

98. SPIRITUALISM

1. What is Spiritualism defined to be?

"A belief that departed spirits hold intercourse with mortals by means of physical phenomena, as by rapping, or during abnormal mental states, as in trances, or the like, commonly manifested through a medium; spiritism."-Webster.

Spiritism: "The theory that mediumistic phenomena are caused by spirits of the dead."-Webster.

NOTE-"The very central truth of Spiritualism is the power and possibility of spirit return, under certain conditions, to communicate with those in the material form."-N. F. Ravlin, Spiritualistic lecturer, of California.

2. Did this doctrine exist in ancient times?

"Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God." Lev. 19: 31.

NOTE - "The phenomenal aspect of modern Spiritualism reproduces all essential principles of the magic, witchcraft, and sorcery of the past. The same powers are involved, the same intelligences are operating." - F. F. Morse, in "Practical Occultism," page 85.

3. How does God regard sorcerers?

"And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers." Mal. 3: 5.

4. What does He say of the teachings of enchanters and sorcerers?

"Therefore hearken not you to . . . your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers. . . . for they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you far from your land." Jer. 27: 9, 10.

NOTES - The late Rev. F. B. Meyer, of England, gave the following warning against dabbling in Spiritualism: "I have known several families that have been cursed by having recourse to clairvoyants and mediums. There are grave dangers in these things; and when occult powers are used for selfish ends, it is possible for men and women to be filled with evil spirits, as was the girl at Philippi. People are fools to play with the dregs of the spirit world."-Present Truth, September 7, 1911.

"I am perfectly certain that the whole movement known as modern Spiritualism is in the hands and under the direction of the father of evil spirits; in other words, is thoroughly and unmistakably diabolical."-Dr. C. Williams, of London, England.

5. Before their entrance into Canaan, what instruction did Moses give Israel concerning these things?

"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 anyone 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 consultant 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. Thou shall be perfect with the Lord thy God." Deut.18:9-13.

NOTES - Those who consult or have to do with mediums' or any who profess to receive instruction or communications from the spirits of the dead, disregard this plain instruction and place themselves upon the enemy's ground. Ever since Satan told that first lie in Eden, when he denied that death would be the result of sin, in the very face of death itself, he, working upon man's natural dread of death and upon his distress at the thought of being separated from loved ones, has been endeavoring to persuade men to believe that the dead are not dead, and that men do not die. Idolatry, heathenism, Spiritualism, occultism, and the whole brood of false isms of this kind, it will be noticed, deal very largely with death. This, of itself, indicates their origin, and should be a warning to all to let them alone-to have nothing whatever to do with them. They are from beneath, and not from above. However promising or pleasing they may be at first they are downward and destructive in their tendency, and ultimately lead away from God, into unbelief of His Word, and into sin. They promise life by denying death, and apparently "make good" Satan's lie in Eden, through the ministrations and manifestations of evil angels representing themselves to be the spirits of the dead.

In a sermon on "Spiritualism an. Imposture," Rev. T. De Witt Talmage said: "Spiritualism takes advantage of those who are weak and morbid with trouble. We lose a friend. The house is dark, the world is dark, the future seems dark. If we had, in our rebellion and weakness, the power to marshal a host and recapture our loved one from the next world we should marshal the host. Spiritualism comes in at that moment, when we are all worn out by watching-all worn out, body, mind and soul and says. 'Now I will open that door; you shall hear the voices; take. your places around the table; all be quiet now.' . . . I denounce Spiritualism because it takes advantage of people when they are weak and worn out and morbid under life's bereavements and sorrows. . . . If Spiritualism had full sway, it would turn the world into a pandemonium of carnality. It is an unclean and an adulterous religion."

6. Under the theocracy of Israel, what was the law concerning witches' and those who had familiar spirits?

"Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Ex. 22: 18. "A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death." Lev. 20: 27.

NOTE - This shows how dangerous and deadly everything of this character is in God's sight.

7. With what is witchcraft classed by Paul, and what does he say to those who are guilty of such things?

"Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies. . . . I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. 5: 20, 21.

8. What should one do if asked to inquire of a familiar spirit ?

"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?" Isa. 8: 19.

NOTE - Giving the sense of this passage, Dr. Adam Clarke says: "Should not a nation seek unto its God? Why should you seek unto the dead concerning the living?" But this is exactly what Spiritualism teaches men to do-to seek unto the dead concerning the living.

9. What instruction does the Apostle John give touching this subject?

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." 1 John 4: 1.

10. By what are we to try them?

"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: 20.

11. Should we allow ourselves to be influenced by signs or wonders performed by those who would try to lead us away from God and His law?

"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spoke unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou has not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proves you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall walk after the Lord Your God, and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice!" Deut. 13:1-4.

12. How much do the dead know of what is going on among men?

"Thou changed his countenance, and sends him away. His sons come to honor, and he knows it not; and they are brought low, but he perceives it not of them." Job 14: 20, 21.

13. Do the dead know anything?

"For the living know that they shall die but the dead know not anything." Eccl. 9:5. "His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish " Ps. 146: 4.

14. What scripture for ever precludes the idea that the dead come back to earth to communicate with the living?

"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." Eccl. 9:6.

15. Then when miracles are performed by spirits purporting to be those of our dead friends, to what shall we attribute them?

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

16. What will be one characteristic of latter day apostasies?

"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!" 1 Tim. 4:1.

Many items illustrate a condition widely prevalent:-

A lawyer with a national reputation, well known to me, said J. L. Hall, of New York never begins the preparation of a difficult case without getting "advice from the other side" as he describes the search. Another distinguished man of New York City once asserted to me that he had his familiar spirit with which he talked as freely as with a human companion.'-Washington Herald, May 8, 1911.

A noted Brooklyn divine some years ago, not realizing that he Spiritualistic views, was voicing the following: "What are our departed Christian friends who in this world had their joy in the healing art, doing now? - Busy at their old business. No sickness in heaven, but plenty of sickness on earth.' -Christian old Herald, July 8, 1882.

Writing concerning "Communion With the Departed," General Booth, of the Salvation Army, said: "Through all my history, my personal intercourse with the spirit world has been but limited. I have not been favored with many visions, and it is but seldom that I dream dreams that impart either pleasure or profit; and yet I have a spiritual communion with the departed saints that is not without both satisfaction and service. And especially of late the memories of those with whom my heart has had the choicest communion in the past, if not the very beings themselves, have come in upon me as I have sat at my desk or lain wakeful on my bed in the night season. Amongst these, one form, true to her mission, comes more frequently than all besides, assuring me of her continued partnership in my struggle for the temporal and eternal salvation of the multitudes-and that is my blessed, my beautiful wife!" - War Cry, November 27, 1897.

" Dr. Joseph Parker, of the City Temple, London, has openly declared that he prayed to his departed wife every day. He said that he never came to the City Temple to preach without asking her to come with him. He further says: 'I encourage my friend to pray to his wife, and to pray God to ask her to come to his help. She will be more to him than twelve legions of unknown angels.'" -The Living Church, November 14, 1899.

The late Emperor Nicholas fell "under the influence of a Spiritualist named Philipp, who rules the emperor to such an extent that His Majesty makes no important decision, even in relation to family life, without consulting his Spiritualistic guide." Melbourne Age, November 15, 1902.

In a statement given out December 20, 1910, soon after the death of Mrs. Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, Mrs. Amelia Stetson, one of the leaders of the Christian Science Church of New York City, said: "Mrs. Eddy, who was the female Christ, will return to earth. I am watching and waiting for the manifestation of Mrs. Eddy in the semblance of human form. It may come today, it may come next week, it may not come for ten years, but it will surely come. . . . The millennium is at hand. Mrs. Eddy is not dead. She is still alive, and when she appears again on earth, it will be as herself-as Mary Baker Eddy."

"A message purporting to come from Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, through Mr. William T. Stead, the noted English journalist, shortly after the former's death, says, 'There is no death; all is life; all is freedom.' "-Signs of the Times, February 28, 1911. And soon after Mr. Stead himself went down on the Titanic, April 15, 1912, Spiritualists in different parts of the world received numerous messages purporting to have come from him.

17. How does Satan deceive the people?

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." 2 Cor. 11: 14.

18. What role do his agents assume?

"Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness." Verse 15.

19. Will Satan and his agents attempt to counterfeit the coming of Christ, and work signs and wonders to confirm their pretentious claims?

"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 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!" Matt. 24: 23, 24.

20. What will be one of the last great signs performed by this means, to fasten men in deception?

"And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the 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!" Rev. 13:13,14.

21. What scripture shows that Satan is to work with special power and deceptive wonders just before Christ's second coming?

"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!" 2 Thess. 2: 9, 10. See also Rev. 12: 12.

22. While many will be deceived by these wonders, and accept of the false christs that appear, what will those say who have maintained their love for the truth, and patiently waited for Christ's return?

"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, THIS is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save US: THIS is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isa. 25: 9.

23. What warning has been given us through the Apostle Peter?

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour!" 1 Peter 5: 8.

WICKED spirits gather round thee,
Legions of those foes to God
Principalities most mighty-
Walk unseen the earth abroad; They are gathering to the battle,
Strengthened for the last deep strife; Christian, arm! be watchful, ready,
Struggle manfully for life.