

SOULS & DEATH



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The world of today is awash in spirit fever. TV shows, radio talk shows, magazines, books and the Internet are full of spirit stories. People the world over, religions of every sort, are experiencing spirit mania. But what does the Bible really say about the spirits, death, the soul and life after death?

In Genesis chapter three we read the story of the temptation of Eve. Eve, in conversation with the snake, explained that God had said that if they ate fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they would die. The snake replied that they would not surely die. (Lucifer was using the medium of the snake to communicate with Eve.)

Here we have the beginnings of the great lie that Lucifer has spread around the world. When you die, you don't really die. God said, "for when you eat of it you will surely die." Genesis 2:17. The devil said, "You will not surely die." Genesis 3:4. God versus Lucifer. Right versus wrong. Truth versus falsehood. Who will you believe?

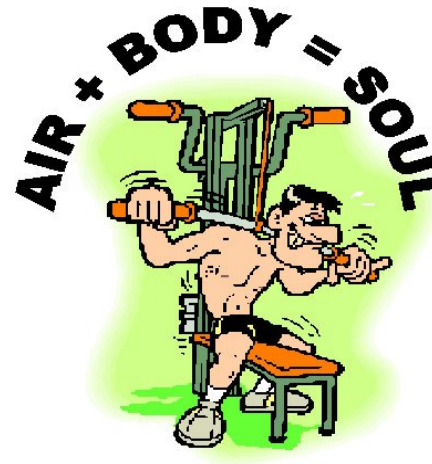
If you want to know what the ingredients are to a specific food, you read the ingredients' label. If you want to know what parts are in an item, you look at the "part's list". If you want to know what man is composed of, you read the ingredients from the "part's list". What are we made of? Do we have a living spirit and a living soul that lives separately within our bodies?

God made man from the dust of the ground and said, "for dust you are and to dust you will return." Genesis 3:19. No spirit or soul there going anywhere. Nothing living to continue after death, just dust to dust. God made this even plainer. He sent them out from the Garden of Eden so they could not "take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." Genesis 3:22. Since sinful man has never eaten of the tree of life, there is no

eternal living sinner; not even as a “soul” or a “spirit”. God made it even plainer in Genesis 6:3. Man, “he is mortal,” not immortal. So what is a “soul” and a “spirit”?

If we start with a concordance we will find that the primary meaning for the word “spirit” means “breath”. That’s it, just air. You know, the stuff you breath. And it is not alive. So when you die, you go back to the dust from which you were made, and the “spirit”, the “breath” God gave you goes back to Him into the atmosphere.

When God created man, God “formed man from the dust of the ground.” OK, here we have a body lying on the ground. Just a body, nothing alive. After forming a body, He “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life...” He did “CPR” on Adam. God pumped air into the lungs of Adam and Adam started to breath. At this point “the man became a living being.” Genesis 2:7.



A living being! This term “living being” is what the King James Version of the Bible calls “soul”. That is what “soul” means: “Living Being”. It doesn’t say that God put a “soul” into Adam. It says that air (spirit) plus body (dust) together equal a “soul” (living being). Without breath (spirit) or body (dust) you have no soul. Nothing to live on after death. Nothing! The soul dies!

Our bodies are to be temples of the Holy Spirit. This term “Holy Spirit” or “Spirit” with a capital “S” denotes the other person with the God title. This entity is eternal and immortal. But that is not the same as “spirit” with a small “s”. You see, your body can be a temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in, or a temple for the evil spirit to dwell in. Your choice. They don’t live together in the same temple.

God gave you the breath and the body to produce a living temple (soul). But the temple is empty. You must decide which entity is to fill and inhabit your temple. It was the Catholic Church that borrowed the pagan concept of the soul from the great Greek pagan thinker Plato. “They defined the soul, with Plato, as an independent spirit inhabiting, and thwarted by, the body...” The Age of Faith: *Durant*.

“Plato, most influentially, separated the soul, or psyche, from the material body and argued that this reasoning part of our being was immortal.” U.S. News & World Report: October 23, 2006.

If you choose to let the wicked spirit dwell in you and turn your temple, living being, into wickedness, then your soul will die eternally. “The soul who sins is the one who will die.” “The soul who sins is the one who will die.” Ezekiel 18:4, 20. God wants to make very sure that you understand the surety of death – total death – non-conscious death. The soul will die if you continue to sin.

“Anyone who is among the living has hope . . . For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing; they have no further reward, and even the memory of them is forgotten. Their love, their hate and their jealousy have long since vanished; never again will they have a part in anything that happens under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 9:4-6. Yes, we “sleep the eternal sleep” until Jesus comes. Then the righteous will be raised to live eternally with Jesus and the wicked will be destroyed to “sleep the eternal sleep”. Nahum 3:18.

The dead are dead. The Bible calls death: “sleep”. This sleep is an unconscious, non-living type sleep. We sleep in the grave, “Hell”, until Jesus comes to wake us at the second coming. Nothing goes to heaven or to a fiery place at death. That comes later. “Hell”, by the way, is the Greek word that simply means “the grave”. That’s it! It was the Catholic Church that borrowed the pagan concept of a burning underworld to control people and steal their money. Are you that foolish?

Even Jesus told us that death was a “sleep”. When Jesus was told

Related Texts

Job 3:11, 13
Job 14:7-12
Job 34:14, 15
Psalm 30:9
Psalm 88:4, 5, 10-12
Psalm 102:26
Psalm 146:4
Ecclesiastes 9:10
Isaiah 26:19
Isaiah 57:2
Malachi 4:1, 3
Matthew 13:29, 30
Matthew 16:27
Mark 5:39
John 5:28, 29
Acts 23:6
Romans 1:23
1 Thessalonians 4:15-17
2 Peter 2:6
Jude 1:7
Revelation 21:1, 4

Job 7:7-10
Job 19:25-27
Psalm 6:5
Psalm 49:10-12, 14, 15
Psalm 92:7
Psalm 115:17, 18
Ecclesiastes 3:18-20
Isaiah 2:22
Isaiah 38:18, 19
Daniel 12:2, 13
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Matthew 25:31-33, 46
Luke 24:3, 39
John 6:39, 40, 44, 54
Acts 24:15
1 Cor. 15:6, 42-44, 50-53
2 Thessalonians 1:7-9
2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12, 13
Rev. 20:4-7, 9, 10, 13-15
Revelation 22:12

that His friend Lazarus had fallen sick, He did not leave immediately to go to him. Later He said to His disciples, “‘Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.’ His disciples replied, ‘Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.’ Jesus had been speaking of his death, but His disciples thought He meant natural sleep. So then He told them plainly, ‘Lazarus is dead.’” John 11:11-14.

“You sweep men away in the sleep of death;...” Psalm 90:5. To God, death is nothing more than a little sleep since all the righteous will be raised, or awakened again, when Jesus comes. Since the reward of eternal life or eternal death is not given until Jesus comes back to separate the sheep from the goats, there are no “souls” burning in eternal fire right now. God is a God of love and justice. How could He throw a child into eternal fire now when the judgment isn’t until the end of time? That would be torture and God is not a God of torture. When Jesus spoke to the thief on the cross, He stated, “I tell you the truth today you will be with Me in paradise.” Luke 23:43. This sentence is written the way the Greek author, Luke, wrote it. Notice, they did not write with punctuation back then. Punctuation was added about 500 years after the New Testament was written.

Let’s punctuate this sentence to agree with the rest of the Bible. “I tell you the truth today, you will be with Me in paradise.” What Jesus is telling the man is, Today, I am telling you the truth. You will be with Me in paradise, but not today. Jesus didn’t even go to paradise that day. Jesus went into the grave, hell. We also know that the thief did not die that day. How could he go to paradise since he did not die that day. How do we know this? When the soldiers came to take the bodies down from the crosses for the Sabbath, they “broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other.” John 19:32. Why was this? Because they were still alive. They wanted to inflict as much pain as possible. If they wanted them dead they would have stuck them with spears. “But when they came to Jesus and found that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.” John 19:33.

Some may bring up the parable Christ told about the Rich man

and Lazarus found in Luke 16:19-31. Some will claim that Christ here is speaking about immediate rewards. But that cannot be. Christ does not lie, nor does He speak one thing, then contradict Himself. All through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation He talks about death as a sleep and a bodily resurrection at the end of time.

To better understand this story, we need to recognize that it is in the midst of Parables. Starting in Luke 13 we have the parable of the mustard seed and yeast. Luke 14: the parable of the great banquet. Luke 15: the parable of the lost sheep, lost coin, lost son. Luke 16: the parable of the shrewd manager, rich man and Lazarus. Luke 18: the parable of the persistent widow and the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector. Luke 19: gives us the parable of the ten minas.

The “Rich man and Lazarus” parable is not talking about what happens when a person dies. No more than the parable of the lost sheep is about how to be a shepherd. If you want to know what a parable is about, go to the end of the parable and Jesus will explain it. At the end of the “rich man and Lazarus” parable we find that Jesus is concerned with repentance. This parable was a condensed story of the plan of salvation. Yes we will die. Yes, we go to the grave (hell). Yes, at the end of the age the angels will come and take the righteous to heaven to be with Abraham when he is raised from his sleep. The wicked will be thrown into a lake of fire. But not right at death. It is a condensed version. But all of it was to illustrate repentance. If we don’t repent and live the righteous life, we will go to the lake of fire. If we repent, we will go to heaven. “‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ ‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

The irony of this whole confusion is that Moses and the Prophets tell us that when you die you are dead and go to sleep until Jesus comes. Yet no one is listening. That is what the parable is all about. Listening to the Old Testament for truth. Jesus taught it, Paul taught it, and the whole New Testament taught it, yet how

few want to believe what Jesus, Paul and the Old Testament teach.

One more historical note. Jesus in this parable is only using this “paradise & hell” concept because it was widely propagated by one of their own pagan-Roman writers who lived in the 1st century B.C. His name was Virgil. He “makes as vivid as he can the notion of a rewarding heaven, a cleansing purgatory, and a punishing hell.”* This concept is not from God, but from paganism. *The story of Civilization III: Durant

Moses and the Prophets tell us to keep the Ten Commandments to have eternal life. Jesus taught it. Yet no one is listening. 1 John 5:12 says, “He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” How simple. The only way we can receive immortal LIFE is to have Jesus in our lives. Those who go to “hell” have rejected Jesus, therefore they do not have life and cannot live forever. They are DEAD!

Keeping the Ten Commandments shows that you have Jesus living within you. That is the evidence that you have the Spirit of God living within you. By keeping the Ten Commandments; Jesus says He will give you eternal life. If you reject the Ten Commandments, you have rejected Jesus. Without Jesus you have no life. You are dead. The wages of sin is death; not life. Eternal death!

So when do the wicked get burned up? “At the time of Your appearing You will make them like a fiery furnace. In His wrath the Lord will swallow them up, and His fire will consume them.” Psalms 21:9.

So what are the “spirits” people claim to see or hear? They are the evil angels who were cast out of heaven with Lucifer. They impersonate Jesus and people in order to deceive. That is why the Bible condemns to death those who have any association with mediums or “speak” with the dead. They are not of God. When King Saul went to inquire of the medium, the person she “brought up” was not Samuel since God had rejected Saul. It was a demon. Therefore, King Saul died for his sin.