

## Planet in Rebellion

You see, we reasoned that the tithe-the tenth-was already God's. And we wanted to give something. So we decided to keep out from our very small income 10 percent for tithe and another 10 percent for offerings. Perhaps that was more than we needed to do. But how God blessed!

Now we did not just sit back and expect a miracle. We did all we could to provide for ourselves. And it was a crowded program those days-with a full college study load, working a late evening shift in a nearby industrial plant, and pastoring a church forty miles away.

Then came the months when because of weather and a heavy study load we could no longer provide as much. Our only income then was twenty-five dollars a month. But somehow God just took over.

I remember the day when my wife confided in me that she was wearing her last pair of hose. And I confided in her that we were spending our last dollar. We prayed, knowing full well that God understood and would fulfill His promise when we did our part. Had He not said, "My God shall supply all your need"? We believed He meant just what He said.

And He certainly did. The very next morning I found in our post office box a package containing two pairs of hosiery. I thought of the words, "Before they call, I will answer." And how those stockings did last!

And I remember the time we sat down after Christmas and figured out ever so carefully our expenses for the coming year. To finish our educational venture we knew just how much we could spend. To some it might have appeared impossible to continue our Plan of tithing. But God was not unprepared.

We had it all worked out-except that there was no money for food for the month of January. And then, as we returned from visiting our relatives, we could hardly push open the door because of the boxes of food the Lord had impressed someone to bring-enough for an entire month. And only God had really known the problem. To this day I do not believe that the most astute bookkeeper could explain how the money stretched. Sometimes God permits His arithmetic to be understood only by faith.

Those days of early struggle are now but precious memories. Yet through the years, even with the adequate though modest income which God's plan provides the ministry, not once have I ceased to marvel at how nine tenths with God's blessing goes farther than ten tenths without it. It always works that way!

Well, I just wanted to tell you. I wanted you to know that in my heart, as in so many other hearts, is the conviction that God cares, cares enough to be concerned even with problems of dollars and cents.

It is a satisfying adventure to take God at His word and see how perfectly He fulfills His promise. The way of partnership with God unequal though that partnership may be-is the certain way to priceless faith in Him. That faith-that personal, living faith-can be yours today, if you so choose.

And remember, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

## 18. Masquerade of the Psychic

I WAS PASSING through London the day King George died. Princess Elizabeth and her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, you remember, were en route to Australia, and little Prince Charles and Princess Anne were vacationing with their royal grandparents at Sandringham.

On the morning of the king's death immediate news of the bereavement was withheld from the children, who were playing in the nursery. However, Prince Charles noticed that the maids who came in to care for the room were weeping.

"Why is everyone so unhappy?" he inquired. And the nurse told him quietly, "Grandpa has gone away."

The little prince was not satisfied. He was soon asking for "Granny." When at last she came into the nursery, little Prince Charles sat on her knee, looked intently into her face, and asked, "Where has grandpa gone?" The queen mother was silent. She could think of nothing to say.

Death, from the day it first coldly introduced itself to man, has been a forbidding enigma. But it has been reserved for this generation to probe deeper into the mystery of life and death than any other. This is a generation that crowds eternity-and wants to know what is there.

It is little wonder, then, that moving boldly across the horizon of this questioning generation we see the masquerade of the psychic.

No man can close his eyes to it. Every man must decide what his relationship to it shall be.

Here we meet an issue that comes very close to the human heart. And what I say, I want to say

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with most tender sympathy. For the loneliness, the silence, that settle down upon one who has seen some treasured life slip into the shadows of death is so intense that we can have nothing but understanding sympathy for the heart that desperately seeks comfort.

The awful carriage and baptism of sorrow occasioned by our recent world wars have given to psychic cults an opportunity of which they have taken full advantage, until today there is not a home that escapes the bombarding of the psychic by way of newspaper, radio, television, or best seller. Everybody wants to know!

This intense interest in psychic research has put on its laboratory coat and crept into our universities. It is tugging at the edges of the medical profession. The hypnotist is attempting to probe deeper and deeper into the secrets of the human mind.

Countless thousands are turning to the psychic-some in the spirit of scientific investigation, others out of curiosity or for entertainment. And the number is legion who in their loneliness have become confirmed devotees of these movements.

You may, however, be one of the many who have cast all these phenomena aside as trickery. You may have dismissed them from your mind as fraud. But while some of them may be trickery-and even their own adherents admit that within the psychic circle there is much fraud-yet the person who dismisses them all as trickery or fraud has not had the slightest glimpse into these movements which had their origin in ancient times and which have left indelible marks on all the centuries until today no man or woman can be oblivious to their impact.

I am not a spiritualist. I have shunned involvement in the psychic world-not because I doubt the phenomena, but because I have learned in the Word of God of their origin.

Many have inquired concerning the Bible position on such phenomena. And is not an examination of this popular subject now a most logical step in our search for truth?

You see, we have come to a time when we dare not trust our five senses. Issues can no longer be safely decided by our eyes and our ears and our feelings. The issues that confront us today can be safely met only by the solid "It is written" of Scripture.

But first, do we have clearly in mind just what we want to discover in our search for truth? The reason that the principal psychic cults have appealed to so many thousands of people is that they claim to give opportunity to heartsick, lonely, bereaved men and women to communicate with those whom they have loved and lost.

Now, either this claim is true or it is untrue. If true, it is the grandest and sweetest truth that ever came to mourning humanity. If untrue, it is a shameless fraud perpetrated in the name of life's most tender memories. As we open the Word of God, I leave it with you to decide. The claim is true or untrue. You will agree that it cannot be both.

We read, then, from the one dependable source of information. "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." Isaiah 8:19, 20.

Right on the subject, isn't it? But notice this scripture as translated by Dr. Moffatt: "When they tell you to consult mediums and ghosts that cheep and gibber in low murmurs, ask them if a nation should not rather consult its God. Say, 'Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? Consult the Message and the Counsel of God!'"

That is a straight, clear word from God. When we are invited to consult one who is sensitive in the psychic arts, one who claims contact with those departed, we should answer, "Why consult the dead on behalf of the living?" Rather, "Consult the Message and the Counsel of God!"

Now what does the message of God reveal about the dead? Do the dead come back? "As the cloud is consumed and vanished away: so he that goes down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more." Job 7:9, 10. Evidently there has been a mistake.

Now follow me carefully. The great hope which the Scriptures hold out to the human heart is that on the resurrection morning-not at death-loved ones torn from us will be united with us again. In fact, the entire structure of Christianity rests upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and the final resurrection of His followers in the last days. Job himself said, "For I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job 19:25. And he adds this triumphant note: "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." Verse 26.

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But as to the dead coming out at the bidding of the curious, or returning to their household to see how loved ones are getting along, the Word says, "He shall return no more to his house." They are not to be recalled until that rapt and final day when Jesus Himself shall return. In that day, and not until that day, death will give way to eternal life.

The Bible goes still further. It says that at death man's power to think ceases. "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." Psalm 146:3, 4.

There need be no mistake here. The Creator knows what happens at death. And He tells us that the dead do not think. Let me read another scripture. "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.

There we have it! The dead know nothing. They cannot remember. They cannot love or hate or envy.

However much you or I may have probed the mysteries of life and death and of the human mind, we do not know what is on the other side of the grave, except as the Word of God reveals it to us. But thank God, enough is revealed to give birth to genuine hope within the human breast—hope that all humanity desperately needs. Jesus Himself said that our beloved dead rest peacefully until the resurrection day, and that then He will call them forth. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29.

Here the Creator of heaven and earth, who holds the issues of life and death in His hands, states simply that there is an hour coming when all the dead will hear His penetrating, life-giving voice. And then, not at death but on the resurrection morning, God's waiting ones will come forth with the priceless gift of immortality. That is the gospel, pure and simple.

Some years ago a small boy came into Sunday School from a non-Christian home. His mother had a morbid fear of death. One day, after listening to the story of the resurrection of Christ, the child bounded home with shining face and exclaimed, "Oh, Mother! You don't need to be afraid anymore to die, for Jesus went through the grave and left a light behind Him!"

Yes, one of the sweetest and most beautiful truths in all of God's Book is that when a man dies he rests quietly, undisturbed by memories of a troubled life or by concern for his loved ones, until the promised resurrection day. One prominent businessman said to me, as we studied the Word of God on this subject, "If that isn't the way it is, then that's the way it ought to be!"

Notice how consistent God's plan is. Think it through. Why would we need a resurrection at the end of time if men go to their reward immediately at death? Why would Jesus need to return to this earth a second time, as He has promised, to gather His people, they are already with Him now in Paradise? Why do the Scriptures teach a judgment in the last days if men are already judged at death?

Do you see? The dead do not return to their house. Their power to think ceases. They know nothing until Jesus calls them forth to everlasting life in that glorious reunion day.

An intelligent lady was studying the Bible on this subject. She had been very much interested in communication with the dead. But when she came to this particular point in her study, she exclaimed, "Then who is writing on my slate?"

Do you understand her dilemma? If what we have read from the Word of God is true—and it is—then who gives the messages in the darkened room? Who is masquerading in the disguise of those loved and lost? What are the powers that are operating in the psychic world? We have seen what they are not. Then what are they?

God tells us who the real powers are. The Scriptures clearly identify those powers that parade in the garb of others as the followers of Lucifer—the fallen angels.

I fully realize how difficult it is to grasp the idea that evil angels can actually work miracles. But that fact, I sincerely believe, is the key to understanding the psychic phenomena with which we are bombarded today. Please forever settle one thing in your mind: The supernatural, the miraculous, does not necessarily come from God. When that fact is fully established in your thinking, you are safeguarded from many a deception.

"For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles." Revelation 16:14.

You see, the fallen angels, the followers of Lucifer, the devils the Bible talks about, are superior intelligences. They can work miracles—miracles which will deceive all who are not guarded by a knowledge of Scripture. Satan can actually transform himself into an angel of light. "For such are false apostles,

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deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." 2 Corinthians 11:13, 14.

You understand now that it is altogether possible for a fallen angel to masquerade as another being, to actually transform himself into the form of a loved one. You begin to understand now what really happened in the experience of King Saul, in the seance described in the Bible in 1 Samuel 28. Notice verses 6 and 7:

"And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor."

But did not Saul actually speak to Samuel? I ask you, How could he speak to Samuel if Samuel, like all the dead, was quietly resting in his grave with no knowledge of what was taking place? And would God send a message to Saul through the dead when He had already refused to communicate with him through His appointed means? You can see that the two sources of information are direct opposites.

No, the apparition claiming to be Samuel was not he. It was only an evil intelligence playing the part of Samuel in a psychic drama forbidden by God. And Saul died for his transgression. "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 enquire of it." 1 Chronicles 10: 13.

Saul died for his sin. And God writes over the seance, over every attempt to contact the dead, "Wrong, wrong, wrong!" For the same evil powers that operated back there are operating today. Let me read it from the words of F. F. Morse, himself a spiritualist. In his book Practical Occultism, page 85, he says, "The phenomenal aspect of modern spiritualism reproduces all of the essential principles of the magic witchcraft and sorcery of the past. The same powers are involved, the same intelligences operating." Revealing evidence, isn't it?

Let me say it as kindly and as earnestly as I know how: According to the Word of God these spirits which come to us and claim to be the dear ones taken away by death, are not dead people. They are not living people. They are not people at all! They are fallen angels masquerading in the form of our loved ones.

A friend of mine was making Christian calls in Scotland. But in one home this Christian worker was surprised to be met with cold reserve by the lady of the house. The conversation, however, seemed to invite the lady's confidence, and soon she explained her bitterness toward all religion.

It seems that during the war years she had received a cable from the government stating that her husband was missing in action. For many long months she waited, with no word. Then well-meaning friends urged her to attempt to contact her husband through the seance, for they reasoned that no doubt he was dead.

She felt that a measure of comfort might be hers if she could make contact. And to her amazement she saw the likeness of her loved one. She recognized his voice. They talked over many personal things.

But months later her husband, alive and well, walked unannounced through the front door. He had never been dead or even seriously wounded. Unfortunately this disillusioned woman became bitter toward religion because of the evident deception, the shameless advantage taken of her sorrow by wicked and lying spirits. Remember? "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles."

No wonder Paul wrote, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

I want to be kind. I have nothing but love in my heart for those who have been sincere in their attempt to find comfort in the realm of the psychic. But the powers back of these phenomena take unfair advantage of men and women. They come with caresses and words of love when we are weak and sorrowful. That is why I feel compelled to speak as I do.

I have watched the growth of these sciences in Asia and Europe and America. I have followed carefully the experiments in parapsychology, as scientists with laboratory exactness have attempted to discover just what the extrasensory perception of the human mind, both before death and after, might be.

I have examined the cults of the dead, the claims of the masters of the East, with their long trail of offshoots. And I have found in them what many honest investigators have found before me. Sherwood Eddy, for instance, though greatly impressed with what he saw, confessed, I frankly admit that there is not only triviality and contradiction but fraud and trickery in the psychic field."

Please do not be confused. God's message for this critical hour is simply not found in the trivial

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disclosures of sometimes truthful and sometimes lying spirits. Saving truth is not contained in the “profound” information that two sisters had a ring, or in the materialization of an ash tray, or in the marvelous ability to see a table fork when someone else thinks about one.

“Have you seen Jesus?” one of the spirits was asked. And the spirit replied, “I have not seen Jesus over here, nor have I met any who have.”

Jesus is not in spiritualism. There may be hymns in its seances. It may accept Him as a great medium. But He must leave the cross behind. Said Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, an outstanding devotee, “Spiritualism will sweep the world and make it a better place in which to live. When it rules over the world it will banish the blood of Christ.”

But any supposed hope for the world that leaves out the blood of Christ is an empty hope, a cold hope. Again I quote from Sherwood Eddy: “One sometimes feels in such writings the pantheistic chill of the arctic night.”

No, man’s hope is not in psychic phenomena, not in messages from a cold, filmy spirit land, not in the dead at all, but in the living Christ. Man shall not live by word from the dead, “but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” And His Word contains the most comforting promise ever made: I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

Seeing our Lord face to face. Joining our loved ones in the glorious light of never-ending day, nevermore to part. This is the promise! This is the gospel! This is the future that Calvary has made possible!

I urge you to turn aside every other consideration. Crowd out every other thought, and turn your eyes on Calvary. There is a controversy raging between good and evil, between right and wrong. Our only safety is to stand in the shadow of the cross!

“Beneath the cross of Jesus  
I fain would take my stand,  
The shadow of a mighty rock  
Within a weary land.”

Elizabeth C. Clephane.

Will you stand with me there?

## 19. The Other Side of Death

ONE of the most fascinating incidents coming from the annals of a past generation tells of the conversion of two prominent men who were avowed skeptics. One was the eminent Gilbert West; the other, Lord Lyttelton, famous English statesman.

These two men agreed that Christianity should be destroyed. But they also agreed that in order to destroy it, two things were necessary. They must disprove the resurrection of Christ, and they must dispose of the conversion of the Apostle Paul.

They divided the task between them, West assuming responsibility for disproving the resurrection, and Lyttelton giving his attention to the experience on the Damascus road. They were to give themselves plenty of time—a year or more if necessary.

But what happened? When they met again to compare notes, they had both become strong and devoted Christians. Each had been confronted with the indisputable fact of the resurrection. Each confessed that the remarkable change in his life had come about as the result of his encounter with a risen Christ.

I have discovered that if anything will unsettle the skeptic, it will likely not be our arguments, however sane or sound. Rather, it will be the degree of our own conviction. And that conviction depends upon the reality of our personal awareness of a risen Lord.

Some time ago I made my way down the narrow, winding road leading from Herod’s Gate in old Jerusalem, past General Gordon’s Calvary, to the quiet garden tomb believed by scholars to be much like the tomb from which Jesus rose. I stepped into that tomb and found it—as the disciples found the tomb of their Lord—empty! The words of the angel echoed, “He is not here: for he is risen.”