182.
37 Browning, *Feathers Brush My Heart*, 129.
38 LaGrand, *ADC: Final Farewells*, 120-121.
39 LaGrand, *ADC: Final Farewells*, 118-119.
40 Guggenheim and Guggenheim, *Hello From Heaven!* 235.
41 Guggenheim and Guggenheim, *Hello From Heaven!* 26-27.
42 Callanan and Kelley, *Final Gifts*, 182.
43 LaGrand, *Messages and Miracles*, 47-49.
44 Woods, *Visions of the Bereaved,* 96, 121-122.
45 Knight, *The ESP Reader*, 392.
46 Cox-Chapman, *The Case for Heaven*, 42-45; Wambach, *Life Before Life*, 28-42, 51, 56, 62-63, 97; Ford, *The Life Beyond Death*, 182.
47 Browning, *Feathers Brush My Heart,* 13-14, 19-20, 121-122, 168; Guggenheim and Guggenheim, *Hello From Heaven!* 126, 237, 258-269; Martin and Romanowski, *Love Beyond Life,* 2, 144, 200; Ring, *Lessons From the Light*, 175.
48 Browning, *Feathers Brush My Heart,* xxiv, 165-166 ; Guggenheim and Guggenheim, *Hello From Heaven!* 244, 246, 325; Martin and Romanowski, *Love Beyond Life,* 172.

An Annotated Bibliography

Bailey, Lee W. and Jenny Yates, editors. *The Near-Death Experience: A Reader*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

This book contains many essays from people who had NDEs and others who try to understand the phenomenon.

Barrett, William. *Death-Bed Visions*. London: Methuen & Company Limited, 1926.

Barrett was a physicist and a founder of the Society for Psychical Research in England in 1882. He became aware of DBVs when his wife, an obstetrician, witnessed a patient having a DBV after giving birth. Barrett then interviewed hundreds of caregivers of dying people and found remarkable commonalities across DBVs as the spirits of loved ones came joyfully to fetch the dying.

Berman, Phillip L. *The Journey Home: What Near-Death Experiences and Mysticism Teach Us About the Gift of Life*. New York: Pocket Books, 1996.

Berman had an NDE at age 16 when he nearly drowned. Later, after his infant daughter's death, Berman, as a scholar, studied other people's NDEs. His book details actual NDEs and mystic experiences from a large number of people and draws insights about the lessons we can learn from these.

Brinkley, Dannion, with Paul Perry, *Saved by the Light*. New York: Villard Books, 1994.

Brinkley recounts his two NDEs, relates encounters with beings of light, and shares insights about the life review, the spirit dimension, and our soul purpose.

Browning, Sinclair, Editor. *Feathers Brush My Heart: True Stories of Mothers Touching Their Daughters' Lives After Death*. New York: Warner Books, 2002.

This is a collection of ADCs given to women from their mothers' spirits. The ADCs include messages of love, continuing contact, and warnings against danger.

Boylan, Grace Duffie. *Thy Son Liveth: Messages from a Soldier to His Mother*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1920.

A mother has written about her soldier son's spirit communications to her through Morse code, telepathy, and automatic writing, after he was killed in World War I.

Callanan, Maggie and Patricia Kelley. *Final Gifts: Understanding the Special Awareness, Needs, and Communications of the Dying*. New York: Bantam, 1992.

Two hospice nurses relate how the dying often share death-bed visions and glimpses of the spirit dimension.

Carrington, Hereward. *Psychical Phenomena and the War*. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1918.

Carrington, a British-born American researcher and author had an interest in supernatural phenomena. He debunked many mediums but believed some mediums were genuine, and understood that soldiers did give ADCs to their loved ones. He earned his Ph.D. in 1918 and founded the American Psychical Institute in 1921.

Cox-Chapman, Mally. *The Case for Heaven: Near-Death Experiences as Evidence of the Afterlife*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1995.

Journalist Cox-Chapman heard a disembodied voice telling her to relax when she was in an auto accident. She later interviewed people who had NDEs to better understand and describe what heaven is all about.

Dabholkar, Pratibha A., *Life Review: God's Perfect Plan*, available on Obooko, 2023.

Based on scholarly research, professor Dabholkar has written about the life review that NDErs go through (and that everyone will experience on dying) as God's perfect plan to deal with people's imperfections and evil actions.

Delacour, Jean-Baptiste. *Glimpses of the Beyond*. Translated by E. B. Garside. New York: Delacorte Press, 1973.

This book documents a large number of death-bed visions, in which the spirits of close relatives appeared to the dying and helped them make the transition.

Devers, Edie. *Goodbye Again: Experiences with Departed Loved Ones*. Kansas City, MO: Andrews and McMeel, 1997.

Psychotherapist Devers relates ADCs from a number of interviews collected for her dissertation.

Ford, Arthur. *The Life Beyond Death*. (As told to Jerome Ellison) New York: Berkley Medallion Books, 1971.

The author shares knowledge about the spirit dimension obtained through other people's ADCs as well as through his own NDE.

Grey, Margot. *Return From Death: An Exploration of the Near-Death Experience*. Boston, MA: Arkana, 1985.

Grey had an NDE when she was gravely ill. She later explored NDEs from British and American individuals for her dissertation. She concluded that the experience was essentially the same regardless of background and that it changed the individuals' lives for the better.

Grossman, Cathy Lynn. "Most Say Angels Have Protected Them," *USA Today,* September 18, 2008.

A short article on how guardian angels are viewed.

Guggenheim, Bill and Judy Guggenheim. *Hello From Heaven!* New York: Bantam, 1996.

The authors, who coined the term after-death communication, share ADCs from interviews they conducted. They categorize these ADCs and briefly discuss what we could learn from these experiences.

Knight, David C. *The ESP Reader*. New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1969.

A book that relates a number of extrasensory phenomena including death-bed visions.

Kübler-Ross, Elisabeth. *On Life After Death*. Berkeley, CA: Celestial Arts, 1991.

Dr. Kübler-Ross, a pioneering researcher on the subjects of death and dying, has written four essays in this book to capture her thinking about dying, what happens afterwards, and what we should do while here on earth.

LaGrand, Louis E. *After Death Communication: Final Farewells*. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1997

Grief counselor LaGrand offers many examples of ADCs. But his views tend to be religious and he shows a lack of conviction about the reality of ADCs.

LaGrand, Louis E. *Messages and Miracles: Extraordinary Experiences of the Bereaved*. St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1999

LaGrand offers even more examples of ADCs but continues his tentative view of whether ADCs are real.

Lodge, Oliver J. *Raymond, On Life and Death: With Examples of the Evidence for Survival of Memory and Affection after Death*. London: Methuen, 1926. (1st edition, 1916)

A father has written about his soldier son, killed in World War I, who first communicated to the family (as a spirit) through mediums, but later gave them direct ADCs. The family was able to heal through these ADCs, and also learned much about the spirit dimension.

Martin, Joel and Patricia Romanowski. *Love Beyond Life: The Healing Power of After-Death Communications.* New York: Dell Publishing, 1997.

This is a collection of ADCs from a large number of bereaved people whom the authors interviewed. The

authors focus on the healing that can come from such ADCs and encourage the bereaved to accept communications from departed loved ones.

Minor, Robert N. Several articles in journals such as *Religious Studies* and the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.

Minor, a comparative religions scholar has published extensively in journals. His descriptions of Radhakrishnan's and Aurobindo's views of God and the spirit dimension are found in many of his articles.

Morse, Melvin, with Paul Perry. *Closer to the Light: Learning from Children's Near-Death Experiences*. New York: Villard Books, 1990.

Pediatrician Morse discusses several NDEs related to him by his young patients and explains how they opened his mind to spirit experiences.

Morse, Melvin with Paul Perry. *Parting Visions: Uses and Meanings of Pre-death, Psychic, and Spiritual Experiences*. New York: Villard Books, 1994.

Morse discusses a variety of spiritually transformative experiences (such as ADCs, DBVs, and NDEs) related to him by his patients as well as others. He deplores reluctance in the medical community to recognize that these encounters are real, and any tendency to dismiss them as hallucinations. He writes of his own acceptance of such experiences and what they have taught him about the important things in life.

Ring, Kenneth. *Heading toward Omega: In Search of the Meaning of the Near-Death Experience*, New York: W. Morrow, 1984.

Professor Ring taught a university-level course on NDEs and also interviewed a large number of experiencers. His book shares his findings and insights.

Ring, Kenneth. *Lessons From the Light: What We Can Learn from the Near-Death Experience.* New York: Plenum Press Insight Books, 1998.

Professor Ring discusses how NDEs change lives and perspectives. He points out that readers who apply these insights and lessons to their own lives will embark on a better path, more attuned to the Light beyond.

Stevenson, Ian. *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation.* Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1974.

Professor Stevenson reports on twenty reincarnation cases, carefully supported by facts and comprehensive details to rule out alternative explanations.

Valarino, Evelyn Elsaesser. *On The Other Side of Life: Exploring the Phenomenon of Near-Death Experience.* New York: Insight Books, 1997.

Valarino, a researcher and author, conducted thoughtful interviews on NDEs with an impressive list of scholars, philosophers, scientists, and doctors. These interviews add greatly to our understanding of the spirit dimension.

Wambach, Helen. *Life Before Life*. New York: Bantam Books, 1979.

Wambach, a psychologist and researcher, regressed 750 people to before their births. She reported on what the subjects said about the spirit dimension, soul mate groups, and reincarnation.

Weiss, Brian. *Messages from the Masters*. London: Warner Books, 2000.

Psychiatrist and philosopher Weiss shares teaching passed on to him by his "spirit guides." (Although he does not acknowledge them as such, the guides are either his departed loved ones, or part of his eternal soul mate group, who stayed behind and who watch over him.)

Woods, Kay Witner. *Visions of the Bereaved: Hallucination or Reality?* Pittsburgh, PA: Sterling House, 1998.

Woods, a psychologist and bereaved mother, reports on her own and other people's experiences with ADCs. Whereas her understanding of ADCs seems sound, she believes the archaic idea of assigned guardian angels.

About the Author

Dr. Pratibha A. Dabholkar (Ph.D., Georgia State University), emerita professor, University of Tennessee, has made a deep study of spiritually transformative experiences (such as ADCs, NDEs, and DBVs). She writes and teaches about these subjects and related issues to inform and enlighten people. She also writes fiction books to help

readers comprehend these important phenomena through engaging stories. In addition, Dr. Dabholkar uses her learning in these areas as a lens to evaluate selected classic and modern films on angels, heaven, and associated subjects. See www.love-and-learning.info for more information on the author, her inspiration, and her work.

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