

Spiritualism and the Reward of the Saints

1. The First Lie

In Genesis 2:9 we read “And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” There is every reason to believe that the text wishes to describe two real, literal trees, both bearing fruit that could be picked and eaten. And yet the names of the trees express another reality.

The tree of life was essential for continued human life. Without eating continually from this tree, the human body would begin to lose its vitality and die. This is expressed in Genesis 3:22. “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:...” Eating from the tree of life would give immortality, the power to live for ever. But without the fruit of the tree of life, a man was mortal, subject to death at any moment. This verse tells something about the tree of knowledge of good and evil as well. Having eaten of that tree, a man would be able to distinguish for himself between good and evil.

But eating from the trees was mutually exclusive. One could not have both. One must choose between between them. Eating from the one represented the realization that life is dependent on God's continual providence. Eating from the other represented the desire for independence from God and the will to determine right and wrong on one's own behalf without reference to the divine will. That is why the trees were mutually exclusive. One cannot be both dependent on God and willfully independent from Him.

While we are no longer faced with the possibility of eating from either of the two trees in the garden, we are still faced with the mindsets of both. We may realize our complete dependence on God for life, the knowledge of what is right and wrong, and salvation and redemption. Or we may claim to be independently immortal, to have the right to define right and wrong for ourselves, and to attain salvation and redemption by our own human efforts. Strangely or not, this trinity of attitudes in both alternatives always seems to hang together.

When the tempter confronted Adam and Eve, he said to the latter “Ye shall not surely die.” Genesis 3:4. The lie was in contradicting the unalterable reality that one cannot be dependent on God for life and at the same time willfully reject God's definition of right and wrong for our own. If we choose independence, we choose death. But the lie returns. We want to believe that we can be immortal and independent of God.

With jubilant malice the human heart rejoices to see that the bite out of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil does not result in immediate entrance into the tomb. In that very day the vital link to the source of immortality is cut. But the body lingers on, slowly and imperceptibly sinking into silence and dissolution. The human rebellion blinds the eyes from realizing that the cold hand of death has already clutched the throat in which the bite from the fruit of the tree is still to be found. But even when the body is laid in the grave, the lie continues. Ye shall not surely die. The perverse desire to believe a lie causes the human mind to cling beyond all evidence of the senses that there is an immaterial human soul that survives death and the grave and lives and must live eternally. This lie is at the foundation of all false faiths and false hopes.

The foundation of true faith is in the ten commandments. False faith will deny one or more of these. It will insinuate that God is more than one. Thus arises trinitarianism and polytheism in all its forms both gross or appealing. False faith will insinuate that the Sabbath need not be kept, or that there are times when we must purposefully take the life of another

human being. After all, taking a human life is not so serious, since people do not really die, goes the justification. False faith always opens the door to lawlessness and violence. But behind it all is the lie “Ye shall not surely die.”

2. What is the Soul?

The Bible makes it clear what the living soul is from the very beginning. The first lie, that human beings do not really die when they die is so common, that God saw fit to tell us directly the truth about the soul from the very start, so that we need not be deceived. Genesis 2:7 says: “**And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.**”

From this text we can see that the living soul is made of the man formed from the dust of the ground. The body is part of the soul, and there is no soul without the body. The soul is not something immaterial and naturally immortal that leaves the body when a man dies. It is the body itself into which has been breathed the breath of life. When the breath of life of [spirit](#) that comes from God leaves the body, the living soul ceases to exist. The body returns to the dust from which it was created, and the breath of life or spirit returns to God who gave it. So Ecclesiastes 12:7 says: “**Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.**”

Given the fact that so many people have believed the first lie, it may come to mind that the spirit is something conscious and living that survives death and takes memories and personality with it back to God. But this is not so. The Bible clearly shows that there is no consciousness and no memory in death. Ecclesiastes 9:5,6 says: “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 any *thing* that is done under the sun.”

The experience of death is compared to a sleep, and [Yahushua](#) mentions this many times. So for example in John 11:11, he says: “**These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.**”

From these texts we know that the soul is visible and material. It comes into being when the breath of life is united to the body. It ceases to exist when the breath of life is separated from the body. There is no consciousness in death.

3. Communication with the dead

Many people believe that the dead are disembodied spirits who can communicate with the living. But what we have learned from the Bible about the soul and the [state of death](#), it is clear that such a thing is impossible. Still, thousands of people have experienced communication with what they think to be the spirits of departed loved ones or historical personages.

There are even some examples of such deception in the Bible itself. The most famous is the story of King Saul, who visited the witch of Endor. He saw the form of Samuel rising up from the grave and speaking to him and predicting his doom. The story begins thus in 1 Samuel 28:7. “**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.**”

4. What is a familiar spirit?

The very words of Saul and his servants reveal that they knew that Samuel did not really appear. They did not expect the real Samuel, but **a familiar spirit**. What is a familiar spirit? Matthew tells us directly, that such spirits are devils. “When

the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick:..."

But even if such spirits were the spirits of the dead, which they are not, the Bible vehemently condemns communication with them.

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)

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. (Lev 20:6)

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. (Deut 18:10-11)

And he made his son pass through the fire, and observed times, and used enchantments, and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke *him* to anger. (2Ki 21:6)

Moreover the *workers with* familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. (2Ki 23:24)

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)

And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. (Isa 19:3)

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. (Rev 16:13-14)

All of these warnings should be enough to keep people from consulting the dead. Such attempts result either in nothing at all, or they open the way for evil spirits to come in and seduce and deceive.

The belief that the soul is an immortal, immaterial, conscious entity is the lie that opens the door to the deceptions of Satan. Satan works such deception in all of the popular religious traditions. Muslims, Christians, Jews and pagans all believe the first lie. They are thus susceptible to deception. Devils impersonating the blessed virgin Mary have been seen with increasing frequency as unclean devils accelerate their mission of deceit. [Revelation 17 suggests that a devil will impersonate Pope John Paul II](#) and lead the world into destruction. Satan's greatest work of spiritism is the impersonation of Yahushua himself. We should not accept the claims of resurrection and miracles. There is one clear test to reveal whether a figure is authentic or not: those who proclaim the commandments of God, the ten commandments, are true. Those who deny one or more of them are false.

The purpose of impersonating the dead on the part of devils is to lead humankind into disobedience. Those who believe in the immortal soul will be led into destruction by the wiles of Satan.

5. The source of life

God only hath immortality according to the Scriptures. But He has redeemed humankind from the death that entered into the world through believing the first lie. Eternal life is available through Yahushua.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. (John 3:36)

Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. (John 6:27)

But these are written, that ye might believe that . . . [Yahushua] is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (John 20:31)

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:20)

He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. (1Jn 5:12)

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1Jn 5:13)

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son . . . [Yahushua] *the* Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. (1Jn 5:20)

While eternal life is given to those who have faith in Yahushua, we still see that people around us die. Unless we live to see the appearing of Christ at his second coming, we too shall die. So how do those who have faith in Christ enter eternal life in practice and in reality?

6. The Resurrection

Death results in the disappearance of the living soul. All that is left is the dust of the ground separated from the breath of life. There is neither consciousness nor memory. But that is not the end of matters.

For if we believe that . . . [Yahushua] died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in . . . [Yahushua] will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 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: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1Th 4:14-17)

From this passage we understand that those who have faith in Christ, if they have died, will be resurrected at his second coming. They will be resurrected to eternal life. At this time, only those who are given eternal life by the benefits of Christ's resurrection will come to life.

After the thousand years, the wicked will also be raised to face the penalty for their wickedness, which is eternal death. This is described in Revelation 20:11-15.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in

the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. (Rev 20:11-15)

7. Summary

- The living soul is made up of body and breath of life.
- The soul disappears at death, when body returns to the dust of the ground and the spirit returns to God.
- There is no consciousness or memory in death, but it is a sleep.
- The dead cannot communicate with the living.
- Spirits claiming to be the dead communicating with the living are seducing devils intending to destroy people.
- Evil spirits impersonating dead people have deceived all of the popular religious traditions, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, and pagan alike.
- Eternal life belongs only to those to whom Christ gives it.
- Those who receive eternal life will be resurrected to immortality at Christ's second coming.
- The wicked dead will be resurrected a thousand years later for a brief time to receive their punishment by fire and eternal death.