

## About angels and demons

Author Unknown at this writing. It is a really good study

### Angels and Demons

#### Is There Really a Spirit World? Revealing Angels and Demons

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."(Ephesians: 6:12)

##### 1. Their Existence

In these days of space travel multitudes are wondering if it is possible that people are living on other planets. We do not believe this, but one thing we do know, however, is that there are hosts of angels living in other spheres of the earth. These angels - and, as a matter of fact, demons too, influence us from day to day, angels to minister to us and demons to kill both body and soul. There are those who will laugh at the thought of believing in supernatural beings but those who laugh do not read or know the Bible. Many are just like the Sadducees in Acts 23:8 who say "...that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit."

The word angel as used in the Bible refers more often to an "office" than to a "person". In its elementary form it means messenger. This messenger might be heavenly like the seraphim, or earthly, like the human prophets. In Malachi 3:1 Jesus is called "the messenger of the covenant" and this is reconciled with the fact of Hebrews 1:5 where it states that He never took on Him the nature of angels. The word angel is used in various ways in the Bible:

1. For human messengers. Luke 7:24, "And when the messengers of John were departed, He began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" (Read also. 2 Samuel 2:5).
  2. For human messengers declaring a divine message. Galatians 4:14, "And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus" (Read also Haggai 1: 13).
  3. For God's providence's as in 2 Corinthians 12:7, "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure."
  4. For bishops and pastors as in Revelation 2:1, "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write..." (Also Revelation 3:14).
  5. For demons without bodies who seek to take possession of men and are called the devil's angels (Matthew 12:24, 25:41).
  6. For heavenly beings, such as guarded Jacob in Genesis 32:1,2. "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host and he called the name of that place Mahanaim."
  7. One who was definitely called the angel of the Lord as in Exodus 3:2.
- The main idea behind the angels is that they were here to serve. The holy angels are the messengers of their Creator, while the fallen angels are the messengers of Satan who is "the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Hebrews 1:14 tells us of the good angels who minister to man's well-being, while Ephesians 6:12 tells us of the evil spirits who war against that in man which is wrought of God.

The Bible makes clear that the angels dwell in the heavenly spheres and in numbers beyond our count. They are gathered in groups which are identified as "thrones", "dominions", "principalities", "powers", "authorities", and "heavenly host" (Colossians 1:16; I Peter 3:22; Luke 2: 13). Yet all these are wholly subject to the Lord Yeshua, the Christ who created the universe and all it contains, including the angelic beings. He created "things...visible and invisible" (Colossians 1: 16). Peter tells us that these beings are subject to Christ ( I Peter 3:22). Jude verse 6 tells us that angels have their own dwelling places. They had an estate given to them.

The Bible teaches that angels are invisible, but this is not proof that they do not exist as some would have us believe. When the natural vision of the young man in 2 Kings 6:17 was augmented he saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. One reason why they cannot be seen is that man, without a doubt, would want to worship them. Paul admonishes against the worshipping of angels in Colossians 2:18.

John testifies also in Revelation 22:8-9, "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: WORSHIP GOD"

Let us notice that while angels are called spirits (Hebrews 1:14), this does not mean they are incorporeal. Man has a spirit ( I Thessalonians 5:23) yet he also has a body. Angels also have a corporeal nature for Jesus said that after the resurrection men shall be like angels (Luke 20:36). We may not understand it all but there are many things we do not understand.

There is evidence from the Bible that those who die in the Lord shall be above the angels because of their identification with the Son of Yahweh. Let us read Hebrews 1:3-6: "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son? And again, when He bringeth in the first begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him."

The angels are set forth in the Bible as individual beings.

They render worship (Psalm 148:2); they behold with due understanding the face of the Father (Matthew 18 10); they know their limitations (Matthew 24:36); and as we saw in Hebrews 1:3-6 they are inferior to the Son of God. The fallen angels, of course, know how to do evil.

It would also appear from the Scriptures that no more angels will be added to the original creation. Jesus said in Matthew 22:28-30, regarding life in heaven, that "...they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." There is evidently no increase or decrease among

these heavenly beings.

We do not know how many angels there are. They are described in multitudes that cannot be numbered:

David said "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels" (Psalm 68:17)

Daniel saw thee "...thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him" (Daniel 7:10).

The shepherds saw "...a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest..." (Luke 2:13,14)

John says, "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.." (Rev 5:11-12)

The exact abode of the angels we cannot say but certainly they inhabit the heavenly spheres: "...the angels which are in heaven" (Mark 13:32). Paul says, "But though we, or an angel from heaven..." (Galatians 1:8)

## 2. Demons and Their Origin

The origin of Satan and his demons is found in the Bible. The scene before us takes place at God's Throne. The time is before the creation of man. The stage setting is found in Ezekiel 28:11-19: "Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God...Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God...Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee...Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty..." (read the entire passage carefully).

The description here is not that of an earthly king alone. It refers to one who had a special position at the Throne of God who is described as "the sum of wisdom... perfect in beauty... every precious stone was thy covering... the anointed cherub that covereth... perfect in thy ways... till iniquity was found in thee... thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty... never shalt thou be any more." He was certainly of a special order near the Throne of God and as the cherub he led the worship of the universe. But in his pride he tried to direct to himself what properly belonged to God.

The result of Satan's rebellion is clearly stated for us in Isaiah 14: 12-14, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations. For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."

Notice the pride and rebellion of Satan: "I will exalt my throne above the stars; I will sit also upon the mount; I will ascend above the heights; I will be like the most high."

The Bible then teaches that Satan is a king over his own kingdom which includes his demons.

Let us read Matthew 12:22-30, "Then was brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand! And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad."

Without a doubt, this host of bodiless spirits was created as subjects of Satan in the primal glory. Satan, being in authority over them, drew them after him in his sinful attempt to thrust himself into the place of God. Satan is in authority over two distinct orders of beings—the Satanic order of the earth, and the Satanic host of the air. Through Adam he secured the authority over the earth and the host of the air were, without a doubt, under his authority from creation. When Satan offered our Lord all the power and glory of the kingdoms of this world, he claimed that the rule over the world had at some time been conferred upon him: "And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it" (Luke 4:6).

Christ here recognized in principle Satan's right to dispose of the kingdoms of this world in this present age.

Satan's authority is shown in these passages from the Bible, "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand" (Matthew 12:26) Also Matthew 25:41, "Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"

This host of Satan in the Bible is called 'devils' but the word also suggests 'demons'. Demon possession means that the demons enter the body and exercise control over it. Demon influence is set forth as a warfare from without (Ephesians 6) which is carried on by temptation and influence.

These demons of Satan are bodiless spirits. Notice Mark 5:12, "And all the devils (demons) besought Him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them." (Read also Matthew 12:43-45). "As they went out, behold, they brought to Him a dumb man possessed with a devil. And when the devil (demon) was cast out, the dumb spake..." (Matthew 9:32,33. Read also Acts 8:6-7; 16: 16; Mark 5: 1-13).

The Bible also teaches that these demons are wicked and unclean. Let us read Matthew 8:28, "And when He was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs,

exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way." Mark 9:20, "And they brought him unto Him: and when he saw Him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming." (Read also Matthew 10:1; Mark 5:2-5).

The Bible also teaches that there are degrees of wickedness represented by these spirits. In Matthew 12:43-45 it says that the demon, returning to his house, "...taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself." Now the question comes before us, "Is demon possession possible in our age?" The missionaries in so-called heathen lands will answer in the affirmative.

John G. Paton, missionary to the New Herbrides wrote, "Satan filled the man's heart. He incited his people to steal everything from us, and to annoy us in every conceivable way. They killed one of my precious watchdogs, and feasted upon it. Certainly the power of demons was strong."

Mildred Cable in her book *Ambassadors for Christ* said, "Heathendom is not a low social condition, it is not poverty, it is not bad customs, it is not even an inferior code of morals. Heathendom is the condition of men and women whose worship is directed towards Satan. Behind the idols is the being to whom idol worship is directed for they are dealing with demons. These demons show no mercy but they do seek to destroy the souls of men."

We have also seen in this study that certainly there was demon possession in Christ's day. Christ cast out demons.

Without a doubt Satan carries on his same work in the age in which we live. We may not always recognize demonic powers because demons are able to conceal their true identity. They may live an inspiring moral life, as well as appear as the spirit of the spiritist medium or through manifestations from heathen lands.

Demons can appear as "angels of light" the same as their king, and we need God's Holy Spirit to give us discernment. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

The purpose of Satan and his demons is to hinder God's purpose for this age and to extend the authority of his own kingdom. They carry on a definite warfare against all believers according to Ephesians 6.

One method of the demons in this age of grace is to present a form of godliness but to deny the power thereof. And the departure we see from the faith is the best evidence we have today of the influence of demons. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4: 1,2).

These seducing spirits promote the doctrines of demons. These evil spirits are active in seeking to turn men and women away from the faith. They are in rebellion against God and seek to hinder God and His truth.

### 3. How Demonism Works Today

The world today is playing with demon spirits in a way that is absolutely unparalleled in history. There are multitudes of people who are playing with spiritism. When Adelaide, South Australia, was a city of about 650,000 people,

there were four spirit mediums regularly advertised. In a city of the same size in Great Britain there were 28 such mediums.

Spiritism is coming into prominence not only in this form, but also in religious ceremony. Let us read I Timothy 4:1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

The Bible teaches clearly that there shall come, in the last days, a departure from the faith and surely that day is upon us. "Giving heed to seducing spirits." The Devil, through his demons, his armies of evil spirits, sends forth these devilish doctrines that have no Bible foundation. These demons are expert in the art of seducing and turning aside people from the Truth. They come to people in times of intellectual doubts, or of some deep sorrow, or of some spiritual failure and they introduce the seed of false teaching which becomes, in time, the ruin of the soul.

Let us notice that Paul goes on to warn young Timothy that often the Devil works in and through people. "Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" ( I Timothy 4:2). These are human instruments of demons whose ministry is dedicated to the damnation of the souls of men and women.

Demons are at work today just as they were in Bible times. We have demons at work through divination, which is the employing of tokens or charms to indicate good and evil luck. Divination might be by water, air, fire, earth, dreams, rabbit paws, or other such articles. This is a form of witchcraft which is a departure from the one true God (see Leviticus 19:31). Even the ouija board of our day is in partnership with demons and those who use it do so at the peril of their souls. (Samples of divination are found in Hosea 4:12; I Samuel 28:7).

Then there are various forms of magic. Magic was practiced by the educated priest magicians of Egypt in the time of Moses. And you will remember that King Nebuchadnezzar of Daniel's time had his college of "wise men." This magic is expressed today in hypnotism, mind cure, and fortune telling which are forms of demonism.

Destroy all Pagan Idols and occult, Spiritism and witchcraft materials!!! -  
Cleanse yourself!!

The Apostles had to deal constantly with Demonic forces. They instructed those that were involved in and harassed by demonic spirits to destroy all Pagan Idols and all witchcraft materials [such as tarot cards, idols, Ouija boards etc]

Acts:19:19: "Any many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts [witchcraft-pagan idol worship] brought their books [pagan materials etc.] together, and burned them before all men:..."

There is also sorcery which is divining by lots. We have such a case in Acts 19:18,19, where those under the influence of Satan and his Demons were saved and as we noted, they brought their books and materials of Idol Worship, Witchcraft, Sorcery and Divination and burned them. Sorcerers are classed in the Bible as having their part in the lake of fire (Revelation 22: 15).

What about witchcraft which is submission to evil spirits of one kind or

another? Paul speaks of witchcraft as the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:20). It is the same as Devil worship.

We remember that Saul once opposed witchcraft in Israel, until the Spirit of God departed from him for other reasons, and an evil spirit then took possession of him. He practiced now what he had long opposed. I Chronicles 10:13 tells us: "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it."

Today we have a rise in spiritism which boldly declares to have a "new revelation", a "new religion" and a "new movement of the spirit" whereas God's Word tells us clearly in Revelation 22:18 that cursed shall that man be who adds to the Bible. David said in 2 Samuel 12:23 concerning his child who died, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Spiritism teaches the opposite and says the dead do come back and that David was mistaken. We can expect a further rise in spiritism in these last days.

All of this has to do primarily with the unsaved. But Satan works through his demons to hinder God's work through believers:

He quotes the Bible (Matthew 4:6);

he Counterfeits True Christianity and transforms himself into an angel of light (2 Corinthians I 1: 14);

he afflicts the body (2 Corinthians 1 2:7);

he takes away the seed of the Word (Mark 4:15);

he brings in impure thoughts (I Corinthians 7:5);

he tempts by pride (I Timothy 3:6);

he seduces by pleasure ( I Timothy 5:11,15);

he sifts some, like Peter (Luke 22:31 );

he buffeted Paul (2 Corinthians 12:7);

concerning faith he made shipwreck of Hymenaeus and Alexander ( I Timothy 1 :19-20);

he tempted Ananias to hypocrisy and Sapphira to lying (Acts 5:3).

In Ephesians 6:12 we read, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Paul tells us we must stand against the wiles or stratagems or operations of the Devil. Many believers are afraid to stand. Our enemies are the great evil powers, evil angels, demons, who are seeking to control the authoritative powers of this world and seeking also to keep men and women from the truth of God's Word. Demons are working overtime today. Since demons do not have bodies of their own they seek to reside in and poses the bodies of humans.

They are working today through the lives of religious leaders as well as through the lives of people of the world to frustrate God's whole plan for His own people and for this age. The demons are doing all they can to keep God's people from truly honouring their Lord. They are working overtime to destroy the authority of the Word of God. They are doing away with the blood and with Bible salvation. The devil himself is truly an angel of light and loves to operate in the religious realm. The Bible says we are to stand against him and

his demons in these fearful days.

The Bible makes clear that in the last days before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ sorcery, spiritism, and various lying wonders of demonism shall prevail. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10 says, "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." While this will come to its true climax in the Tribulation Period, nevertheless, such manifestations of Satan's working will be prevalent in the last days.

This is what we find today. The Devil works as an angel of light in presenting his powers and signs and lying wonders. Magazines and books are already on the increase dealing with psychology, theosophy, fortune telling and fore-telling, and all such crooked thinking results in unrighteous living.

#### 4. Victory

Let no one for a moment think that demons and homage to the dark spirit world is something just for those in so-called heathen darkness. Hear what Professor Alfred Russell Wallace, world-renowned zoologist and evolutionist said, "I have frequently seen myself, in good light, sticks and handkerchiefs pass through a curtain yet an examination of the curtain did not show any changes in it whatever."

William T. Stead, journalist and scholar said: "Twelve months have now passed since my boy died, in almost every week of which I have been cheered and comforted by messages from him who is nearer to me than ever before."

Sir William Crook, the great chemist: "I have talked with the spirit of Katie King scores and scores of times, saw her form appear and disappear and photographed her many times."

These are true experiences and thousands more could be given if we had the space. Satan's demons are clever and know more than we know and at these seances they impersonate and pretend to be those who have died.

God warns us in Deuteronomy 18:9-11, "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. 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."

What does the New Testament say? Colossians 2:14-15, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers (which are the evil powers and demons of Satan), He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." The Lord our God is greater than Satan and we have victory and power to overcome in Him.

Spiritism, which is fostered by the demons of Satan, is contrary to everything Bible Christianity believes. It denies the inspiration of the Bible for it says, "To assert that the Bible is a holy and divine book and that God inspired the writers to make known his divine will, is a gross outrage and misleading to the public." This almost sounds like some of the liberal theologians of our day.

The spiritists deny the reality of prayer. They said about George Mueller for

example, that his "mediumistic powers enabled the spirits to work for him by influencing others to send him money for food and clothes."

They deny the reality of the Devil and the existence of Hell: "All spirit people of wisdom, knowledge and love say that there is no burning hell - no fearful devil."

They deny the Bible truth concerning the Holy Spirit. They say that the "other Comforter" which Jesus promised to send was simply "the spirit of a departed loved one comforting the bereaved here on earth."

They deny the Bible doctrine of the Atonement which is based on the blood atonement of Christ on the Cross. They say, "Sin is remediable by repentance and atonement and reparation personally wrought out in pain and shame and not by coward cries for mercy. What a wicked and soul destroying delusion has been the clerical face of salvation by a vicarious atonement."

Yes, and they deny the Deity of our blessed Lord They say, "He was a Social Reformer. He was an honoured Teacher, but he was the Son of God only in the sense that any other man can be." Again they say, "I do not find that Christ claimed for himself more than he held out as possible for others. When he identified himself with the Father it was the oneness of mediumship. He was the great Medium or Mediator."

Surely we can see that such teaching comes from the Devil himself. We must be careful by first recognizing the existence and work of such demons and then to stay away from them. Paul teaches us in I Corinthians 10:20-21, "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils (demons), and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." Of course the demons exist and they exist in order to be worshipped.

But praise God, according to Colossians 1: 15-18, Christ's reconciliation includes both heaven and earth. This Cross-work is the basis by which God will judge those who are not properly identified with Him.

Then in Colossians 2:14-15, already quoted, the value of the Cross-work extends to the angels as well as to persons. Christ, by His death, we read, spoiled principalities and powers, made a show of them openly, and triumphed over them.

The fact of Satan's judgement is clearly shown in John 12:31: "Now is the judgement of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

Again, John 16:11, "Of Judgement, because the prince of this world is judged."

We also read in Hebrews 2:14, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

The Bible therefore clearly teaches that Satan and his demons came to judgement, were spoiled, unveiled, triumphed over, judged, and cast out by Christ in His death. Of course we recognize that the sentence as such has not yet been executed for the Devil has great power now as "the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2). He is also the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4). How, then, can believers have victory over the power of Satan until the day comes when his sentence will be finally executed?

The basis for living a life of victory is to recognize the fact that it is the

Christ-life in believers and the Christ-life alone that can enable each one to live for one moment, one day, and one year at a time. It is "Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20), that is, it is Christ living out through me that brings the daily victory.

Just as we need a body to live through, so Christ must have a body to display His power and life. That is why, when He died on the cross to save us, He purchased our bodies with His own blood along with our souls. What Christ accomplishes in this age is limited to what He can do through these bodies of ours. He has no hands but ours; no voice but ours; no feet but ours. True Christianity is Christ living His life through a purchased and consecrated body.

How can this be done? Romans 6:10-18 tells us that we are to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God. Then we are to yield ourselves to God. Two girls had received Christ as their Saviour and within a few days were invited to a dance.

They did not know what to do so asked their pastor. He told them the Bible was their only guide. So with earnest prayer they read the Bible and in Colossians 3:3 they read, "Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." They looked at each other and exclaimed, "There it is - that's God's answer and we will follow it." They took the invitation and wrote across the back of it these words, "Sorry, we cannot come to the dance. We are dead," and they signed their names. They indeed had become new creations in Christ Jesus, and were now "dead to the world"

While we are here on this earth, with Christ living His life through us, we have God's full provision for every need in the Christian life. His promises are for us. When God asks us to do something, He provides the necessary power to do it. In Ephesians 6:11-17 we have the armour which is available to every Christian.

A careful study will reveal the fact that God's provision in this armour is none other than the Person of Christ. Christ is our armour. Christ is our victory. The Bible here makes it clear, "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." There are far too many Christians on the run today when God wants us to stand for Him. James 4:7 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Let the devil do some running for a change and let God's children stand in this evil day.

Let us keep in mind that what Paul is saying in Ephesians 6:11-17 is that God's children have an armour, not of things, but an armour which is the lovely Person of Christ. The girdle of Truth, the breastplate of Righteousness, the shoes of Peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of Salvation and the sword of the Spirit is none other than Christ. What Paul says in the seven verses of Ephesians 6:11-17, he says in seven words in Romans 13:14, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

To make it even more practical and simple, this implies daily fellowship in a most personal way with our Lord through Bible study, prayer, and Christian fellowship. It implies a life of separation from the things of the world. It implies a life free from worry for we are to cast our care upon Him who cares for us. It implies a mind that is surrendered not to the wisdom of this world

but to the wisdom of God as revealed in His Word. It also implies a daily warfare not waged in our own strength but through the sufficiency that comes from our Lord. This will enable us to stand up rather than fold up.

## Is There Really a Spirit World?

Both popular culture and religion bombard us with references to the spirit world. But is it real? What's it all about? Where can you turn to sort out fact from fable?

Have you ever wondered about the spirit world? Almost everyone is curious about the subject. Perhaps you know of friends or relatives who have even dabbled in it.

Does the spirit world truly exist, or is it just a figment of fertile imaginations? More importantly, is it beneficial or dangerous to delve into this area?

These are important questions. And whether we like it or not, we are constantly bombarded by issues about the spirit world from newspapers, TV, radio and movies. If you look up the 10 top grossing pictures or fictional books at any given time, chances are several will deal with the subject of the spirit world. TV programs with "channelers," those who claim to communicate with the dead, are becoming more popular.

In this technological age, it might seem that more interest would be given to scientific subjects, but the fact is we see a fascination with all facets of the spirit world—both good and evil.

Moreover, this subject is so vital that one day the right information about it could spare you and your loved ones untold grief and suffering!

So what do we need to know about it? And where can we go to find accurate information?

Finding the true source

Can we go to science to find the answer? If the spirit world exists, it would be, by its very nature, not composed of matter or atoms. A dictionary definition of spirit is "a supernatural being or essence." And the scientific community has little to say about things that can't be seen under a microscope or through a telescope or that can't be examined in a laboratory. Science admits it deals best with the physical world and is highly skeptical of anything dealing with the spiritual realm.

What about religion? Certainly most religions have something to say about the spirit world. But how reliable are they? Eastern religion, for instance, speaks of the spirit world, but its numerous books often contradict themselves on the subject. The Bible of course has a lot to say about the spirit world, but can it be trusted?

After studying Eastern religions for 42 years, M. Montiero-Williams, a former professor of Sanskrit at Oxford University, compared the Eastern religious books with the Bible. What did he conclude?

"Pile them [the books on Eastern religion], if you will, on the left of your study table; but place your own Holy Bible on the right side—all by itself, all alone—and with a wide gap between them," he wrote. "For, there is a gulf between it and the so-called sacred books of the East which severs the one

from the other utterly, hopelessly, and forever . . . a veritable gulf which cannot be bridged ever by any science or religious thought" (quoted by Sidney Collett, *All About the Bible*, 1958, pp. 314-315).

This is true not only for the mystic Eastern books, but for virtually all of the literature dealing with the spirit world—so much is confusing and unconfirmed.

Is the Bible a reliable source?

Of all the books that deal with the spirit world, only the Bible has been shown throughout the centuries to be a reliable source of information, separating the good from the bad of the spirit world—for certainly there are two opposite sides to it.

Unlike other books, the Bible declares that it was inspired by the One who inhabits and is over the whole spirit world—God! It states, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17, emphasis added throughout).

The Bible is also the only book that consistently describes the spirit world without contradictions in a logical, historical manner. It is the one lasting source that has given trustworthy information about the spirit world and has served as a faithful counterweight to the evil spiritual forces.

In fact, close to 2,000 years ago, its influence caused many to repudiate books dealing with the evil side of the spirit world. When the apostle Paul visited the city of Ephesus and preached from the Bible about God's truths, the reaction of those using books on witchcraft and magic was to renounce these sources of spiritual darkness.

We read: "Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed" (Acts 19:19-20).

Likewise, we see today that the Word of God is still the most powerful force against the powers of evil. Thanks mostly to the Bible, we live in a world where so much that was prevalent in the ancient world of magic, idolatry and superstition has been eliminated—although from time to time, these false beliefs try to make a comeback, as they are presently doing.

So, what does the Bible say about the spirit world? How can it help us?

A spirit world filled with angels

God tells us that it was He who created these spirit beings. We read, "And of the angels He says: 'Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire'" (Hebrews 1:7). Yes, it was God who created all the angels.

God's Word gives a few descriptions of the realm inhabited by millions of angels. The apostle John was shown in a vision this angelic world: "Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands" (Revelation 5:11).

God also reveals that He created the angels before the existence of the physical earth. Giving Job a glimpse of that time, He asked, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . When the morning stars [a

biblical symbol for angels] sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job 38:4, 7). Here, the "sons of God" is a reference to angels who shouted for joy when they saw the earth being created.

These angels are composed of spirit and, according to the Bible, cannot die (Luke 20:36).

The purpose of holy angels

What was the purpose for creating angels? Here is another question for which only the Bible has a reliable and definite answer. It says, referring to angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14).

So the angels were created to aid human beings in fulfilling God's plan of salvation. This angelic help includes protecting God's people in numerous ways. As Psalm 34:7 states, "The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them."

So God uses the holy angels to protect and take care of His own. This is the part of the spiritual realm we shouldn't fear. In fact, we should be very thankful to God for having created these powerful angels for our benefit. We also should constantly ask God to place these angelic servants around His people to protect them from harm. Psalm 91:11 tells us that God "shall give His angels charge over you, to keep [preserve or protect] you in all your ways."

But what about the other side of the spirit world that the Bible also describes—the dark realm? It is, sadly, a reality we must face. But the Bible provides us with valuable information to protect ourselves from it and make us aware of its deceitful ways.

The origins of an evil spirit world

If God created the spirit world to be good, how did the dark side arise? And why would a good and loving God have allowed it? Again, the only true and reliable source of information is the Bible, written under the inspiration of the supreme spirit being called God, who is eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing and who best knows the story—for He was there from the very beginning. He says, "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done..." (Isaiah 46:9-10). Thankfully, He has chosen to reveal to us how and why this evil side of the spirit world arose.

God first discloses to us that evil began with one of those created angels, called Lucifer in Latin (later called Satan), who rebelled against Him.

God addresses this being in Isaiah 14:12-14: "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'"

God adds more information in His Word about Satan and the beginning of sin and evil. In Ezekiel 28:14-17 He again addresses this being: "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God... You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till

iniquity was found in you... You became filled with violence within, and you sinned... Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor..." (Ezekiel 28:14-17).

Yes, angels were created with free will, able to choose between good and evil and thus capable of sin.

Satan's domain on earth

This angel, a cherub, one of the mightiest of angels, sometime in the distant past led a rebellion against God and was cast down to the earth with those angels that followed him. Scripture says that "God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment" (2 Peter 2:4).

The term "hell" in this verse is tartaroo in the Greek and means a place of confinement.

Where is this place of confinement? The Bible reveals it is here on earth!

When God asked Satan in Job 1:7, "From where do you come," Satan replied, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."

This is his dominion and where his angels also dwell.

Furthermore, when Jesus was tempted by Satan, the devil showed Him the world's kingdoms and said, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish" (Luke 4:6).

It was therefore the rebellion of this powerful angelic being that began the reign of evil and sin here on earth, long before human beings were created. By the time Adam and Eve were formed, Satan was already here on the earth, and either presented himself as a serpent or spoke through it to deceive Eve (Genesis 3:1-5).

The Scriptures also reveal these fallen angels will attempt one more time to storm heaven, but they will not succeed. This is described by the apostle John in Revelation 12:7-9: "And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

Thus we see that God's Word explains that sin and evil originated with an angel, Lucifer. He rebelled along with other angels and became Satan, the "Adversary," as this name means, of both God and mankind. This was also the origin of the dark side of the spirit world.

Satan is the great deceiver "who deceives the whole world" (Revelation 12:9) and, along with his angels, is an expert in disguising himself as an apparent doer of good. As the apostle Paul writes: "For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works" (2 Corinthians 11:14-15).

The fallen angels, hostile to God and men, are called demons in the Bible. They share with Satan, their leader, the goal of deceiving people with false doctrine, generally making human life miserable and, if possible, even destroying people. As the Bible says, "In latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons" (1

Timothy 4:1).

The battle for our minds

So, whether we are aware of it or not, a spiritual battle is going on—a battle for our minds. The apostle Paul says of this spiritual warfare: "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness" (Ephesians 6:12).

As we mature, we will inevitably notice struggles in our own minds where good and bad thoughts and attitudes battle for dominance to shape behavior. Satan has the power to transmit attitudes and tries to persuade us to do evil. One need only look at some of history's most murderous tyrants—men like Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin or Pol Pot—to realize the menace that arises when evil thoughts come to totally dominate one's thinking. It is real, and it is deadly and dangerous.

The apostle Paul explains how Satan operates by transmitting invisible but powerful negative attitudes: "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others" (Ephesians 2:1-3).

Thankfully, the Bible foretells a future time on earth, during the millennium, when Satan will no longer be able to transmit his evil attitudes and the world will finally be at peace (Revelation 20:2-3). But in the meantime, we must be careful to guard our minds as this unseen spiritual battle rages around us!