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MAY B. DEAD

Can the Dead
Really Speak to Us?

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Those in the Grave Will
Hear His Voice



COMING ISSUE



Heaven, Hell, Exposing the Myths

We've all seen the pictures: angelic beings floating on clouds strumming a harp, a red devil with little horns and a pitchfork stoking the fires of eternal hell. What are heaven and hell really like, and, more important, who or what determines your destination? Get the important facts in this enlightening issue.

Our Mission:

Hour Times, published by Remnant Publications, a nonprofit organization, is produced for the sole purpose of leading individuals, families and society to "A Better Way of Life," as found through God's Holy Word, the Bible. We believe that the Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God, its principles and counsel are as relevant and binding upon humanity today as they have been throughout the ages.



People of the "Look"?

By Cari Haus

A friend had just died in the prime of life, and two women of different faiths were discussing the tragedy.

"I'm so glad we don't believe as you do," said one to the other. "It's such a comfort for me to *know* that my loved ones are somewhere around, watching over and caring for me."

"But what about Ecclesiastes 9:5?" queried her friend. "Or other Bible verses that say the dead are asleep in their graves?"

"I don't care what the Bible says on this matter," retorted the first. "I know what I've seen and felt and heard. Not even the Bible could change my mind."

TWO CHRISTIAN VIEWS?

Obviously, these two women held extremely different views about the nature of "life after death." And this is just the tip of the theological iceberg, for while one was willing to test her faith on the clear Word of God, the other had joined the "experience" generation. She had an answer for her beliefs, but it was experiential rather than biblical.

Sadly, this woman is not alone. We live in an era where, perhaps more than any other time in earth's history, people are inclined to rest their faith on experience. As a people, we are more emotional than rational, more theatrical than realistic, more inclined to follow our hearts than our heads.

One of the reasons for this experience-oriented society is, of course, television. Through the miracle of the silver screen, most teenagers have probably "experienced" more robberies, rapes, murders, adulteries, drug busts and general chicanery than all their ancestors combined. When gripping, emotional, sensational scenes pass before our eyes, hour after hour, day after day, we are changed. Changed from readers to watchers, from believers to feelers, from Bible-quoting Christians to experience-oriented "people of the look."

The Bible tells us that in these last days the devil will go about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (See 1 Peter 5:8.) It also tells us that in the time of the end there will be deceptions so powerful that, if possible, even the very elect would be deceived. (See Matt. 24:24.)

As a mastermind of deception, the devil has a counterfeit for every Bible-based thread of theology, including what happens when people die. But it's up to us—as Bible-believing Christians—to follow the warning of Peter to "be sober, be vigilant" (1 Peter 5:8).

We must also be aware that experiences—the things

we see, hear, feel, taste and smell—are some of the most powerful tools in the hands of the devil. For while he can easily manipulate experience, he can't change the clear Word of the Lord. And the truth—the solid rock we can and must build our faith on if we would be saved at last—is based on the Bible rather than an ever-changing emotional experience. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

A farmer once remarked that, when plowing a field, the depth of his thoughts was affected by the length of his furrows. Through years of experience, he found that his thought patterns changed each time he turned in the field, which resulted in his simple equation: long furrows lead to deep thoughts. This farmer was, and still is, a deep thinker—a fact that was no doubt helped by the length of his fields.

HOW LONG ARE YOUR FURROWS?

How is it with you, friend? How long are your furrows? Here's a clue: if you spend much time in front of the TV, your furrows might be about six-seconds long. If you live a stress-filled, action-packed life where you feel more like an air-traffic controller at Chicago's O'Hare Airport than a peaceful, organized person, your furrows cannot be too long.

The topic of this issue, what happens when a person dies, is a difficult one. It addresses the deeply held, experience-based beliefs of millions, perhaps billions, of people.

Surveys have shown that nearly half of the Americans in the United States believe they have made contact with the dead. Their personal experience leaves them loath to consider any biblical evidence about the true source of that experience.

But it's up to us, in these challenging times, to hold all our experiences up to the light of God's Word. We must plow long furrows, drink deep from the cisterns, be strong in the Word, if we would unmask the devil's disguises.

Consider the example of Jesus, who, in His hour of wilderness temptation, experienced great physical hunger, a mountaintop view of the nations, and even a "peak" from the pinnacle of the temple. Yet He planted His feet firmly on God's Word, answering the devil with an "it is written" no fewer than three times.

May this faith of Jesus—this Bible-based, even experience-denying faith—be yours as you consider this important issue of *Hour Times*. And may we all plow long furrows. ✠

One of the reasons for this experience-oriented society is, of course, television.

Does Jesus care when I've said goodbye
To the dearest on earth to me,
And my sad heart aches till it nearly breaks—
Is it aught to Him? Does He see?
O yes, He cares—I know He cares!
His heart is touched with my grief;
When the days are weary,
the long nights dreary,
I know my Savior cares.
—Frank E. Graeff

“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.”—David, in Psalm 23:4 (KJV)

“The Bible opens with a tragedy and ends in a triumph.

“In Genesis we see the devastation of sin and death, but in the Revelation we glimpse God’s glorious victory over sin and death. . . .

“But what is the basis of the Christian’s hope of eternal life? Is our hope of life after death merely wishful thinking or blind optimism? Can we have any certainty that there is life after death and that some day those who know Christ will go to be with Him throughout eternity?

“Yes! There is one great fact which gives the Christian assurance in the face of death: the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the physical, bodily resurrection of Christ that gives us confidence and hope.”—Billy Graham, *Unto the Hills*, 269-270

“We will not all sleep in death, but we will all be changed. It will

take only a second—as quickly as an eye blinks—when the last trumpet sounds. The trumpet will sound, and those who have died will be raised to live forever, and we will all be changed. This body that can be destroyed must clothe itself with something that can never be destroyed. And this body that dies must clothe itself with something that can never die. . . . When this happens, this Scripture will be made true: ‘Death is destroyed forever in victory.’”—Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 (New Century Version)

“Whoever believes in me will live, even though he dies.”—Jesus, in John 11:25 (TEV)

“The valley of the shadow of death holds no darkness for the child of God. There must be light, else there could be no shadow. Jesus is the light. He has overcome death.”—Dwight L. Moody

“Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou

art not so . . .

One short sleep past, we wake eternally

And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.”

—John Donne, *Holy Sonnet 10*

“Only when one is no longer afraid to die is one no longer afraid at all.”—Peter Marshall, *A Man Called Peter*

“Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven, He cries: ‘Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!’ Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live.”—Ellen White, *The Great Controversy*, 644

The Body of
Benjamin Franklin
Printer

(Like the cover of an old book

Its contents torn out
And striped of its lettering
and gilding)

Lies here, food for worms.
But the work shall not be lost
For it will (as he believed)
appear once more
In a new and more elegant
edition

Revised and corrected
by
The Author.

—Benjamin Franklin’s epitaph
(written by himself)

We value the opinions and thoughts of our readers. Please share how *Hour Times* has made an impact on your life. Your feedback is essential to our success. Thank you.

Hour Times P.O. Box 426, Coldwater, MI 49036



Illustration by R. Ayres

Those in the Grave Will Hear His Voice

By Jay Gallimore

Why do we live? Why do we die? What happens when we die? Is there any hope beyond the grave? No living person can escape these questions, for they are at the heart of our very troubled existence. Evolution cannot explain the mystery of why we live and then die. Oh, we know that cells are programmed to reproduce themselves only a few times. But why? Who made up the program? Where does a person turn for answers? Real answers!

"Spare us the lies and the speculations. Just give us the truth." At least, that is my attitude. To my knowledge these questions are answered by only three sources, and each source has a different answer:

THREE SOURCES OF ANSWERS

Atheism

The first source of "answers" to these important life questions is atheism, which rejects the supernatural, all-knowing, all-powerful and everywhere-present God. Using the modern "god," often called science, it will tell you that the grave is a black hole from which there is no return. Like the ancient Romans, atheism lives on the philosophy that it is best to "eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die." It has no answers to the other "whys."

Governments continue to spend billions of dollars asking science to find out "why." Yet the great mysteries of life and death are too big for a test tube. Science can often explain the mechanics of living and dying, but it cannot discover why. Today, after spending huge

amounts of money and time, it still has only hopelessness to offer the human race.

Paganism and the Occult

The second source of "answers" is the pagan/occult world.

"People are spiritual beings" has been the message of this world for centuries. "When a person dies, only the body dies." The pagan/occult world teaches that you have an immortal soul, or spirit, that will go on living, thinking and being after you die. For them, death is only a "stepping stone," which allows people to move on to new and exciting places in the spirit world.

Since the spirit is thought always to be living and thinking, many believe you can contact or at least pray to these spirits. Enormous amounts of time and money are spent on attempting such encounters, and often it appears that something supernatural is indeed being contacted. But what? Are these really the spirits of the dead, or something else? We will answer those questions as we examine the third source of answers to life's questions, the Bible.

The Bible

The Bible, as the third source of life's awesome questions, offers a set of answers that are ancient, simple and straightforward.

Question 1: Why Do We Exist?

Genesis, the first book of the Bible, tells us why we live. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1*). We

Evolution cannot explain the mystery of why we live and then die.

live because He created us to live, think and choose. We were created out of His great heart of love. Until He formed us, we did not exist. It was for His own personal joy that He made and fashioned us in His image.

Question 2: How May We Continue Living?

We must understand that for life to exist, harmony had to exist. Obedience to God's law produces harmony. No harmony equals no life! Loving our Creator with all our heart and our neighbor as ourself is the basis of all harmony.

We know we ought to obey, but we don't know how. It seems as if our best intentions are like ropes of sand. What then is the secret of obeying God's laws? The secret was made available to our first parents: "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'" (Gen. 2:16-17).

The command gave them a choice, not an explanation. The secret of obedience was simply this: Would they trust God? Would they have faith in Him who created them? To trust is to obey. To disbelieve is to disobey. The cause and effect are simple. God told Adam and Eve in so many words, if you choose not to trust Me and eat of this forbidden tree, you will die.

Question 3: What Is Death?

God did not say, "Your body will die, but you will go on living in spirit form." No, He simply said that you will die if you disobey Me. Death is the opposite of life. You cannot die and go on living. God's simple but absolute message to Adam and Eve and the human race is trust and obey Me and live. It is still God's message today. It is the message of Jesus in John 3:16. It is Paul's New Testament message, "The just shall live by faith [in God]" (Rom. 1:17).

When the serpent told Eve, "You will not surely die" (Gen. 3:4), he lied! The pagan/occult-based religions have been telling the same lie for millennia. The only way sin can be resisted is to trust the One who created us. If we trust ourselves or anyone or anything else, sin and its awful consequences are the sure result. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). This is not complicated. God is the source of all life. No being can live without a connec-

tion with Him. Our faith in Him is our connection to life. When Adam and Eve broke that connection, they and all their children were plunged into

Is the grave a black hole from which there is no return?

darkness. Natural faith in God was lost. Sinful behavior was the sure result. Because of this we are born into death. We are "born to die," as my grandmother used to say.

Question 4: What Happens When You Die?

Then what happens when we die? Are the atheists right? Is the grave a black hole from which there is no return? Is life simply here today and gone tomorrow? To answer that question, let us first discover the three steps the Creator took in making Adam:

1. The first thing the Bible says is that God "formed man of the dust of the ground" (Gen. 2:7). In other words, God took the earth and formed the brain, heart, kidneys and all the marvelous systems that make us what we are.

2. When that was completed, God did the second thing: "He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (ibid). This breath of life is the same word for spirit, or wind. This is the life principle that comes from God Himself, who is spirit.

3. The third thing was the result. The Bible simply says man "became a living being" (ibid). The New Testament reflects this union when it describes man as being body, soul and spirit. When spirit and body come together under God's creative hand, the result is a living being, or a living soul. We are not simply a body, we are also spiritual beings. God relates to us as spiritual beings because He Himself is a spirit. Body and spirit make us a *living* soul.

But what happens when we die? When God told Adam that because of sin he would die, He said, "Dust you are, and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:19). Those words had deep meaning. All of the human race knows that at death the body begins to decay, and it returns to dust. This happens once the life principle, or spirit, has returned to God, who gave it (see Eccl. 12:7).

So, when the body, because of disease or old age, can no longer support the spirit, or life principle, it dies and

returns to dust. So what is left when the body loses the breath of life? According to Scripture, the spirit, or life principle, returns to God (ibid).

This life principle is not a living, thinking entity all on its own. It is the life current, or the power, which came from God in the first place.

But what happens to the soul? Here is where the Bible and paganism part ways. It is a shock to some to discover that the body, minus the breath, does not leave a living, thinking soul, or spirit, that goes to heaven, hell or purgatory. Instead, it leaves a *dead* soul, or being. The Bible is clear: "The soul who sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:4).

There is no question that there is a dead being, or soul, left at death. When Jesus told His disciples about the evil men they would encounter and the persecutions they would endure, He comforted them by saying, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). Jesus makes it clear that there is a body and a soul. We know what happens to the body—it decays. We know what happens to the spirit, or life principle—it returns to God. But what happens to the soul? Does it go on living and thinking, or does it go to sleep until the morning of the resurrection? Let the Bible answer.

Question 5: What Happens to the Soul at Death?

The Bible is very clear about a person's condition in death. It says, "For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing" (Eccl. 9:5). One day, at North Carolina State University, I was talking to a group of Moonies. Moonies are basically new age, or pagan, in their beliefs with a covering of Christianity. They were explaining to us that only the body dies at death, but your soul goes on living. I raised my hand and quoted the above verse.

"No problem," said our teacher. He drew a line on the board. Above the line he put the body. Below the line he put emotion, love, thinking, etc. "The things below this line go on living," he said. "Do you know what the next verse says?" I asked. "No," he answered. Then I finished quoting the passage; "Their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; nevertheless will they have a share in anything done under the sun" (Eccl. 9:5).

My Moonie friend who “believed” the Bible did not know what to say.

Listen to some more Scripture: David said, “The dead do not praise the LORD, nor any who go down into silence” (Ps. 115:17). Peter said of David, “For David did not ascend into the heavens” (Acts 2:34). In both the Old and New Testaments, death is described over and over as a “sleep.” (See 1 Kings 14:20, 31, 15:8, 24). Jesus, who has the “keys of hell and of death” (Rev. 1:18, KJV), said this about our condition in death. Speaking of His friend Lazarus, He said, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps. . . . Then Jesus said to them plainly, Lazarus is dead” (John 11:11, 14).

If death puts our soul, or personal identity, to sleep, and we know nothing, then where do we go at death? The Bible again is very clear. The dead are in the graves. It is not merely talking about the dead body. According to Paul, we will get a new body at the resurrection. (See 1 Cor. 15:52, 53.) The old body is not coming out of the grave. Jesus is very clear about where the dead are: “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth” (John 5:28). Daniel is just as clear when he speaks of the end of time. He says, “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake” (Dan. 12:2).

Something in the grave wakes up when Jesus calls, and He clothes it with a new body like His. That something is a person’s sleeping soul, or personal identity. No one can see the soul anymore than the breath of life, or life principle. All we can see is the body. Jesus does not place the dead in hell or heaven, but in the grave. The dead stay there until the morning of the resurrection. The atheists teach that you are nothing but a body. The pagans teach that you are really an immortal, undying soul that will go on living regardless of the death of the body. The Bible teaches that you are made a living soul, or being, by being clothed with a body and made alive with the life principle of God’s power.

Death is the reverse of this. When your body can no longer sustain God’s life principle, and the two are separated, you simply go to sleep. While you are sleeping in the grave, you are unconscious and unaware of anything. However, when you are clothed with

a new body and endowed with the life principle of God on the morning of the resurrection, you wake up. Your thoughts start right where they stopped. It’s as if the pause button was pushed on a tape recorder. When it is released, it starts right where it stopped. You must have all three—body, soul and spirit—as one, before you can be a *living, thinking* soul, or being, again.

The Bible presents the resurrection, not an immortal spirit, or soul, as our hope of living again. The resurrection hope pervades our New Testament. When Lazarus died, Martha and Mary, who were close friends of Jesus, testified to their hope of a future resurrection. (See John 11:24.) For example, at baptism, a person is lowered in the water, or symbolically buried in the grave. He or she is then raised from the water, or symbolically resurrected from the grave. Listen to Paul: “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death. . . . Certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Rom. 6:4, 5).

When Adam sinned, he plunged the whole human race into death. We needed a Savior, or the grave would have become our eternal black hole.

From the second death, there is no return.

It would have held us captive through the ceaseless ages of eternity. We were in need of someone to rescue us, someone who was able to open the gate of our prison and let us out. We needed help. We needed 911. We were in a very desperate condition. God’s answer was, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

This is profound and yet simple. Our disobedience demanded our death. God is not irresponsible. He will not, and cannot, give life to those who destroy life. Sinners destroy life. Justice and fairness to the rest of the universe demanded the sinner’s eternal death. What was God’s answer to this? He gave to us His only begotten Son. His Son became a human. He became our substitute. He took our place. He could do so because He is worth more than all of us. He is worth more than the universe because He,

as God and with God, created it all.

What is worth the most, the Creator or the created? The Artist or the art? Jesus died our death and took our penalty on Calvary’s cross. He satisfied the justice of God for us, because we cannot satisfy that justice and live. Yet He lived a sinless life. He was as innocent as a lamb. His faith and obedience, savaged by temptation, remained unbroken. On the basis of His faith and obedience, God had a right to call Him from the grave so that in turn, Jesus might call us from the grave.

By His life and death, Jesus has given the human race another chance. If we accept Him by faith, our sins can be forgiven, and we can be changed into new creatures. This life we now have is probation. We can choose the Messiah and the life He offers, or we can choose to live our own way. This is why there are two kinds of deaths and two different resurrections. Jesus was very plain about this. One cannot miss what He teaches. Here are His words: “Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:28, 29).

In other words, if you die with your faith in Christ, you will be raised in the resurrection with a new body and will never, ever die again. The bad news is that if you die without faith in Christ as your Savior, you will be resurrected for judgment and die the second death. It is this death that the Bible says is to be feared. From the second death, there is no return. In this second death the soul, or personal identity, is not allowed to sleep waiting for another resurrection. It, along with the body, is totally annihilated. From this death there is no hope.

Our only hope is to respond to the words of John in Revelation: “Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17). Jesus offers everlasting life to anyone who will trust Him to be his or her Savior. He alone holds the keys to the grave. He alone is the resurrection and the life. (See John 11:25.) ❧

*All Bible texts are quoted from the New King James Version, unless otherwise specified.



Use King James Version for answers.

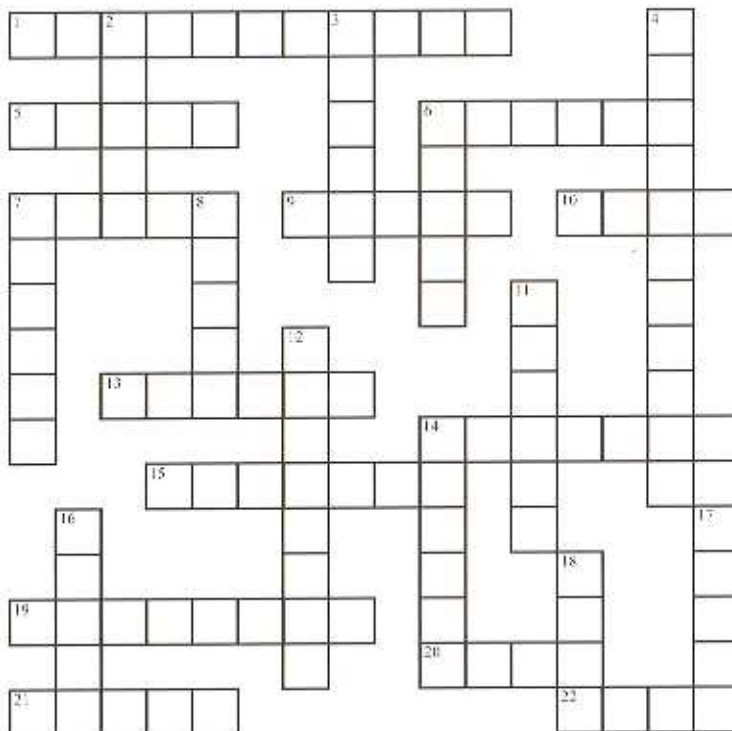
Study to show thyself approved . . . rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Tim. 2:15.

Across

1. Peter described the devil as a _____ (2 wds.)(1 Peter 5:8)
5. Number of days and nights it rained during the flood (Genesis 7:12)
6. "By their _____, ye shall know them" (Matthew 7:20)
7. Tasted like wafers made of honey (Exodus 16:31)
9. Number of churches John wrote to in Revelation (Revelation 1:4)
10. Jesus' mother (Matthew 1:18)
13. He killed thousands of enemies while blind (Judges 16:21-30)
14. King who threatened to cut a baby in two (1 Kings 3:15-27)
15. Alternate name for Dorcas (Acts 9:36)
19. Moses' wife (Exodus 18:2)
20. "I am the way, the truth, and the _____" (John 14:6)
21. Number of days Saul (Paul) was blind (Acts 9:8-9)
22. Judas betrayed Jesus with a _____ (Luke 22:47-48)

Down

2. He was pressured into making a golden calf (Exodus 32:1-4)
3. Not even Solomon was arrayed like these (Matthew 6:28-29)
4. "Pride goeth before _____" (Proverbs 16:18)
6. "The word was made _____" (John 1:14)
7. Mount where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22:2)
8. Moses' father (Exodus 6:20)
11. Sea creatures must have fins and _____ to be permissible as food (Deuteronomy 14:9)
12. What relative was David to King Saul? (1 Samuel 18:27)
14. Boy who assisted Eli (1 Samuel 3:1)
16. The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1)
17. Who said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me"? (Acts 9:4-5)
18. "Blessed are the _____ for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5)



Answers

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Photo by Q. Viduan

Can the Dead Really Speak to Us?

By Joe Crews

JFK Jr. Princess Diana. Sonny Bono. Mother Teresa. The world has been shocked by the death of these and other celebrities in the past few years. Icons all, they represented something deeply cultural to every one of us.

But are these dead really "gone"? Or are they, as some would suggest, still very much alive?

"I know it's Sonny," Cher tells the world. Because "James [the celebrated medium she is using to 'contact' her late ex-husband] tells me things that nobody but Sonny and I could have known."

Cher is not alone in trying to contact the "underworld." According to Andrew Greeley, professor of sociology at the University of Chicago and renowned author, about 40% of Americans have had an experience with someone coming back from the dead. The figure is even higher for widows and widowers, 60% of whom believe they have either seen or communicated with their lost loved ones.

One Gallup poll found that at least one out of every four Americans now believes in reincarnation. Another poll, taken by the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Council, found that two million Americans believe they have had either out-of-body or near-death experiences. More than 20 million are turning to psychics, and a good number of these, tired of having to rely on a middleman, are learning how to channel themselves. In addition, two thirds of Americans believe they have experienced ESP (extra-sensory perception). As

The New York Times once reported, "A mounting tide of fascination with the supernatural is engulfing businessmen, housewives, military officers and artists."

A list of the "rich and famous" who have been known or rumored to "contact" the dead ranges from Cher to Boris Yeltsin, from Hillary Clinton and Princess Diana to President Lincoln and his wife.

A few short years ago, the stories of apparitions and spirit forms simply weren't taken seriously. Reports of "ghostly" encounters were seen as so ludicrous, they weren't even reported by the media. Yet today, scarcely a paper or magazine can be found that doesn't cater to astrology, psychic phenomena, or sensational supernaturalism. Long, ominous shadows are lengthening across the face of America today, cast by a dozen different forms of occult spiritualism. Meanwhile, the tentacles of this fast-growing evil are fastening a strange hold upon millions of devotees.

WHAT IS GOING ON?

This is the question on millions of lips today. Or, to be more specific, "Whom are these people who claim to have contact with the dead really speaking to?"

Is this some kind of massive delusion? Are the apparitions real, or imagined? And what power lies behind the confirmed accounts of materialized spirit forms?

"Whom are these people who claim to have contact with the dead really speaking to?"

The phenomena can no longer be ignored! The claims have come far too close to every one of us. Hardly a person has escaped contact with someone who has an incredible tale to tell about communication with the dead.

Often the manifestations are anything but ghostly and sepulchral. After their sudden appearance, the familiar forms of deceased friends and relatives are recognized by distinctive clothes, voices and mannerisms. Often they refer to closely guarded family secrets and pass on verifiable information known only by one or two others alive.

Some people have confirmed that they make no important decisions without consulting a spiritualist medium who, in turn, supposedly puts them in touch with the guiding spirits of the dead. Even high government figures have confessed to consulting with such sources before moving in matters of national interest.

A CAUSE FOR CONCERN?

Do we have reason for concern over this situation? Can these supernatural agencies be depended upon to give safe and honorable guidance?

And what about all the related forms of occultism whose tendrils seem to intertwine every existing social structure of humanity today? Satanism, witchcraft, ESP, hypnotism, Zen, astrology, voodoo and a dozen other so-called "mind sciences" purport to bring happiness and success beyond imagination.

ONLY TWO SOURCES

To answer these crucial questions we must uncover the foundations of these mysterious movements, facing the inescapable conclusion that there can be only two sources of supernatural power in the world. Whether we believe in God, and whether we believe in Satan, honest reason demands that anything beyond the demonstrable, natural processes would have to involve either the spiritual powers of a god or a devil.

If these insistent voices that have influenced empires truly represent God's counsel, then we must rejoice over this growing influence. On the other hand, if evil, satanic forces are producing the same phenomena, we

are facing one of the most diabolical and frightening schemes imaginable. What could be more self-delusive than following demon voices in the belief that they are the voice of God?

GOD'S WAY

Please take note that God's method of communicating with people is through His Word: "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" (Isa. 8:19, 20).

In other words, knowledge beyond human power should be gathered from God's Word rather than "familiar spirits." In contrast to God's way of communicating with people, spiritualism is rooted in the idea that communication is carried on between the living and the dead—that the dead are not really dead at all, but are living in some other world of higher wisdom and understanding.

Unfortunately, spiritualism is shaping even the thinking of Christian leaders to an alarming degree today. But is this doctrine according to the law and the testimony? How does all this fit in with the teaching of God's Word? What does the Bible have to say about it? Let us examine some of the sources of spiritualism.

The fact is, it started in the Garden of Eden when Satan utilized the serpent medium. In Genesis 3:1-4, we read the story of Eve's fall into sin. God had said that death would follow

Adam and Eve's transgression, but Satan said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." When Adam and Eve did die, Satan shrewdly tried to cover his lie. Ever since that day, he has tried to make it appear that death is not really death—that it is actually life, instead.

Because Satan used it to perpetuate his lie, God strictly forbade the practice of communicating with the "spirit world." Notice these statements from the book of Leviticus: "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be de-

filed by them: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. 19:31). Again, "A man or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death" (Lev. 20:27).

Now, why is God so opposed to this thing? Why such a severe penalty for engaging in spiritualistic seances? Because it is a devil-inspired lie, that's why. It is unsound and antiscritptural throughout.

"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" (Ecc. 9:5, 6).

Again, describing death, God said, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Ps. 146:4). Death is a sleep until the resurrection day, an unconscious, dreamless sleep. Since the dead cannot possibly come back to speak to their loved ones, how can we explain these mysterious appearances of those who have died?

Numerous instances could be cited of such experiences where the exact form and voice were seen and heard. There is only one possible source for such demonstrations. Satan is still trying to sustain the lie he once told to Eve. He is still trying to prove there is no death. He appears

Unfortunately, spiritualism is shaping even the thinking of Christian leaders to an alarming degree today.

in whatever form he chooses, shrewdly imitating the characteristics of the dead. Such lying wonders are well calculated to deceive and convince people that a lie is actually the truth.

Notice how this work of Satan is described in God's Word: "Even him, 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; because they received not the love of the truth, that

they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. 2:9-11).

Here we are told that the truth alone will guard us from the signs and wonders of Satan's power. In 1 Timothy 4:1 we read of some in the last days who will give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. Finally, in Revelation 16:14, the prophet de-

There is no communication between the living and the dead.

scribes "spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world."

Don't forget that the devil can work miracles. (See Rev. 16:14.) He can do things that we never will understand. Now we can begin to understand why people have been so shaken up by the apparent appearance of dead friends. After 6,000 years of observing human behavior, Satan is able to counterfeit their forms and voices cleverly. At psychologically weak moments, Satan takes advantage of heartbroken, bereaved relatives to perpetuate his fraud. No wonder God despises this evil and sentences its leaders to death by stoning.

FLEEING SPIRITUALISM

In the last days Satan will appear as an angel of light, seeking to counterfeit God's truth. But remember, he is the father of lies. (See John 8:44.) He was cast out of heaven once because of that, and he is going to work mightily in these days to deceive, twist the truth, and try to lead us to believe this great delusion.

The dead are sleeping. They are not conscious at all. There is no communication between the living and the dead. Only by believing the Bible truth can we escape the deceptions of Satanism.

With time running out and the end of the world at hand, Satan is desperately working to revive the old, forbidden avenues by which he can control people's lives. He has changed names such as *vizards*, *neromancy*, and *sorceners* to more acceptable titles such as *spiritualism*, *astrology*, *lypnoisis* and *ESP*.

WHAT ABOUT FORTUNETELLERS?

Now someone is certain to raise the question right here about the predictions of some of these modern prognosticators. Are they able to foretell the future accurately? Are they true prophets? "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).

This means that those who are teaching and acting contrary to the Scripture cannot be true prophets. There are false as well as true prophets, according to Jeremiah. Listen: "Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers. . . . For they prophesy a lie unto you" (Jer. 27:9, 10).

If these occult specialists could actually know the future, I can tell you one thing—they would be billionaires by being able to manipulate the stock market. By their foretelling of politics, they would surely dictate the headlines of tomorrow's newspapers. But this has not been the case. Eight hundred years before Christ was born, the prophet Isaiah set up a divinely appointed test for those pretending such power: "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen; let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods" (Isa. 41:21-23).

A TRUE TEST

What about that test for today's predictors? God says, "Let them show us what will happen"—not just once in a while—not 75 percent of the time. A good guesser could do that. An astute politician could be right that many times. No, if God is in it, it will always be 100 percent correct. Neither Satan nor people can tell the future, except on the basis of the past and in the light of Bible prophecy. But the very thing that people and evil spirits have never been able to do, God

has done again and again by His prophets.

Outside the Word of God no claims such as these have ever been made and fulfilled, either on a short-term or long-term basis. Here is where the nonsense of astrology is most clearly revealed. Its absurd generalizations and warnings, based on the supposed mysterious influence of stars on human destiny, have never been proven to be accurate. Millions can be cheered or dismayed by the implications of the horoscope. Did you know that the Bible speaks directly to such people? Listen to this in Jeremiah 10:2: "Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them."

There it is—an actual description of astrologers who become fearful and dismayed over the signs of the heavens. What a time this is for people to trust in the God who made those stars.

AN ORGANIZED EVIL

The truth is that all forms of new age, occult and/or mysticism have their foundation in the government of Satan. The Bible tells us that Satan's legions of fallen angels are organized into levels of evil authority. While God administers His program of life, healing and restoration through the messengers of light, Satan uses evil angels to propagate confusion and deception.

What a picture of the great controversy as it is played out on a cosmic scale and also in the lives of struggling individuals! Spirits from another world are mobilizing forces beyond our comprehension in preparation for the final engagement between good and evil. Nor one of us is an innocent bystander in this contest. None can be neutral as the issues of truth and error separate the inhabitants of planet Earth into two mighty camps. With whose angels will we cooperate, or even communicate? Where will our loyalties be placed? May God grant that we shall be found at last on the side of those ministering angels who will continue to be our companions throughout all eternity, world without end. ☩



Exercise

By Vicki B. Griffin, Ph.D., MACN, Author, Lecturer, Researcher

MANY AMERICANS ARE STAGING PERPETUAL SIT-INS

Literally! According to a recent study of nearly 10,000 people, 54 percent said they did little or nothing during their leisure time. There are an estimated 250,000 deaths each year directly attributable to lack of exercise, and for this reason the Center for Disease Control and the American College of Sports Medicine recommend that Americans engage in at least 39 minutes of exercise daily. (I suppose you could throw in an extra minute for good measure.)

CHILDREN AT RISK

Children are also becoming alarmingly sedentary. Ideally, children in grades 1 through 12 should get at least a daily 30-minute physical education class, but only 36 percent do, according to the Presidents Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. That is one reason why 40 percent of children as young as 5 already exhibit at least one heart disease risk factor such as obesity, diabetes or elevated cholesterol. Alarming, a recent report from the American Heart Association revealed that the more risk factors a person has for heart disease, the greater the risk of developing memory and learning impairments. Each risk factor carries with it a 23% increased risk of mental impairment! Conversely, numerous studies show

that exercise actually boosts the ability of both young and old to pay attention and learn. That includes enhanced memory, concentration, cognition, creativity and word fluency.

SITTING DOWN AND DOWN IN THE DUMPS

Apparently, all this immobility isn't making us very happy, either, and may be contributing to the rising levels of stress, tension and anxiety that Americans are experiencing. A new survey of 1,000 adults found that depression, anxiety and psychological problems actually impair physical and social functioning and overall quality of life more than do common medical disorders such as arthritis and diabetes. Nearly 15 million Americans suffer clinical depression each year.

STRESS CAUSES DEPRESSION

Depression is often associated with chronic stress. Aside from dietary practices that promote stress, such as nicotine, caffeine and refined sugar consumption, lack of exercise is a major lifestyle stressor, which promotes depression, tension and anxiety. A major study of 8,000 adults revealed that the less active a person was, the more depressed he or she was likely to be. Regular exercise significantly boosted mood, regardless of the level of depression the individual suffered at the beginning of the study. The Bible says in Proverbs 19:15 that "slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep, and an idle soul shall suffer hunger." Although the Scripture obviously has broader significance, one of the meanings for the word *sleep* is "drooping in spirit," "faint" or "dull"—just what we feel when we don't get exercise!

EXERCISE: IT CAN GO TO YOUR HEAD

Did you know that regular daily exercise not only increases overall health and muscle tone but also mental sharpness, mood, concentration and self-esteem? One interesting study showed that just a 10-minute brisk walk will yield one hour of increased energy and reduced tension, whereas a sugar snack will ultimately result in fatigue and tension.

LEARN A LESSON FROM DR. LINK

The following true story took place in the 1930s. A discouraged, despondent man came to see Dr. Harry Link, a famous doctor in New York City. He had lost his job.

Fast Facts

- Adequate choline in the diet of pregnant mothers is important for the proper development of memory in their infants. *Science Daily 1998.* Note: Choline is widely distributed in plant tissues; a rich source is found in lecithin.
- One to five cups of coffee a day increases heart attack risk by 60%, six or more by 120%. *JAMA*


Nobody loved him anymore. He wanted to commit suicide to end his troubles. Dr. Link explained that he had been too sedentary, and had exercised only his mind and neglected his body. "I will give you a program of manual work," he said, "and soon you will be feeling better." "I don't like manual work," said the man. "I don't want to work. I want to commit suicide."

The doctor did his best to persuade the man to accept a program of work, but it was no use, and at last in exasperation he said, "All right then, commit suicide. But if you do, why not do something out of the ordinary, something heroic, and get into the headlines when you die." The man liked the idea. "What do you suggest, doctor?" he asked. The doctor said, "I have never heard of a man running himself to death. If you want to get into the headlines, run around the block until you drop dead, and every newspaper will have it on the front page." "That's what I'm going to do," said the man, and off he went.

He went home, wrote his letter of farewell, then started running. He ran and he ran, but he couldn't drop dead. He got so tired he said, "I'll have to finish it tomorrow night." He went back home and slept better than he had for a long time. The next night he ran again, around and around; but he couldn't drop dead, and—you've guessed it—he didn't drop dead at all! He literally ran himself back to health and strength!

CONCLUSION

Now, we are not suggesting such a drastic program!

But the good news is that you can make a decision about your health, your lifestyle, which will promote not only physical wellness by reducing the risk and progression of heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis, kidney disease, diabetes and cancer but also will improve mental health. What is the best form of exercise? For alleviating stress and maximizing pleasure, try vigorous but not violent, cooperative but not competitive activities. Brisk walking, hiking, bicycling, swimming, canoeing, chores like splitting wood, gardening, jumping on a trampoline, stair-climbing, stationary exercise machines—all provide good, non-jarring activity. With the help of God, will you choose to make moderate exercise—at least 20 minutes twice a day—a God-ordained priority in your life? 

**Just a 10
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recipes

TASTY TOFU NEATBALLS

Ingredients:

- 1 C Coarsely chopped walnuts OR pecans, toasted at 200° for 15 min.
- 1 1/2 C Soft bread crumbs
- 1 Large tofu block
- 3 Tb Gluten flour
- 2 Tb Onion powder
- 3 Tb Dried parsley
- 2 tsp Salt
- 1 tsp Sage
- 1 tsp Marjoram
- 1/4 C Nutritional yeast flakes

Directions:

- Mash or knead thoroughly with hands.
- Roll into balls and place on sprayed

cookie sheet.

- Bake at 325° for 30 minutes.
- Makes approximately 40 tofu balls (8 balls per cup).

Serving Suggestions:

- This one is delicious with spaghetti sauce or baked in a casserole and served over rice or toast.
- These fabulous "meat" balls are great as an entree, too. Just smother them with some gravy or spaghetti sauce and serve with potatoes and vegetables.
- Try slicing them cold onto a hot dog or hamburger bun, topped with Campfire Bar-B-Que sauce for a quick, wholesome lunch.
- Anything you can do with meatballs you can do with NeatBalls!



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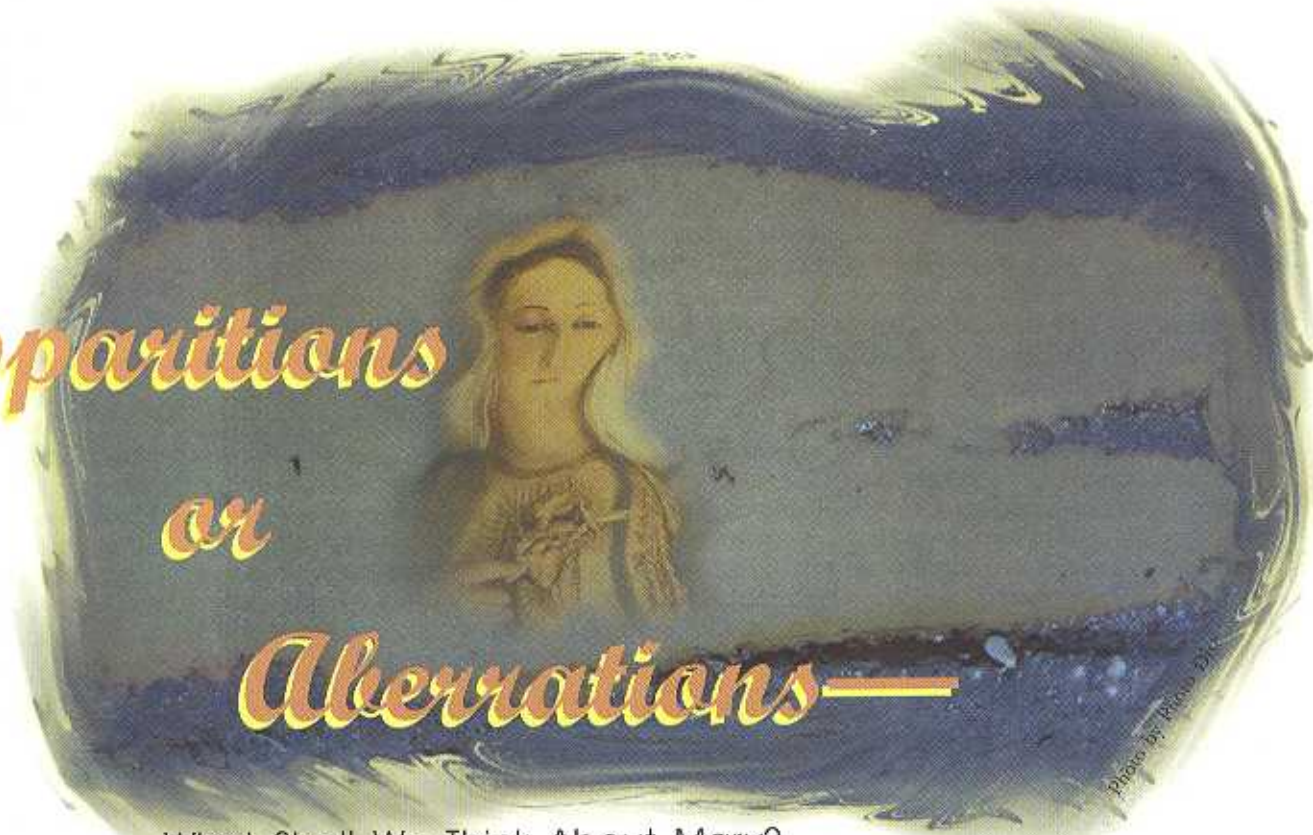
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Apparitions

or

Aberrations—



What Shall We Think About Mary?

By Cari Haus

Not too long ago, if someone had told you that the Virgin Mary would take on worldwide significance as a religious figure, most people would have thought the very idea to be an incredible fantasy—a flight of the wildest imagination. If a psychic had predicted that “Mary” would appear repeatedly and, seemingly, everywhere, admonishing the saints and foretelling the future, he or she would have been laughed to scorn.

Times have changed, however. Today, pictures of the weeping Madonna grace the front cover of more than a few national newsmagazines. Books have been written and talk shows hosted—all focused and speaking freely about “her.” Countless thousands spend

their precious time and money to visit her shrines. Meanwhile, her “appearances” have spread to every continent.

Yes, there is definitely an apparitional woman going around, calling herself the Virgin Mary. She appears openly to people, giving them inspirational messages. Speaking convincingly of the end of

time, she predicts the soon return of Christ.

AN IMPORTANT MISSION

It’s easy to see why the world would welcome the “Virgin Mary” as God’s special last-day envoy. To many, she is the last great hope for world peace. Just imagine if the Virgin Mary could:

- reconcile Israel and her Arab neighbors to work together for the common good of peace, prosperity and happiness;
- bring love and friendship to the war-torn country of Rwanda; or
- cure the hatred between the Serbs and Muslims in Bosnia.

How the world would love her! The people of this world long for peace, and this is right. Yet the Bible tells us that just when people think they have really found “peace and safety,” sudden destruction comes like a whirlwind. (See 1 Thess 5:3.) Jesus Himself, though He will give this tired earth peace in the world made new, said at His first coming that He “did not come to bring peace but a sword” (Matt.10:34, NKJV).

So we have to be careful where our “peace” is coming from. And before believing the “Virgin Mary” or any other paranormal events, we need to ask ourselves some

Yes, there is definitely an apparitional woman going around, calling herself the Virgin Mary.

pretty serious questions, such as:

- Is this really the Virgin Mary, as so many thousands and, yes, millions believe?
- Could she possibly be something else?
- If she is something else, what else?

It's very interesting to note that Jesus predicted that He Himself would be impersonated. If Jesus Himself, being the Messiah, would be impersonated, is it reasonable to believe that the apostles and other great Christian leaders, including Mary, might be impersonated as well?

In answering this question, let's turn to the pages of God's holy book, the Bible. It is there—not in the pages of human feeling, experience or emotion—but in the pages of God's inspired Word, that we will find the answer to this question. The Bible tells us that there is another power endeavoring to subvert the Savior's work through disguise.

In Genesis 3:16, God predicted that there would be enmity between Satan and "the woman." "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed."

Believers in the supernatural ministry of the Virgin Mary believe that the woman spoken of by this text is none other than the "Holy Mother" of Jesus. Pointing to this text, they say it proves that Mary would intercede for fallen humanity.

Of course, we can't accept this as fact without also considering other portions of the Scripture. Most important in this study is Revelation, chapter 12, where John describes a pregnant woman clothed with the sun. She has the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of 12 stars. Her child, who is described as destined to rule all nations of the world with a rod of iron, is caught up to God and to His throne. There is no doubt that this man-child is the literal Christ. (See Revelation 19:15.)

But who is His mother?

LITERAL OR SPIRITUAL?

Believers in the apparitions say that if the man-child is literal, the woman must be literal. They say this woman is the physical Mary, the "mother of God." They find the fact that she wears a crown even more convincing—for she is the "queen of heaven."

They also argue that if Mary were indispensable for the first advent of

They see "her" modern appearance as paving the way for the Second Coming.

Christ, she is also indispensable for the Second Advent. They see "her" modern appearances as paving the way for the Second Coming.

THE BIBLE ANSWERS

In answering these questions, it's important to know that Mary is not the "Mother of God." She is the mother of the Man, Christ Jesus. She did not give Him His divinity—for He existed and was God before she was ever born. Instead, she gave Him His humanity.

Jesus Himself, though a faithful and obedient Son for 30 years of His life, gave her no special status above other people after He entered His ministry. In the words of Matthew, "Then one said unto Him, behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? . . . For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. 12:47, 48, 50).

The Bible clearly teaches that the church is Christ's bride, and a careful study of Revelation and other Bible passages will show that it was the church (not Mary) that travailed and gave birth to the man-child Jesus Christ. For after the Child was born and caught up into heaven, the woman flees into the wilderness for 1,260 years to escape persecution.

Finally, in considering the apparitions of Mary, we must remember that "the living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything" (Eccl. 9:5). If you have not done so already, please read the other two articles in this issue and apply them to these apparitions. The Bible clearly teaches that the dead are not only asleep, they also do not come back to visit the living. Consider the example of King Saul, who lost his life over his final and greatest sin—trying to call up the deceased prophet Samuel through the "ministry" of the witch of Endor.

So, Mary the mother of Jesus is now sleeping, most probably buried high on a hill above the ancient city of Ephesus. And it's up to us, as Bible students, to gird ourselves with God's truth so that we may live by faith in His Word—even when it goes contrary to the evidence of our own senses.

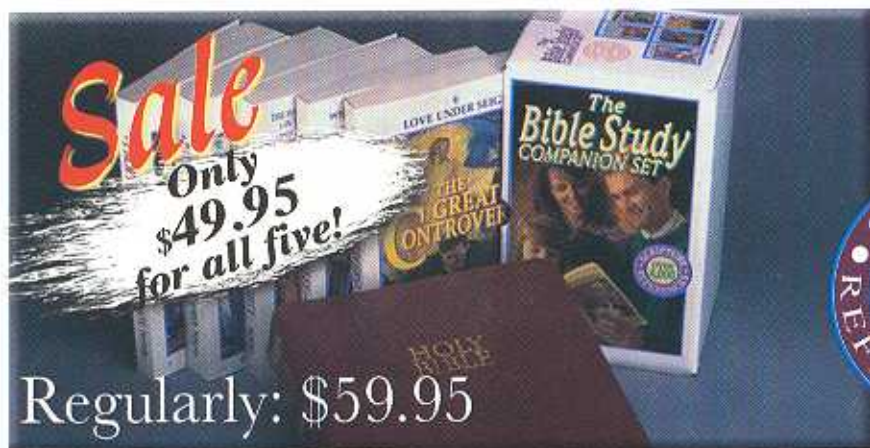
In speaking of the many deceivers who would come in His name, Jesus told His disciples that "if they shall say unto you, behold, he is in the desert; go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not" (Matt. 24:26).

This same wise counsel, given by our Lord so many years ago, can also be applied to the many supernatural events taking place today. "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).

In other words, when the Bible tells us that the dead are sleeping and will not awaken until the second coming of Christ, we make ourselves susceptible to the devil's wiles if we travel here and there, seeking for signs of the supernatural. "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall be no sign given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah" (Matt. 16:4). May the Holy Spirit build a hedge about us, helping us to test every supernatural experience by the Word of God, and thereby be guarded from every deception, until the day we enter our heavenly home. ❧

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