

1. Reincarnation: An easy comfort and a limiting conformity, as it offers the option of a second opportunity that according to the Bible doesn't exist. Thus, postponing decision-making for another life when God says, **"I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."** 2 Corinthians 6:2. It is also limiting as it ties people down to a given destiny, and this life is their "hell", a place where they pay for the mistakes of their former life, contradictory to the biblical assertion that states: **"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."** John 8:36. **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** 2 Corinthians 5:17. He that takes his life seriously decides today.

2. Hell and purgatory: The most degrading theory for such a loving God is that of an eternal hell, where sinful souls are burned in endless torment. As we speak of a hell, we create in our imagination the idea of a dreadful God full of rage, when in fact, every divine act speaks to us about His love. **"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked..."** Ezekiel 33:11.

3. Contact with the dead: A writer said, **"Satan wants us to dwell in two things: the past, that we can do nothing about; or the future, that we cannot foresee."** This is one of the traps found in this theory. Namely, that it does not matter if we have talked enough with our loved one or if we have solved our problems, someday, even after death, we can do for them what we have not done in life. Yet today is the day to love and hug our children, and give them the time and attention they need! The second trap is that it creates an intermediation that displaces Christ, as He is the only One that can solve our problems. **"... No man cometh unto the Father, but by me."** John 14:6. Peter said, speaking of Jesus, **"...for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."** Acts 4:12.

4. Worshipping spirits: Many strange phenomena have increased in the last days called "paranormal phenomena", where people receive benefits, healing, miracles, all done by wandering spirits that are contacted via ceremonies, cults or mediums. They are also used to intimidate or hurt people with "jobs" requested by

enemies, rivals, etc. God says, **"There shall not be found among you... 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. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord..."** Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

"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." Isaiah 8: 19, 20.

God gives us a sure recipe to be freed from the harmful influence of these mysterious forces. **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."** James 4:7. **Give yourself to Jesus, live every day according to the ten commandments, law of His kingdom, and don't believe in the power of those spirits but believe in the power of God. "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony..."** Revelation 12:11.

We should not confuse the journey with the destination. That tunnel and light are the trip, not the destination. Death is unconsciousness, as we have proven with the Bible. But it warns us, **"...the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."** Revelation 12:12. He that said the first lie, **"ye shall not surely die,"** was Satan using his first medium, the snake. That lie was introduced throughout the history of humanity and forms part of the wine (doctrine) of Babylon, the false religious system of our day. **"Babylon the great is fallen... and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit..."** Revelation 18:2.

Precisely, New Age is a melting pot of Spiritism, Christendom, Hinduism, and Paganism that form part of Babylon. God says, **"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."** Revelation 18:4. Jesus desires to make you happy and free you of fears, anguish, and errors that contradict the clear message of the Bible and the will of God.

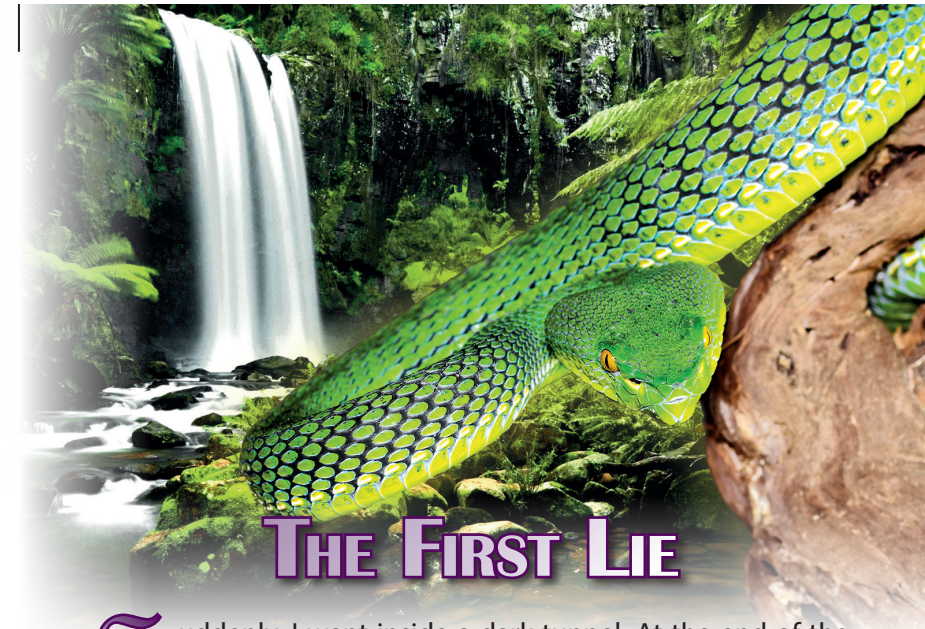
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THIRD MILLENNIUM BIBLE COURSE

8

International Missionary Society, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement



THE FIRST LIE

Suddenly, I went inside a dark tunnel. At the end of the tunnel I could see a white light. Loved ones who had passed away invited me to follow them when suddenly a hand woke me up, it was the minister, he wanted to talk with me. When I woke up I remembered where I was, I was on the hospital bed where I had been hospitalized due to cancer. The doctors had declared me terminally ill and apparently, I was dead...

This is a story that resembles that of so many thousands of people who are declared clinically dead and come back to life. For many it is a sign of hope, for others, the confirmation of a belief, for some it creates doubts. What is the truth concerning death?

Many think that those who die, if they have behaved well, go to heaven; otherwise, they go to hell or purgatory. Others think that they go on to the world of spirits. There are those who claim to be reincarnated in another being, born superior or inferior according to how their karma has lived on earth. Some believe that the dead know nothing until the day of the final resurrection. What does God say? What does the Bible teach? **"If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait..."** Job 14:14.

EVERYTHING BEGAN IN THE BEGINNING

God's command was clear, **"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."** Genesis 2:17. But another opinion was whispered into Eve's ear contrary to the clear and precise mandate of God, **"... Ye shall not surely die"** (Genesis 3:4). Although the earth is full of cemeteries and tombs the prove divine affirmation, there is still the idea of immortality within man, in spite of everything; under the same terms that were whispered to Eve, **"... Ye shall not die,"** no matter what you do in life.

That opinion has generated many concepts that have bombarded the sensitivity of those who grieve the loss of a loved one. They are disseminated through movies, pamphlets, sects and creeds that defend the theories of reincarnation, Hell, purgatory, contact with the dead and the worship of spirits. All these have a common root: the belief of the immortality of the soul.

LIFE, DEATH... THEN WHAT?

In order to understand the process of death we must first understand the process of life, as death is the absence of life.

How did life begin? *"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."* Genesis 2:7. Here we see the presence of three elements: dust, breath of life, and living being. The *being* or living soul, and psyche, are the result of the union of the other two.

Dust + Breath of Life = A Living Being
Body + Spirit = A Living Soul
Soma + Pneuma = Psyche (Greek)

In different fields the same thing happens. For example, water (H₂O) is the combination of two molecules of hydrogen and one of oxygen.

We see then that *"all created beings live by the will and power of God. They are dependent recipients of the life of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life."* *The Desire of Ages*, p. 785. His Spirit is what gives us life, therefore it is now easier to understand what death is, which is the opposite of life.

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:7. **"... thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust."** Psalms 104:29.

Matter (body) - Breath of life (spirit, breath) = Death.

We have come to the biblical conclusion that death is the absence of the body's spirit of life. But...

IS MAN CONSCIOUS IN DEATH?

The dead know nothing. *"For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing..."* Ecclesiastes 9:5.

Their feelings die with them. *"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. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."* Ecclesiastes 9:6, 10.

Their thoughts perish. *"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."* Psalms 146:4.

They know nothing, not even of their loved ones. *"His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them."* Job 14:21.

They do not even praise God. *"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence."* Psalms 115:17.

WHAT IS DEATH COMPARED TO?

Jesus compared it to sleep. *"These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth... but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead."* John 11:11-14.

The dead are asleep until the awakening in the resurrection. *"But man dieth... and where is he?... Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."* Job 14: 10, 12.

As a flower and shadow: *"Man... cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."* Job 14:1, 2.

We have seen that the dead know nothing; they are unconscious. But is that man's final destiny? The Bible says, **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."** Hebrews 9:27. Man will have one of two sentences: eternal life or eternal death. **"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."** Daniel 12:2.

We'd like to remind you that God desires you to be saved and enjoy eternal life. **"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."** Deuteronomy 30:19.



WILL WE SEE THOSE WHO HAVE DIED?

God wants to grant eternal life to the dead at the glorious resurrection of those who died believing in Christ. **"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."** Isaiah 26:19.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven... and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.

"... But we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump... and the dead shall be raised incorruptible... For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality... then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Corinthians 15:51-54.

For the believer, for he that has this hope there is still comfort if death has taken a loved one. How wonderful to know that this reunion will no longer be subject to pain, distance, time, or illness, but it will be in a new earth! **"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."** Revelation 21:4.

There is still one more sentence, which is defined as "the second death." **"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire... This is the second death."** Revelation 20:14, 15.

"And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 4:3. There is only one alternative. Which group do you choose to be in? God desires your salvation; He wants you to enjoy eternal life!

CURRENT DANGERS

The majority of movies allude directly or indirectly to life after death. New religious and philosophical tendencies are a mix of immortality of the soul, reincarnation, contact with the dead, and Spiritism currently known as **"parapsychology"**, surrounding us with sensory phenomena called **"paranormal."** Let's break them down one by one:

