



## The World of the Spirits

**M**any of our Native people have believed that those who died took on the form of ghosts. The spirits of the dead were said to return in various forms in various ways. They were thought to be thin as air, though to the eye they may appear real in body.

The tiny whirlwinds of dust that moved about on the prairies on a hot summer day were believed by the Pawnees to be the spirits of human beings who had died. Other tribes thought owls were spirits of the dead.

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Source: *Sacred Legacy*. Simon and Schuster, NY, 2000. "Spirit Life," p. 61.

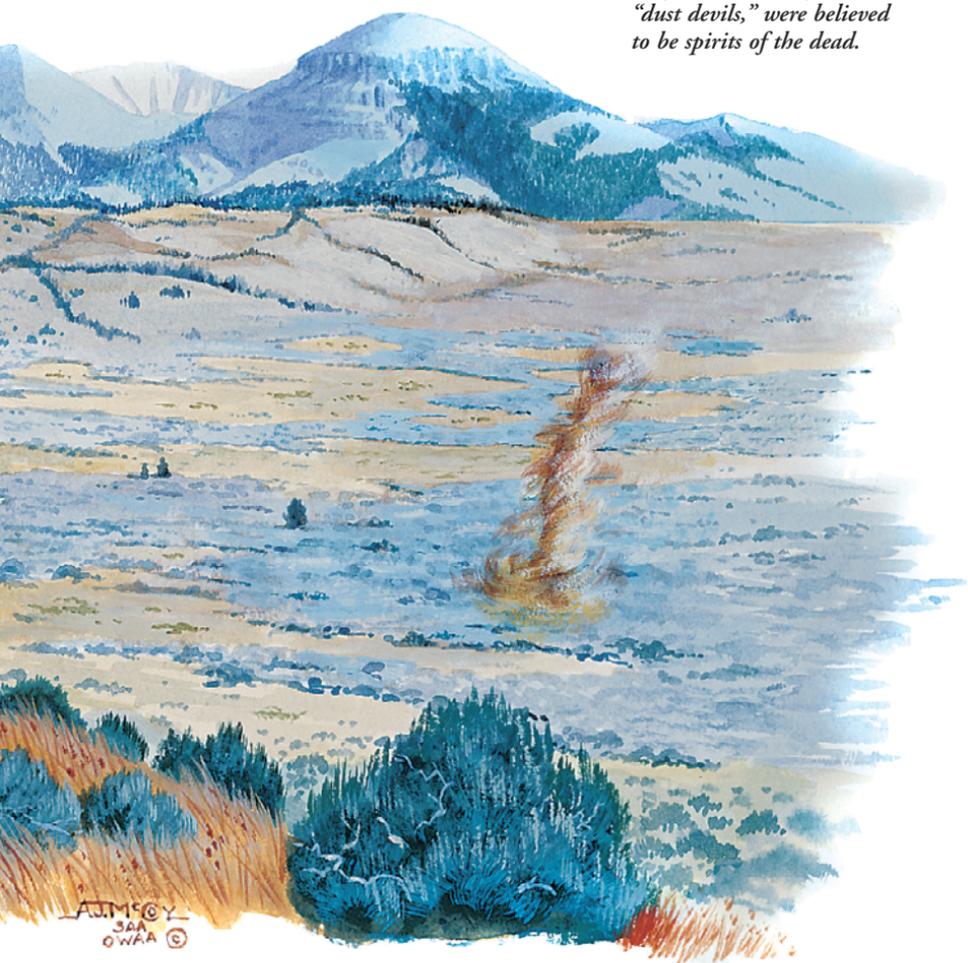
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Webster's dictionary calls spiritism "the belief that one can talk or interact with the spirits of the departed dead."

Chief Seattle of the Suquamish tribe lived across the Puget Sound from the city that now bears his name. In a speech he expressed his idea of spiritism this way: "When the last red man shall have perished and the memory of my tribe has become a myth among the white man, these shores will swarm with the invisible

*Tiny whirlwinds of dust, or "dust devils," were believed to be spirits of the dead.*



dead of my tribe. And when your children's children think themselves alone in the field, in the silence of these pathless woods, they will not be alone.

“At night when the streets of your cities and villages are silent and you think them deserted, they will throng with returning hosts that once filled them and still love this beautiful land. The white man will never be alone. Let him deal justly and kindly with my people, for the dead are not powerless. Dead, did I say dead? There is no death, only a change of worlds.”

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Source: *The Native Americans*. Turner Publishing Inc., Atlanta, GA, 1993, p. 461.

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This idea of a spirit world has been a comfort to some, but to most it is a very fearful thing. If all the dead, including those who were evil, are able to interact with the living today, it is easy to see that we could undergo the misery of harassment from evil spirits.

Understanding what the Bible teaches on this subject can offer us a comforting protection and peace concerning the evil side of the spirit world.

**T**he Bible is our  
guide in this  
important study  
concerning the great  
struggle between  
good and evil.



**I** f a spirit were to tell you teachings contrary to the teachings of the Bible would you believe that spirit?



**Key Thought.** One of the most comforting things in the Bible is its clear teaching concerning death, which is the subject of the previous lesson. The Bible clearly teaches that the supposed spirits of the dead and the wicked things they do are all under the direction of the Evil One, Satan (the Devil), and Satan’s angels.

The Bible tells us that in the last days many will be deceived by giving heed to “seducing spirits” and the “doctrines of devils.” (1 Timothy 4:1, KJV.) Should a person encounter a supposed spirit of one who has previously died, he can be sure this is the work of Satan. The Bible calls his angels “evil spirits” (Acts 19:11-16), which sometimes pretend to be spirits of the dead. How do we protect ourselves from Satan’s tricks and these confusing teachings and beliefs?

## **BIBLE ANSWERS**

**1. How much do the dead know of what is going on among people today? Ecclesiastes 9:10.** “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ . . . in the grave where you are going.” *(All quotations from the Bible in these lessons are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise noted.)*

**Note.** This text tells us that when a person dies he does not know anything. (See also Ecclesiastes 9:5.) The Bible explains that when a person dies, “His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish” (Psalm 146:4). We find that “their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 9:6).

The Bible is clear that when a person dies his or her thoughts stop and are not active again until the second coming of Jesus. It teaches us that spirits of the dead are not walking around today.

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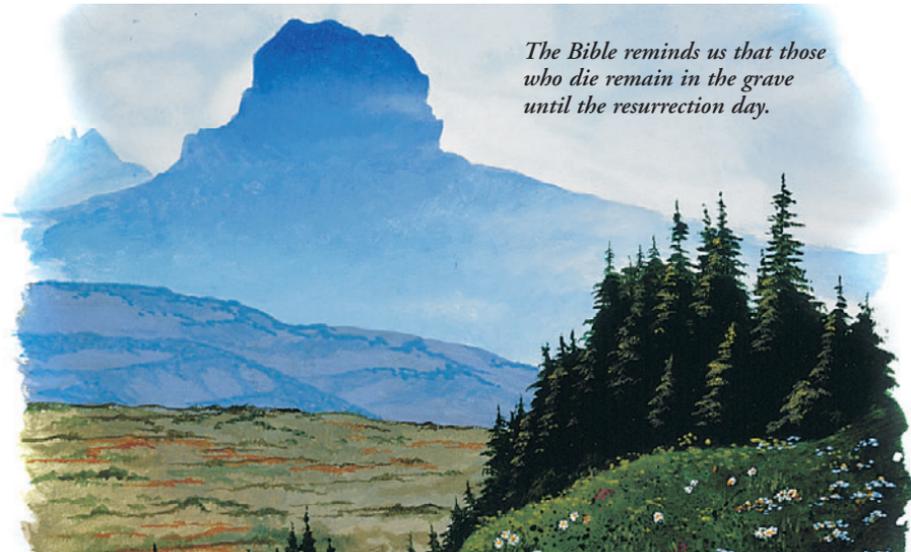
## **2. Where are the dead until the resurrection day?**

**Daniel 12:2.** “And many of those who \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the earth shall awake.”

**Note.** The Bible is quite plain that those who die stay in the grave until the resurrection day. We go to a funeral and see the casket lowered into the ground where the deceased eventually turns to dust. God told Adam after he had sinned, “For dust you are, and to dust you shall return.” Adam was formed from the dust of the ground and returned to it when he died (Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 12:7). We are recreated at the resurrection when Jesus comes again.

### 3. What will Satan and his angels attempt to do to people in the last days just before Christ appears?

**1 Timothy 4:1.** “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to \_\_\_\_\_ spirits and doctrines of demons.”



*The Bible reminds us that those who die remain in the grave until the resurrection day.*

**Note.** Satan deceives many through the idea that the dead can reappear to their loved ones. What would you do if some night you should encounter the spirit form of a loved one who has died? If that spirit were to teach you ideas that are contrary to the Bible, God’s Holy Word, would you believe the spirit?

It would be a temptation to believe a being who appeared to be someone you have trusted in the past, wouldn’t it? In his evil cunning way, Satan does things such as this to turn us away from the truths of the Bible which prepare us for the second coming and our eternal future.

**4. What warning did God give His chosen people in Old Testament times? Leviticus 19:31.** “Give \_\_\_\_\_ to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them.”

**Note.** God knows that Satan and his angels (demons) are out to deceive His people and, if at all possible, lead them away from the real truth about death. Satan has had thousands of years now to perfect his deceptions. So it is especially important that we learn from God’s warning to stay away from spirit mediums and familiar spirits.

**I**t is urgent that we listen to God’s warnings not to be deceived by spirit mediums and familiar spirits.

**5. What should one remember when approached about consulting a person who claims to be able to talk with the dead? Isaiah 8:19–20.** “And when they say to you, ‘Seek those who are mediums’ . . . should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is \_\_\_\_\_ in them.”

**Note.** The message of this passage is simple: we should totally stay away from anyone who claims to talk with the dead. To seek information from the dead is a foolish idea because the dead know nothing.



**T**he Bible tells us of the perils of King Saul, who ignored God's warnings about consulting spirit mediums and visited the witch of Endor.

**6. What does the Bible teach about people having another existence when they die? Ecclesiastes 9:6, last part.** “Nevermore will they have a \_\_\_\_\_ in anything done under the sun.”

**Note.** When we go through hardships, trials, and tragedy, it’s a comfort to know that our loved ones who have died are not around to see and hear the terrible things that come to us, for “their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished” (Ecclesiastes 9:6, first part). It would be a heart-wrenching experience for our loved ones, our parents and our grandparents, to see the problems their children or grandchildren face from day to day.

 Seeking information from the dead is foolish because Scripture says the dead are not conscious.

We would always be worried about what they would think and how they would feel. But we can rest in the comfort that God has a wonderful plan concerning death. All who die cease to have any feelings, thoughts, and life, until the Lifegiver, Jesus, comes again in the clouds of heaven at the last day. During the period of death there is no feeling of hunger, cold, or loneliness—only a total sleep-like existence. The righteous dead will not be aware of the passage of time, for they will go to sleep and not awaken until Jesus comes. God’s ways are always the best ways!

**7. What will happen to those who follow the practice of communicating with so-called dead spirits? Galatians 5:20–21.** “Idolatry, \_\_\_\_\_, hatred, contentions . . . those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

**Note.** This is a great warning to all who may be enthusiastic about following the teachings of, or listening to the supposed spirits of, the dead. If we’re not careful, we could very easily lose eternal life and the peace we may have today as we prepare for the second coming of Jesus.

That’s one reason why the Scriptures make it clear that when faced with evil spirits, we have the protection of God and all His holy angels, if we will just ask for it (Psalm 34:7; 1 John 5:14–15).



*The glorious second coming of Jesus and the resurrection are treasured promises that help us understand the nature of man in death.*

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During World War II many young men from the United States and Canada were drafted into military service. One of these men, Billy Jackson, was drafted, much to the frustration of his mother. Billy was her only child and the one on whom she depended for her living and care.

She feared that if she lost Billy she would lose everything dear to her in this life. Shortly after boot camp Billy went overseas as part of an invasion group. Weeks went by without any word from her son. One day there was a knock at her door. The Red Cross had come to inform her that her son was missing in action and feared dead.

Billy's mother was heartbroken. As weeks passed, she became extremely depressed. One day a neighbor told her she need not be depressed. If she wished, she could see and communicate with the spirit of her beloved Billy. Her neighbor invited her to go to a séance, a meeting in which a medium attempts to communicate with the supposed spirits of dead loved ones.

Billy's mother was suspicious at first until she met a visible spirit-being looking like Billy. She spent time alone with him happily talking about things that only they would know about. As the months passed, these meetings continued and became a source of joy and encouragement to her.

One Sunday morning there was a knock at her door. As she opened the door, there stood her son Billy. Stunned and amazed, she cried, “Billy, what are you doing here? We’re not to meet until Tuesday night!”

Billy was dumbstruck. “Mother,” he said, “I’ve been in a prison camp, and is this the welcome I get?” As the days passed, Billy’s mother had a complete nervous breakdown. Upset and angry, Billy went to the leader of the séance group and threatened to sue her. He did take her to court, and as the weeks went by the news media of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, followed each detail closely. At the end of the trial those who led out in the séance were found guilty of taking advantage of the distress of Billy’s mother.

tunned and amazed, his mother cried, “Billy, what are you doing here? We’re not to meet until Tuesday night!”

When the séance leader was interviewed after losing the case, she replied, “I must have gotten hold of the wrong spirit.” You can be sure she did!

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Source: Milwaukee Sentinel News. June 12, 1942.

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We learn from this story that by choosing to make contact with evil spirits, we will only experience deception. There are no spirits of the dead. The belief that the spirits of the dead are able to talk with us today is the work of the Evil One, Satan, and his angels.





**J**esus conquered the grave, and in Him we have the promise of eternal life. The Bible says: "... He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."



*“He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world”  
(1 John 4:4).*

**Next Lesson.** The next lesson will cover the problems of spirit harassment that are experienced by many today. You may have experienced some of the results of their powers or know someone who has. You will find the next lesson helpful.



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## The World of the Spirits

**R**ead through the lesson, then fill in this Answer Sheet. You should refer back to the lesson to find the correct answers. Referring to the lesson helps fix the answers in your mind.

*Place an X before each TRUE statement.*

**1. When a loved one dies, we should know that he or she:**

- is present with us as a spirit and is aware of our grief.
- is totally unaware of what is happening in the world—including our grief.

**2. According to the Bible teaching about death:**

- those who die will remain asleep in their graves until the resurrection.
- righteous people who die go to heaven immediately following their death.

**3. One of the ways Satan tries to deceive us regarding death is:**

- his teaching that he and his angels will never die.
- to make it appear that a loved one who has died can return and communicate with us.

**4. The Lord tells us:**

- to seek the counsel of evil spirits.
- not to be deceived by spiritualistic mediums and evil spirits.

**5. How should we respond to one who claims to be able to communicate with our dead loved ones?**

- We should turn completely away from anyone making such claims.
- We should believe such a person only if they know things about a dead loved one that no one else knows.

**6. People who have died:**

- can communicate with the living.
- cannot communicate with the living because they are asleep in the grave until Jesus comes again.

**7. According to the Bible, those who follow the practice of communicating with the so-called spirits of the dead:**

- will not inherit God's kingdom.
- will have a special place in heaven.

*Answer to a question often asked about spiritualism.*

**Are evil spirits evil angels and good spirits heaven's good angels?**

- The Bible describes heaven's angels as "ministering spirits" (Hebrews 1:13-14). It

also tells us that Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven. Today they make war on, or attack, those who try to follow God’s plan for their lives and who keep His commandments (Revelation 12:9, 17). The angels of Satan are called “unclean spirits” and the “spirits of demons” who will even work miracles in the last days to deceive people (Revelation 16:13-14).

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