

Origin of the Belief in Immortality of the Soul

THE origin of the belief in the immortality of the soul, as well as the originator of this error, can readily be traced. The Scriptures tell us plainly who the father of the error of the immortality of the soul is. We read the words of Jesus to the Jewish leaders: "Ye are of your father the devil . . . for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8:44. Satan told the first lie that was ever told in this world, and that lie was about the immortality of the soul. What was the lie that Satan told? We read: "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die." Genesis 3:4. That was not an innocent lie, nor was it the last time that it was told. Satan has popularized that deception and told it through his agents until it is one of the cardinal doctrines of most Christian churches today.

Satan said through his medium the serpent: "Ye shall not surely die." However, God said through his prophet Ezekiel: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:20. All people in the world have sinned and therefore are subject to death. Instead of proclaiming what God said, many churches today proclaim Satan's doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Satan's deception may seem very comforting to mourners at funeral rites, but it is an error, and has serious implications which suit Satan's design for the ruin of souls.

The belief in the immortality of the soul dates back to the ancient pagans, and it was adopted by the heathen religion of Greece. This belief and the belief that the sun is a god were the chief religious beliefs of Greece. However, the one belief has no more credibility than the other.

When Greece was conquered by the Romans, the belief in the immortality of the soul, as well as the worship of the sun as god, and worship on Sunday—the day of the sun—became a part of the religion of pagan Rome.

When pagan Rome gave to the bishop of Rome its seat, the city of Rome, and secular power, the belief in the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness became fundamental doctrines of the Catholic Church, which flourished during the Dark Ages under the claim that the pope could not err.

Then along came the Reformation, and many of the errors and practices of the Catholic Church were corrected by the Reformers, but the two cardinal doctrines—immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness—

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were not corrected. These two errors are now proclaimed, side by side from the pulpits of nearly all Christian churches.

The father of lies has carefully engineered the belief in the immortality of the soul from ancient Greek mythology through successive religions until it is today firmly established in nearly all of Christendom.

Why has the Christian world so blindly accepted the belief in the immortality of the soul when we consider that it was handed down to us by tradition from an ancient pagan religion? According to the Scriptures, this belief is in gross error and there is no truth in it.

If modern astronomers today would also accept the theories of the ancient pagans, then they would, as they did then, believe that the earth is flat and that the celestial bodies—the sun and stars—orbit around the earth, instead of the earth being round and rotating on its axis around the sun.

Modern astronomical science has completely disproved the astronomical theories of the ancient pagans. A study of the Holy Scriptures, such as undertaken in this book, also completely disproves the belief in the immortality of the soul, which was held by ancient pagans.

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The Body, the Breath of Life, and the Soul

ON the sixth day of creation week, God formed man from the dust of the ground. He created the brain, the heart, the muscles, and the other organs, and the whole anatomical structure was complete. But there was no life in it. Then He breathed the breath of life into this anatomical structure, and this form became alive. His brain started to function and to have all the activities of the brain such as thought, love, joy, wisdom, and control of the muscles and other organs. However, there was no memory of anything prior to receiving the breath of life. The brain, the heart, the muscles, and the other organs began their functions, and these activities constituted his soul. God did not separately create the soul, but the soul resulted from the creation of the body and from the breathing of the breath of life into it.

We have here the mathematical equation of Creation:

$$\text{Body} + \text{Breath of Life} = \text{Living Soul}$$

If we represent the body as a light bulb, the breath of life as electricity, and light as the soul, we then have a similar equation to bring light into existence. That equation is as follows:

$$\text{Light Bulb} + \text{Electricity} = \text{Light}$$

The light bulb of itself does not produce light, and electricity by itself does not produce light; but the combination of the two does produce light. In like manner the body or the anatomical structure of itself does not produce the soul, and the breath of life without the body does not produce the soul; but the combination of these two entities does produce the living, conscious soul.

In death the reverse process takes place, and can be represented by the following equation:

$$\text{Body} - \text{Breath of Life} = \text{Absence of the Soul}$$

In other words, the soul ceases to exist.

Without these two entities there is no soul; we read: "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Psalm 146:4. And also: "The dead know not any thing. . . . Also

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their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished." Ecclesiastes 9:5-6. Thoughts, love, hatred, and envy are activities of the soul, and when these have perished, the soul ceases to exist.

In producing the absence of light, we have the following similar equation:

$$\text{Light Bulb} - \text{Electricity} = \text{Absence of Light}$$

Without either the light bulb or the electricity, the other component cannot produce light.

Persons have occasionally become completely unconscious for a number of weeks following a severe head injury, and when they regained consciousness, some individuals tell us that there was no thought, love, hatred, or wisdom, during that period of time. However, many individuals, particularly children, tell us when they regained consciousness that they felt as if they were floating in the air, and saw their body lying where it had been, and saw a bright light at the end of a tunnel. They only saw what was beautiful, and said that they were not afraid to die. Some dreamed that a friend or a deceased loved one came to them and conversed with them. However, Job says, in speaking of death, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Job 16:22.

Those near-death experiences are in no way experiences preceding the flight of the soul to heaven, which never takes place, but they are the result of evil angels impressing those thoughts on the minds of these individuals. Satan and the evil angels are thus preparing their minds to accept the spiritualistic concept that in death there is life and consciousness.

However, when a person who is in complete unconsciousness for many weeks eventually dies, there is no return of the activities of the mind or the soul as thought, and this condition will continue in death until the Life Giver will raise that individual in the Resurrection. Then the activities of the soul return again to him.

In speaking about death, we read: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:7. The term spirit here means the breath of life. Since the soul results from the anatomical structure plus the breath of life, then when the anatomical structure returns to dust, and the breath of life returns to God, the soul with its consciousness ceases to exist.

It is the breath of life that changes an inanimate object into an animate being; it is what changes a lifeless structure into a living and viable being.

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If we go to the Hebrew language, we find that the word for spirit and the word for breath of life is the same word. Job uses the terms *breath of life* and *spirit* interchangeably: "All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils." Job 27:3.

The Psalmist throws further light on this subject: "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Psalm 146:4. If the breath of life goes from a person, he has no more thoughts or mental activities, and therefore no soul, for thoughts or mental activities are the functions of the soul.

The State of the Dead

HUMAN wisdom cannot penetrate beyond the portals of the tomb. Science is completely helpless when it comes to evaluating the soul. Biblically a soul is very objective and concrete. It is, as we have already said, the combination of our physical structure plus the breath of life given by the Creator. According to the popular understanding of a soul, it is an abstract entity such as thought, love, hatred, joy, sorrow, wisdom, and works.

However, its nature cannot be determined in the laboratory. Therefore, we have to turn to Inspiration for the answer to what happens to a man when he dies. Since Biblical times no one has ever risen from the dead. When Lazarus was raised from the dead, he had nothing to say about the flight of his soul.

The Scriptures, however, tell us plainly what happens to a man when he dies. The activities of the soul cease to exist. We read: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, 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 anything that is done under the sun. . . . Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Ecclesiastes 9:5-6, 10. As the above text says, in death there is no knowledge of what is happening here on earth.

When God had prolonged the life of King Hezekiah, he was very happy, for now he could keep on praising God and giving thanks to Him. However, if he had died, he could no longer have been praising God, or making known His truth. If his soul would have had immortality and gone up to heaven, he could have kept on praising God in the realms of glory, making known His truth, but he spoke the following words: "For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth." Isaiah 38:18-19.

The preponderance of scriptural truth reveals that in death the activities of the mind as thought cease, and the mind is in that same state as it is when a person is completely unconscious. Moreover, in that state, his mind is in the same condition as it was in after God had formed man

from the dust of the earth, but before He had breathed the breath of life into that lifeless anatomical structure. It was only after God had breathed the breath of life into that form that man became a living soul, and had all the activities of the soul. We further read, "For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Psalm 6:5. And also, "The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence." Psalm 115:17.

The preponderance of scriptural truth reveals that in death the activities of the mind cease, and it continues in this state until that individual is raised up in the Resurrection. So just as it was the breath of life which God breathed into that inanimate form that brought about the existence of the soul, so also the soul ceases to exist when the breath of life returns unto God.

Through the belief in the immortality of the soul, people are taught to pray to Mary, the mother of Jesus; however, she lies in the grave waiting for the Resurrection. Therefore, none of the requests asked of Mary are heard or answered by her, for the Scriptures plainly reveal that when a person dies his thoughts cease and he has no more wisdom or knowledge. In fact, he has no more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun. That is the scriptural truth, and the statement contrary to this which says, "Ye shall not surely die" is a lie from Satan for our ruin.

The Thief on the Cross

WE frequently hear theologians say that Jesus told the thief on the cross that he would be with Him in Paradise on that same day. We read: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43. However, Jesus did not go to Paradise on that same day. He went into the grave on that day. On the third day, when He arose and talked with Mary Magdalene, He had not yet, at that time, ascended to heaven to His Father. We read: "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father." John 20:17.

Christ's Father was in Paradise, for His throne is in Paradise. We read: "The tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Revelation 2:7. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life." Revelation 22:1-2. These two texts clearly show that Christ's Father was in Paradise.

The original New Testament was written in Greek, and that language had no punctuation marks and no commas. Punctuation marks were first added to the Greek language in the 14th century; therefore, prior to that time, Greek had no commas, so this text could be read to mean either that Jesus said those words on that day, or that He said that He would be in Paradise with the thief on that day.

In all the texts of the Bible where the meaning of a certain text is not clear, other texts invariably clarify what was meant by that text, and that is the case with this text.

Since the Bible teaches that the dead know not anything, and, since Christ did not go to Paradise on that day, we must conclude that Christ did not tell the thief that he would be in Paradise with Him on that same day, but that on that day He said he would be with Him in Paradise—meaning at a future time.

The church leaders who translated this verse believed in the immortality of the soul, so they placed the comma according to their belief—before the word "today," but the comma in this text should have been placed after the word "today" to express the true meaning of this text. This text should have been translated as follows: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee today, Thou shalt be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43.

We cannot, therefore, use this text to prove that the soul has immortality. The only thing this text proves is that the church leaders who translated this verse from the original Greek believed in the false theory of the immortality of the soul.

The Rich Man and Lazarus

IN the sixteenth chapter of Luke, Christ presented two parables that have to do with stewardship. In the first part of that chapter He presented a parable that had to do with the possession of tangible assets, while in the last part of that chapter, Luke 16:19–31, He presented a parable that had to do with the possession of the Scriptures and the plan of salvation.

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man represented the Jews and the Pharisees in particular, who were rich in the possession of the knowledge of the Word of God and the plan of salvation, while the Gentiles could only obtain fragments of it. Lazarus represented the Gentiles who were destitute of the knowledge of the Scriptures, but who longed for a little of that knowledge—even crumbs.

This parable does not in any way portray the experience of two individuals in real life in the hereafter—not any more than the parable of the sower represented a real farmer going out to sow grain. It is clear that this is a parable, or an allegory—for all the good people who died since the death of Abel could hardly have room in Abraham’s bosom. Furthermore, there is also the question of into whose bosom did Abraham go.

Christ taught in parables when He did not want some listeners, such as the Pharisees, to understand it, but later He explained it in private to His disciples. Since this story is not realistic to real life, we must conclude that it is a parable, for we read: “But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.” Mark 4:34.

People who believe in the immortality of the soul, believe that it is the disembodied soul that leaves to go to heaven or hell, but in the parable these two individuals both had bodies. The rich man had eyes and a tongue, and Lazarus had a finger. Without bodies how could nerves transmit the pain impulses to the brain? Likewise, without bodies how could individuals have a brain to experience either the pain of hell or the joys of heaven?

It was common knowledge among the Gentiles that the small fragments of knowledge of the Scriptures and the plan of salvation that the Gentiles were able to obtain, were looked upon as crumbs, for we read: “But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the

crumbs which fall from their master's table." Matthew 15:26-27.

In this parable father Abraham said that if they heard not by Moses and the prophets, neither will they hear if one rose from the dead, but ironically a man named Lazarus was raised from the dead. However, the Pharisees who were represented in this parable as the rich man's brothers did not repent and accept Christ as the Messiah, even after He raised Lazarus from the dead. Instead they counseled together to put both Jesus and Lazarus to death.

When Lazarus was raised from the dead, he had been positively dead for four days, and after he was raised he had nothing to say about his soul having lived in heaven in the presence of God and holy angels. If he had spent that time in heaven, it might have been a big disappointment to be brought back to this dark world with its problems and heartaches.

Those men who were translated into heaven from this world did not only go to heaven in spirit but also in their body. When Enoch was translated, he went to heaven in body and spirit. When Elijah was caught up into heaven by a chariot of fire, no body remained behind. The only thing that remained behind was his mantle, and it was recovered by Elisha.

When Christ raised Moses from the dead, Satan protested. He protested not only about Moses' soul but also about his body. Satan objected because God breathed the breath of life into Moses' body, for even Satan knew that the soul was the result of the breath of life in the body. From those two entities the soul is brought into existence. We read: "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses." Jude 9.

Many theologians believe that the story of the rich man and Lazarus teach that there is an eternally burning hell. However, this is only a parable, and the things in this parable are not real to life and, therefore, cannot be taken literally. So to find out what the punishment of the wicked will be, we have to search the Scriptures to ascertain what they teach. We have to take "here a little, and there a little," and compare the texts to know for a certainty what the Bible has to say about this important subject. It does not seem logical that a God of love would have a place in His universe that is eternally tormenting people for disobeying Him during a short period of life in this world.

The parable does not propose to give the impression that the wicked will suffer in never-ending torment in hell, for the things in this parable are so unreal to life that they cannot be considered to represent real facts in life. Neither does the Bible teach anywhere that there is a midway place of torment such as a purgatory. The expression "for ever and ever" as translated from the Greek means "until the end of the age."

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There are more than fifty passages in the Scriptures that use the expression "for ever" in stating that the Hebrew servant shall serve his master forever, meaning to the end of his life. See Exodus 21:1-6.

We read about Sodom and Gomorrah as "Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Jude 7. That does not mean burning without end, for we know that these cities are not burning today.

As we shall see, the Bible explains itself. When Hannah consecrated her son to the Lord, she said: "I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever." 1 Samuel 1:22. Then she stated what she meant by the term "for ever," we read: "Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD." 1 Samuel 1:28.

There are many texts in the Bible that show that the wicked will not burn eternally. When something is burned up the fire goes out. We read: "And all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts." "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 4:1, 3. And also: "And the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10.

Ezekiel in prophesying against Satan stated that he would be ashes upon the earth, and that he would not be anymore. This unmistakably shows that even Satan shall not be tormented eternally, we read: "I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. . . . Thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more." Ezekiel 28:18-19.

"The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23) cannot possibly mean that it will be eternal life in torment. In speaking of the wicked, Jesus said: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous unto life eternal." Matthew 25:46. Everlasting punishment means that the final result will be everlasting, while eternal punishing means that the process of punishing would go on eternally.

God's universe will be clean; there will be no sinning or cursing in a hell while the righteous are enjoying a life of bliss in the new earth.

The psalmist stated the fate of the wicked very accurately; in speaking of the wicked, he says: "It is that they shall be destroyed for ever." Psalm 92:7. That does not mean that they will be tormented forever, but the result will be forever.

The belief in the eternal torment of the wicked has been with us since ancient times, and has been handed down to us through tradition so that now the Catholic Church and many Protestant churches believe that

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there will be an eternally burning hell. The Scriptures teach unmistakably that there will not be an eternally burning hell, but that the wicked will receive their just reward, and that justice will be satisfied.

Saul and the Woman of Endor

THE woman of Endor was a sorceress, and was practicing witchcraft and necromancy (the pretended communication with the dead).

While Samuel was alive, Saul put to death all those who had a familiar spirit and were practicing witchcraft, for these things were an abomination to God. See Deuteronomy 18:10–12. However, in Saul's distress and extreme despair, he inquired through this satanic agency for counsel.

God's methods of communicating with man were by dreams, by the stones upon the high priest's chest called the Urim and Thummim, or by prophets. However, Saul had rejected the counsel of Samuel, the prophet, and, therefore, God did not answer Saul. He did not ask God in humility and repentance, but remained rebellious.

That story is reported in 1 Samuel 28:6–28:

This woman brought up an "old man covered with a mantle," and Saul perceived or thought that the apparition was Samuel. However, it was not Samuel, but an evil angel that had personated Samuel through satanic power.

The message that Saul received from this form, thought to be Samuel, was just the message that Satan wanted Saul to receive to further discourage him, to cause him despair, and to lead him to destroy himself, which he did during the battle.

The fact that this message was detrimental to Saul is evidence that it was not a message from God through the prophet Samuel, but rather a message from Satan. Further evidence that it was not the real Samuel, but a satanic impostor, is the fact that since God did not communicate with Saul through His appointed means of communication, He certainly would not have sent a message to Saul by Satan's method of communication which is an abomination to God. Moreover, we have the more Sure Word of Prophecy that this form was not Samuel, for it is written, "the dead know not anything."

Why Then the Second Coming?

THE second coming of Jesus has been the blessed hope of Christians for ages, and it is one of the main themes of the New Testament. However, if the righteous dead are already in heaven and enjoying the association of Jesus and the holy angels, and the living righteous will go there at their death, then the second coming of Jesus loses its significance.

Man does not now have immortality, for God only has immortality. Paul in speaking of God says, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto." 1 Timothy 6:16. However, at the second coming of Christ, the living righteous and the resurrected righteous will receive immortality. We read: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Corinthians 15:52-53.

When Jesus ascended to heaven, two angels remained and reassured the disciples of His coming again. We read: "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts 1:10-11.

Jesus also prophesied His second coming: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matthew 16:27.

The Bible also speaks of a resurrection, but how can there be a resurrection if the disembodied spirits of the righteous are already in heaven with Jesus and the holy angels, and the wicked dead are already writhing in hell? Such teachings nullify the significance of all the writings in the Scriptures about the resurrection of the dead.

The dead will be raised in two resurrections a thousand years apart. The righteous, or those that are in Christ, will be raised in the first resurrection at the beginning of the thousand years. We read: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise

first." 1 Thessalonians 4:16. During this thousand years the righteous will reign with Christ and will take part in the judgment of the wicked. We read: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." Revelation 20:4-5.

The wicked will not receive their punishment at the time of death, according to the belief in the immortality of the soul, but they will receive their punishment in the lake of fire after the righteous have reigned with Christ in heaven for a thousand years. When the wicked are resurrected, Satan will again have opportunity to deceive them, for we read: "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth." Revelation 20:7-8.

However, before the second coming of Christ and the Resurrection take place, there will have to be the judgment to determine whether a person will be saved and will receive eternal life, or whether he will be lost and will receive eternal death. That reward will first have to be determined in the judgment, for we read: "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12.

The judgment will not take place at the time of death as some believe, for God has set a specific time when the judgment will take place. We read: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." Acts 17:31.

In the apostle Paul's time, that day of judgment was still in the future, for we read: "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." Acts 24:25. However, in our day the hour of the judgment is already in session. In the third angel's message we read what John wrote: "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." Revelation 14:7.

Daniel heard in vision a saint speaking of the cleansing of the sanctuary, which was the Day of Atonement in the earthly sanctuary, and also of a day of judgment, for any person who had a sin unconfessed on the head of the sacrificial lamb was cut off from the camp of Israel.

What Daniel learned from this vision was the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, which is the day of atonement and also the time of the investigative judgment. That voice declared unto Daniel: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Daniel 8:14. A day in prophecy represents a year: "I have appointed thee

each day for a year.” Ezekiel 4:6. See also Numbers 14:34.

Daniel was very disturbed about this vision, and he inquired of its meaning. He received an explanation of the vision, for we read in the very next chapter: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” Daniel 9:25.

The commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem was issued by Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, kings of Persia, according to Ezra 6:14. There were four commands issued, but the most likely command to reckon time from was given to Ezra in 457 B.C. Many people went with Ezra, and the government of the Jews was restored by him. Therefore, 457 B.C. was the date of the beginning of the 69 weeks, and that date certainly was the date of the beginning of the 2300 days or years in prophetic time. Then the 69 weeks or 483 years from the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah, the Prince, and the anointing of Jesus came to AD 27.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins.” Daniel 9:24. These 70 weeks or 490 years from the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem brings us to AD 34, the stoning of Stephen—the date when Israel was rejected by God as His chosen people. However, the Messiah was cut off or crucified in the middle of the week which was the 70th week, and that brings us to AD 31—three and one-half years after His anointing.

According to the events of history, one can calculate the date of the beginning of the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven, which is the beginning of the session of the investigative judgment. That date comes to the fall of 1844, and if calculated to the day it comes to October 22, 1844.

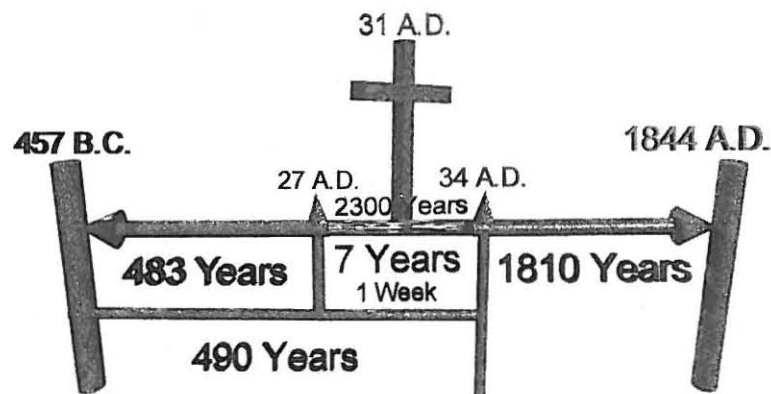
We are told that when that judgment ends it will be the close of probation. All the cases will then have been decided—either for eternal life or for eternal death.

If the Jewish nation had studied and understood the time prophecy of Daniel, they would have known the time when the Messiah would come. Likewise, if we today understand this time prophecy of Daniel, we will know that the investigative judgment is already in session. The investigative judgment determines who will be saved in God’s kingdom and who will be lost, and therefore should be of great concern to us. The cleansing of the sanctuary, which was the Day of Atonement in the earthly sanctuary, represents the day of atonement and the investigative judgment in

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the heavenly sanctuary. The plan of salvation was thus revealed through the earthly sanctuary service.

The Prophecy of the 2300 Years:



- (1.) 457 B.C.—Commandment to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem. Beginning of 2300 years, 69 weeks, and 70 weeks. See Daniel 9:24–25.
- (2.) AD 27—The Messiah, the anointing of Jesus, and the baptism of Jesus. The end of the 69 weeks, the beginning of the 70th week. See Daniel 9:25.
- (3.) AD 31—The Messiah cut off in the middle of week, the crucifixion of Jesus. See Daniel 9:26–27.
- (4.) AD 34—Stoning of Stephen, end of the 70th week, Israel rejected as God’s chosen people, the disciples left Jerusalem and went to the Gentiles. See Acts 6:8–8:1.
- (5.) October 22, 1844—Beginning of the investigative judgment and of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary which is equivalent to the Day of Atonement in the earthly sanctuary. See Daniel 8:14.

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Angels Good and Evil

THE Scriptures plainly reveal the existence of angels, and that their action and influence plays an important role in the affairs of men. There are revealed many acts in which holy angels helped and assisted people.

Angels of God under the command of Christ are striving for the salvation of man, and, likewise, evil angels under the command of Satan are working for the ruin and destruction of souls. So there is a great conflict, though unseen by man, going on in behalf of the inhabitants of earth. We are in the greatest danger when we do not realize the existence of Satan and his host of evil angels, and are ignorant of their deceptive devices. Our only safeguard is to trust in God and be guarded by holy angels.

The purpose of holy angels is to protect and serve. When God was ready to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, the angels took Lot and some of his family by the hand, and led them out of the wicked city of Sodom. When Daniel was cast into the lion's den, God sent an angel who closed the mouths of the lions that they would not injure Daniel. When Peter was in prison, an angel rescued Peter and set him free.

In this life there are also many authentic incidents where good angels have taken part in helping people. In contrast to the work of holy angels, evil angels are constantly at work misleading and causing the ruin of souls.

Anybody who has ever thought that he was seeing a departed relative or loved one in a seance has really seen an evil angel who was personating that relative or loved one.

I know of a man whose son was killed in the war, and sometime later a being who closely resembled his son appeared before this man; but this man knew the Scriptures: "So he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more." Job 7:9. He told this being, "You are not my son, you are an evil angel," and immediately this being disappeared.

There is another case on record in which a mother's sweet, little, blond girl died and was buried. Sometime later a little, blond girl appeared before this mother. She was as beautiful and sweet as when she was alive. This mother's first thought and inclination was to pick this child up and embrace her, but she knew from the Scriptures that this being was not her child; for the Scriptures say that the dead do not come

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back. She said to this being, "You are not my child but an evil angel. In the name of Jesus go away." This being's face immediately changed into an ugly and hideous expression and he disappeared. If we command these evil angels in the name of Jesus to go away, they must and will immediately depart.

As to the number of angels, they are innumerable: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels." Hebrews 12:22.

We further read: "A fiery stream issued and came forth from him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Daniel 7:10.

This adds up to at least 102 million loyal angels still in heaven after one-third of them rebelled and were cast out of heaven. One-third of the angels were deceived by Lucifer, were expelled from heaven, and were cast to the earth: "And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." Revelation 12:4.

This third of the total number of angels would then be at least 51 million evil angels who were cast to the earth, and are today the approximate number of evil angels under the command of a vicious and treacherous leader, Satan, with which human beings have to contend.

Angels are not the departed spirits of persons who have died, as some believe, for angels were in existence and doing God's will long before there were any deaths in the human family. After Adam and Eve sinned, two good angels with flaming swords were placed to guard the way to the tree of life. Abel was the first person to die in this world, and that was much later.

Angels are more powerful than man, for man was created lower than the angels. In speaking of man, the Psalmist says:

"For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." Psalm 8:5.

When Sennacherib defied and threatened Israel, God sent one angel who slew 185,000 armed Assyrians in one night:

"Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." Isaiah 37:36.

In order for us to overcome evil angels, it is essential that we realize the existence of evil angels and know their deceptive devices. Satan deceived one-third of the angels in heaven, and is now exercising that same deceptive power for the ruin of the inhabitants of the earth.

Frail human beings are no match against the superior power of Satan. **Soul and Spiritualism**

tan and his evil angels, and the sad part is that they have continual access to us unless we are constantly guarded by good angels. In our own strength we are powerless against Satan and his host of evil angels. It is only through Christ that we can overcome such a formidable foe, for Christ has overcome Satan. Through submission and obedience to Christ we can through faith be more than conquerors.

Angels were created to be very powerful, and, though fallen, evil angels still possess much power. The Bible identifies the devil as being “the prince of the power of the air.” Ephesians 2:2. His evil angels can cause floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other catastrophes. However, they are restrained by God, and can cause only catastrophes and calamities which they are allowed to cause. Since the world has largely chosen the rule of Satan, and as the wickedness of man increases, the Spirit of God will gradually be withdrawn from the earth. Satan and his evil angels will be allowed to increase their destructive work, and we can, therefore, expect catastrophes and calamities to increase and become more devastating as we come nearer to the end of time.

We believe that all persons who have accepted Christ have a guardian angel appointed to them: “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.” Psalm 34:7.

When Peter was released from prison and came to the door where believers were gathered, they did not believe that it was Peter at the door, and said it must be his angel. Christians, from the earliest times, have believed that an angel was assigned to every believer.

Again, the Bible refers to these divine agencies, the angels, as being “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” Hebrews 1:14.

In speaking of little children Jesus said: “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 18:10.

That means that their guardian angels always have access to the Father and can request as many angels or help that is needed, and the Father will send all the help that is needed in any situation in which one of His children is in trouble.

It is comforting to know that God has assigned a powerful angel to each one of us to help us to overcome temptation, and has assigned that angel to be our private bodyguard, as it were, to protect us as we pass through the dangerous paths of this evil world.

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Spiritualism

SPIRITUALISM is the belief that when a person dies his spirit or consciousness does not die, but he continues to exist without the body and may return as that person and communicate with the living. In reality, that which is communicated are theories of satanic origin.

Modern Spiritualism had its beginning in 1848 when the Fox sisters heard mysterious rappings on the wall of their house. They were able to communicate with these rappings by asking them questions and receiving answers from them.

Spiritualism is now more refined than the ancient sorcery and witchcraft that was carried over from ancient paganism. It was first adopted by Catholicism, and then accepted by apostate Protestantism. All churches, both Catholic and Protestant, that believe in the immortality of the soul will be deceived by spiritualism.

It is only through a thorough knowledge of Satan’s deceptions in spiritualism that we can discern his plans, for spiritualism undermines faith in God and the teachings of the Bible.

Because of God’s great love for man He sent His Son into the world to die for man’s transgression that through Him man may obtain eternal life. However, Satan introduced witchcraft and spiritualism to derail God’s plan for man’s salvation. That is why these occult practices are such an abomination to God. Spiritualism advocates theories and practices that will bring ruin to a man’s soul.

Spiritualism has entered Christianity through many subtle and imperceptible ways—such as positive thinking, hypnosis, holistic medicine, Eastern mysticism, mind-over-matter cults, yoga, and others. Many are seduced by this type of sorcery. One type of sorcery is the use of the Ouija board or any object through which questions are asked of the spirit world, and are then being answered through that object by evil angels. Generally, in sorcery the prevailing thought is that the individual is progressing to the state of a god.

Faith healing by spiritualists is also commonly used. Though much of it is fictitious, Satan can cause disease, and then by reversing the process, make it appear that the disease has been healed.

God certainly does not look more favorably upon the refined witchcraft and spiritualism of today, which has invaded the Christian Soul and Spiritualism

tian society under the cloak of religion, than He looked upon the ancient witchcraft and spiritualism.

Witchcraft and the pretended communication with the dead are an abomination to God, for we read: "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth 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 those things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee." Deuteronomy 18:10–12.

Because of God's great displeasure with the soul-destroying nature of spiritualism, He pronounced the death penalty on those that practiced witchcraft and the pretended communication with the dead, for we read: "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people." Leviticus 20:6. And again: "A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them." Leviticus 20:27.

The pretended communications of the disembodied spirits of the dead are not the individuals personated, but are evil angels masquerading as those individuals. Their appearance is practically the same, and the tone of their voice is very similar. They may even relate incidences that occurred during the individual's life. Moreover, they may make predictions that come true, and appear to be a benefactor to the human race, caring and sympathizing with the living. However, we know that they are impostors, for we read: "As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth 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. And: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" Psalm 6:5. And also. "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Psalm 115:17.

Once we place our confidence in these disembodied spirits, their communications are believed to be truth and of divine origin, but they are the direct agents of Satan whom he uses to destroy souls. It is Satan's unobstructed line of communication that he uses to deceive unsuspecting individuals, and to lead them to eternal ruin.

These evil angels proclaim that man progresses to the state of a god, and that there is no punishment for an evildoer, regardless of how wicked an individual has been. They proclaim that man will be his own judge, and will set his own standard, instead of the law of God, and that he will

not be accountable to anyone.

They also proclaim that God's law has been done away with, and is not binding anymore, and that Christ is not the divine Son of God and the only hope of salvation.

We have the precious words from the Scriptures: "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. Moreover, the things that those disembodied spirits tell us do not agree with the law and the testimony; therefore, there is no light or truth in them.

God told Adam and Eve that if they ate of the forbidden fruit, they would surely die, but the father of lies came along and said: "Ye shall not surely die." Much of the Christian world has chosen to believe the latter, so now both Catholic and apostate Protestant churches proclaim those lies from their pulpits just as they were handed down from paganism. However, what God has said stands eternally, and no ecclesiastical pronouncement or general belief of Christendom is going to change that eternal truth as spoken by Jehovah.

Those who believe in the immortality of the soul believe that the works of spiritualism are manifestations of the power of God, and that man can gain knowledge through spiritualism far beyond that which he now has, even as Satan had promised Eve if she ate of the forbidden fruit. We read: "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:5.

Our only safeguard against the tide of spiritualism is to recognize that any appearance of deceased persons are personations by evil angels, and that any message that they bring to us is a message directly from Satan, the arch deceiver, for our destruction and eternal ruin. So in order to gain the victory over spiritualism, we must be well fortified with the truths of the Bible.

Final Events of Spiritualism

SATAN will have had much experience at the end-time in causing personations of deceased persons, for he has practiced witchcraft and the pretended communications with the dead ever since he first introduced it to the human race. His technique will then be perfect, so he will personate Christ. Some of His confederate angels will personate some of Christ's disciples and apostles such as Paul, Peter, James, and John, for we read: "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matthew 24:24.

When Satan personates Christ, people will prostrate themselves before Satan and declare: "Christ has come! Christ has come!" Satan will be the most dazzling and most glorified being that mortal beings have ever beheld. He will do miracles, heal the sick, and in a subdued and melodious voice pronounce blessings upon the multitude as Christ did when He was here on earth. He will discredit God's law and present heresies such as that he changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and that whosoever does not hallow Sunday will be blaspheming him.

People have long been waiting for the coming of Jesus, and now they will truly believe that Jesus has actually come, and that He will usher in a millennium of peace on earth. At that time it will be difficult not to follow the crowd. It will take real courage to realize that this is Satan's great and final deception to deceive the inhabitants of earth, and lead them to their eternal destruction.

Those who will pretend to be disciples or apostles will present a false theology, and when shown that their theology is different from that of their writings, they will state that their writings were grossly misinterpreted. Woe unto anyone who will disbelieve or discredit this supposed christ (Satan) and his impostors.

If we go to see and investigate these personations, we will be on Satan's enchanted ground, and will be in great danger of being deceived. So we need to heed Christ's admonition not to go and see, for it will be Satan's overwhelming deception. All will be deceived who are not firmly grounded in the Scriptures. We are also admonished not to believe that this being is Christ, but only a personation of Him, for the Scriptures plainly tell us the manner of Christ's coming. We read: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. . . . Where-

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fore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:23, 26-27.

It is Satan's purpose through these supernatural manifestations to sweep the whole world into his fold of spiritualism.

For the description of the sixth plague, we read: "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." Revelation 16:12. This reminds us of the time when Cyrus, king of Persia, created an artificial lake and diverted the water of the river Euphrates into that lake, so that he could enter into the city of Babylon by way of the dry bed of the Euphrates. Through this drying up of the Euphrates, he was able to cause the fall of the ancient, wicked city of Babylon. So the drying up of the Euphrates is symbolic of the events which will lead up to the fall of spiritual Babylon, a system of false religion, mentioned in Revelation 16:19, which states: "And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." This spiritual Babylon is further described in the 17th and 18th chapters of the book of Revelation.

We read further: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 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. . . . And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Revelation 16:13-14, 16.

In this Scripture the dragon represents Satan, and secondarily he represents spiritualism and the charismatic movement which are agents through which Satan works. We read: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Revelation 12:9. The beast is described in Revelation 13:1-10, and represents Roman Catholicism. The false prophet is described as the one who wrought miracles before the beast with which he deceived those that had received the mark of the beast, and those who had worshipped his image. We read: "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image." Revelation 19:20. It is the two-horned beast of Revelation 13:11-17 that represents America. We read: "And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to

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do in sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. . . . And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads.” Revelation 13:14, 16. The false prophet unmistakably represents the apostate Protestantism of America which is in power in America. Armageddon symbolizes the whole world, for the whole world will be involved in this final battle.

The gathering together of all of the kings and evil forces of the earth through spiritualism, Roman Catholicism, and apostate Protestantism will occur during the sixth plague. However, no battle is fought during the sixth plague, for the battle of the great day of God Almighty will be fought during the seventh plague.

Under that threefold union or coalition, those forces will be arrayed to make war against God’s people which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus. The battle of that threefold union against God’s people is called the battle of the great day of God Almighty, and that battle will take place during the seventh plague. When those forces are starting the attack to annihilate God’s people, God will intervene, and direct the seventh angel with a vial full of the wrath of God to pour out his vial into the air.

The only battles that God fought on this earth in the past were for His people. In the future the only battle that God will fight will be for His people. No one in the whole universe is capable of attacking God, so that God would have to fight a battle to defend Himself. Furthermore, it is absurd to think that the battle of God Almighty will be fought between opposing factions of this earth, as a battle between the East and the West, or a battle between Christians and Moslems. Battles between nations or between kingdoms of this earth have frequently been fought, and God was not a contending faction in those battles, unless His people were involved and were a contending faction, or were threatened. The battle described here in Revelation 16 is a battle in which God will be fighting for the protection of His people, and it will be the last and final battle to be fought on this earth. It will involve God as a contending faction, for He will fight for His people. It is called the battle of the great day of God Almighty.

We have an example of a battle which in many ways resembles the battle of God Almighty in which God fought against Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Sennacherib had a well-armed army of 185,000 men who were arrayed before Jerusalem, and threatened Israel. Read Isaiah chapters 36 and 37.

This battle was similar to the battle of the great day of God Almighty spoken of in Revelation 16:14. This battle might also be called a battle of God Almighty, for God fought in this battle against the Assyrians for the protection of His people, Israel. Not a single arrow was shot, and not a single sword was raised against Israel. However, God sent a single angel who slew the 185,000 armed men of Sennacherib’s army, and Sennacherib went back home alone in shame. We read: “Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.” Isaiah 37:36–37.

So the battle of the great day of God Almighty will be similar in some respects to the battle in which God fought Sennacherib. This battle of God Almighty will be fought during the seventh plague, and will be God fighting against the spiritualistic forces of this threefold union for the protection of His people. Again, not a single shot will be fired, nor a single bayonet raised against God’s people, and neither will God do any fighting with conventional weapons. However, He will again dispatch a single angel, the seventh angel, with a vial full of the wrath of God who shall pour out his vial into the air, and the forces of this threefold union will be defeated. We read: “And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent.” Revelation 16:17–21. (The Biblical talent used in weighing silver was 75 pounds.)

After the battle of the great day of God Almighty, when the seventh plague will have done its destructive work, the evil forces of that threefold coalition will then be paralyzed and in indescribable horror, and will no more be a threatening force. The condition of the earth will then be desolate and will be uninhabitable by human beings.

It will be the time when Jesus will return to this earth to take His people to heaven.