

16. The Great Deception

WHEN Lucifer rebelled against God, he was followed by a host of the angels of heaven. The record declares that both he and his angels were cast out of heaven. They are now confined to this earth. For “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Tartarus], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.” 2 Peter 2: 4.

Already we have seen that angels are real beings, with hands, feet, mouths, and wings, and that they are able to appear to men and converse with them. This is true of the good angels, who are the Christians' allies; and it is equally true of the fallen, evil angels, who are the foes of the Christians. These fallen angels are still in league with Satan, and their chief work consists in an effort to deceive the human family and turn men away from God.

Known as “spirits of devils,” these evil angels have, throughout the ages, carried on their deceptive and nefarious work. According to the writings of the ancient prophets, however, this work will be greatly intensified as the world draws near to its latter days. The Apostle Paul warns: “Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.” I Tim. 4:1.

John the revelator, in speaking of the forces of evil that lead the nations into universal war and carnage in the last days, declares: “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” Rev. 16: 14.

The devil and his angels can work miracles. They can appear to men in a materialized form. They can influence human beings, and can practice deception upon them. So powerful, in fact, will the deceptions of Satan become in the last days that God's people are earnestly warned lest they, too, be overcome by them.

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thess. 2: 9-12.

“For there shall arise false christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chamber; believe it not.” Matt. 24: 24-26.

Spiritualism

These Biblical prophecies have been and are now being fulfilled before our eyes. During the past century a new form of religion has swept over the various countries of the world like a prairie fire. It is known as spiritualism. At first it was placed under the ban of all the Christian churches. Its seances were secret and mysterious, and Christians feared and shunned them.

But today the exponents of spiritualism are found everywhere, even in the Christian churches; and the cult numbers its adherents by the millions!

On June 16, 1932, there was published in the London Daily Mail a lengthy apology for spiritualism, written by one Ernest W. Oalin, who was heralded by the editor as being “one of the world's leaders of the spiritualist movement.” In this article Mr. Oalin declared that at that time there were tens of thousands of family and community circles in England meeting every week in the homes of the people to investigate the claims of spiritualism, who were convinced that in this way they can actually establish personal contact with their deceased relatives and friends.

The writer further stated: “Every Sunday night there are at least 200,000 people gathered at public spiritualist meetings. There are some 8 5 0 spiritualist churches or societies in Great Britain, the majority of which are affiliated to the Spiritualist National Union.” The same story might have been told of all the other countries of the world. That was in 1932. Since then, due to World War 11, its growth has been phenomenal. Millions of people having lost their loved ones and friends through the war have sought to renew their contacts through spiritualism.

In view of this tremendous movement toward this comparatively new cult, it surely is most fitting that we inquire, What is spiritualism? Is it true or false? Is it of God or Satan?

Its Claims

Spiritualism claims to be a form of Christianity.

It claims to put the living into direct touch with the dead.

It claims to materialize the dead so that they can be seen, touched, and heard.

It claims that messages giving counsel and advice are received from the dead for those who are living.

It claims to have proved that there is life beyond the grave, that the dead really are still alive, and that they take an active and interested part in the affairs of those still living upon the earth. Spiritualism, therefore, is based upon the theory of the natural immortality of the soul. It actually has its roots sunk deep into the old pagan mythologies, often based upon ancestor worship.

Unless the Bible is entirely false and wholly unreliable, it is impossible for spiritualism to be what it purports to be. For instance, its claim to put the living in communication with the dead is wholly unscriptural. It is contrary to the whole teaching of inspired Scripture. The testimony of the Bible concerning the dead is:

“For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.” Eccl. 9:5,6.

This testimony is conclusive. The dead are not alive—they know not anything; they neither love, hate, nor envy. They have nothing to do with anything that is done under the sun. Therefore, whatever may be seen felt, or done in the seance chambers of the spiritualists is not the work of human beings who once lived upon the earth and have died. The prophet David uttered the warning:

“Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Ps. 146:3,4.

To this also agree the words of Job:

“But man dies and wastes away: yea, man gives up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea ' and the Hood decays and dries up: so man lies down, and rises not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. O that Thou would hide me in the grave, that Thou would keep me secret, until Thy wrath be past, that Thou would appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.” Job 14: 10-14.

A Great Deception

From these clear statements of scripture it will be readily seen that spiritualism is one of the world's greatest deceptions. To die does not mean to continue living only in another form and sphere. Death means the cessation of life.' The dead cannot talk to the living, nor can they in any way influence their lives. Their thoughts have perished. They do not think, speak, nor act. They are asleep, and were it not for the promise of a resurrection they would never live again.

In Mr. Oalin's article, already referred to, he makes the astonishing statement: “Just think of it! Ten thousand families [in Great Britain] in their own homes are convinced that they are talking to their own deceased relatives every week.... The conviction borne in upon spiritualists who thus practice communion in the home is that they have bridged the gulf dividing this world from the next and are indulging in heart to heart talks with people who live in the next world.” What a fatal deception! And what a pity that it should thus engulf the world!

The impact of spiritualism upon the Christian church has been tremendous. It has in fact, all but destroyed it. Concerning this Mr. Oalin says:

“Creeds and professions do not count. Conduct is everything, and the future happiness or misery of any man must depend entirely upon the life he has lived within the limitation of his possibilities and

powers.

“It is certainly leading to the breakdown of all authority in religion, whether the authority be of priests or books. All authority comes from the spiritual worlds. Spiritual truth comes from on high. The parson. is not necessarily its repository, and is only sometimes its privileged mouthpiece, and that when he is chosen by the spirit world itself.

“In the centuries gone by, there were two great churches in Europe which embraced all the people. The development of individual thought caused the break-up of these churches into many sects (Nonconformity, etc.).

“The tendency today is towards a further breaking up, and if I am asked whither spiritualism is leading, I reply it is leading us to a point where every man will have his own spiritual life, based upon a personal communion and contact with a living spirit world.

“That sections of men may get together for mutual worship and mutual assistance is always true, but spiritualism is leading to individualism in religion, and the break-up of authoritative churches.” - London Daily Mail, June 16, 1932, Continental edition.

Although spiritualism parades in the garments of Christianity, its chief exponents boast that its result is the overthrow and breaking up of the Christian church and “the breakdown of all authority in religion.” How can this be? If spiritualism be Christian, how then are the Christian institutions, destroyed by it?

Mr. Oalin further points out that spiritualism can join hands as easily with heathenism as with Christianity, when he declares:

“Since all religions stand for a life beyond death, where the consequences of earth life will be reaped, there is a common platform upon which spiritualism can unite with every phase of religion in the world. The Buddhist, the Moslem, the Brahmin, and the Christian may each practice spirit communion, while still retaining his allegiance to the basic principles of his own faith.” Ibid.

Surely this is carrying matters too far. When a form of Christianity goes so far as to embrace the religions of Buddha, Mohammed, and the Hindus, with all their myriads of false gods, it ceases to be Christianity. Spiritualism, therefore, has no valid claim whatsoever to the term Christian, since, professedly, it is able to unite with these non-Christian religions.

What Is Spiritualism?

We do not deny the phenomenon of spiritualism. It cannot be explained away as mere sleight of hand. The spiritualist really does talk to beings from the spirit world, but they are not the spirits of the' dead. They are instead the fallen angels, whose allegiance to Satan has led them to practice this master deception upon the human family.

Spiritualism, although posing as a new religion, actually dates back to the fall of man in Eden, and has appeared in various forms through all succeeding ages.

When the first parents were placed in their Paradise home, they were earnestly warned that the wages of sin would be death. “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shall surely die.”

When Satan appeared to the woman in the garden, using the serpent as his first medium, he made the bold and diabolical denial: “You shall not surely die.” Gen. 3:4. This was a direct contradiction of God's declaration and was clearly an effort on the part of Satan to discredit God's word. Throughout succeeding ages it has been Satan's studied purpose to continue this deception and make men believe that they possess inherent immortality and eternal life.

Many who have investigated spiritualism are entirely disarmed by the fact that the spirits are able to impersonate their dead relatives and talk with them about things that were so secret that no one else had any knowledge of them. This has seemed to them to be absolute evidence that they are face to face with the departed.

Satan Wiser than Daniel

But there is an explanation for all this. Paul declared that the devil is able to transform himself into an angel of light and to appear to men. See 2 Cor. 11: 13 -15. Also, when the Lord addressed Lucifer as

the Prince of Tyrus, He declared:

“Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee.” Eze. 28: 3. “Thus says the Lord God; Thou seals up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.” Eze. 28: 12.

If Satan knows all the secrets of our lives, and if he can transform himself so as to appear to men in various forms, how reasonable it is to believe that he can impersonate the dead, and talk freely of things that were formerly held as secrets between them and the living.

It was in exactly this manner that King Saul was deceived by a spiritualist medium into believing that he had been put into contact with the prophet Samuel, who was dead. The record is that Saul said unto his servant:

“Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.

“And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knew what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then lay thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord lives, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

“Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, Why has thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man comes up; and he is covered with a mantle.

“And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, Why has thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answered me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou may make known unto me what I shall do.” I Sam. 28: 7-15.

God had strictly prohibited Israel from having intercourse with any who claimed to consult the spirits of the dead; and Saul, being king, was well aware of this prohibition. The Lord's instructions were:

“When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God gives thee, thou shall not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God does drive them out from before thee.” Deut. 18: 9-12.

When Saul had so far departed from God that he sought counsel from the dead, Satan was able to impersonate Samuel, and the king was deceived. It was this turning from the living God to Satan that brought about his downfall and untimely death.

“So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it; and inquired not of the Lord: therefore He slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.” I Chron. 10:13,14.

What a fearful warning this sad experience of the king of Israel should be to men and women who today profess to be followers of God and His Son Jesus Christ, but who, like Saul, are turning aside to inquire of familiar spirits.

Rejects Christian Fundamentals

Spiritualism tends to destroy all the great fundamentals of the Christian religion.

It denies that the Bible is a true book.

It denies the personality of God.

It denies the deity of Christ.

It denies the resurrection of Christ and of the dead.

It denies the second, personal, and visible coming of Christ to re-establish His kingdom over men.

Therefore, to accept spiritualism means to reject God, Christ, the Bible, and all those truths that make up the Christian faith. It means a turning back to the darkness of heathen worship. It is for that reason that the Lord so earnestly warned Israel against this great deception. Said He:

“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter. Should not a people seek unto their God? For the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”
Isa. 8: 19, 20.

We are never to seek for the living among the dead. The Bible test of all religious faith is the “law” and the “testimony.” That is the Word of God. If they speak not according to God's law and the Holy Scriptures, there is no light in them.

The attitude of spiritualism toward the Bible was well* stated some years ago by a spirit in a Philadelphia seance. He claimed to be the spirit of the Apostle Paul. He was asked the question: “What do you think of the Bible since your entrance into the spirit world?”

“The spirit then proceeded to make the following statements about the various books of the Bible:

Genesis

'About as true as any fictitious work now in print.'

Exodus

'As good a book as could be expected at that day.'

Leviticus

'Not directly from God, as man supposes.'

Numbers

'Such an absurdity as that, the facts stated in chapter first, ought to be cast into the lowest depths of the infernal regions.'

Joshua

'Almost the whole book is false.'

Judges

'About the same as the others; and it needs no argument to show that it is void of inspiration.'

Ruth

'Without inspiration, the same as the others.'

Samuel

'A part of it is correct.'

Kings

'Multitudes of mistakes-not correct-no inspiration.'

Ezra

'By a person bearing its name, without inspiration.'

Job

Written through mediums-would have been correct, had it not been that men destroyed its purity.'

Psalms

'Written in the same way, and some of them correct.'

“Spiritual Manifestations in the City of Philadelphia, by a member of the First Circle, pages 10-14.

The books of the New Testament were likewise discredited.

In League with Satan

In the early days of spiritualism it did not make the proud claims of being a form of Christianity but frankly acknowledged that it was in league with the devil. Its leaders addressed their prayers to the devil and made no effort to conceal the fact. For example, in 1861 and 1862 the official spiritualist organ, *The Banner of Light*, published the following prayers to the devil:

“O Lucifer, thou son of the morning, who fell from thy high estate, and whom mortals are prone to call the embodiment of evil, we lift our voices to thee. . . . From the depths of thine infamy stream forth divine truths. Why should we turn from thee? . . . So, O Lucifer, do we come up and stand before the throne of the Ancient of Days, hand in hand with thee. As thou has been the star of the morning thou wilt again become an angel of light. O Satan, we will subdue thee with our love and thou wilt yet kneel humbly with us at the throne of God.” - *The Banner of Light*, December 21, 1861, page 8.

“O thou prince of darkness and king of light, god and devil, greater and lesser good, perfect and imperfect being! we ask and demand of thee that we may know thee, for to know thee is to know more of ourselves. And if to do this it be necessary to wander in hell, yea and amen, we wander there with the spirits of darkness. The church and the world tell us that the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, but we know thee only as God's vice-regent, to stand at His left hand, the regenerator of mankind, the means of bringing up all things, intellectually and morally to perfection.” - *The Banner of Light*, March 1, 1862.

Later, in 1874, on January 29, Professor W. Chaney, a spiritualist medium, engaged in a debate on the subject of spiritualism with a Christian minister in San Jose, California; and before he began to speak, he prayed as follows:

“ 'O devil, prince of demons in the Christian hell! O thou monarch of the bottomless pit, thou king of scorpions having stings in their tails, to whom it is given to hurt the earth for five months, I beseech thee to hear my prayer. . . . Bless thy servant in his labors before thee. Fill his mouth with words of wisdom. Enable him to defend thee from the false charges about to be made against thy sulphurous majesty, and triumph by truth and logic over his opponent, so that this audience may realize that thou art a prayer-hearing and a prayer answering devil.' ”-*Signs of the Times*, May 10, 1877.

Dear reader, if perchance you happen to be one of those who have been carried away by this mighty deception, let me appeal to you in the name of Jesus to break from it at once. The Lord is not in the secret chamber of the seance. Your loved ones are not there. They are safely in God's keeping. No good can ever come to your soul through a religion that is anti-Christian and that is in allegiance with the powers of darkness.

Once in the clutches of this deception it will be hard to break away, for the devil will not let you go without a struggle. He will battle every inch of ground. But God has laid help on One that is mighty. Jesus Christ can set you free. Surrender yourself to Him and ask Him for complete deliverance. Read again and again the wonderful counsel of the Lord:

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching there unto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” Eph. 6: 10-18.

The living know that they must die, But all the dead unconscious lie; Their powers of thought and sense are gone, Alike unknowing and unknown.

Their hatred and their love are lost, Their envy buried in the dust; They have no share in all that's done

Drama of the Ages by William Branson

Beneath the circuit of the sun.

Then what my thoughts design to do, My hands must hasten to pursue; Since no device, nor work is found, Nor faith, nor hope, beneath the ground.

ANONYMOUS.