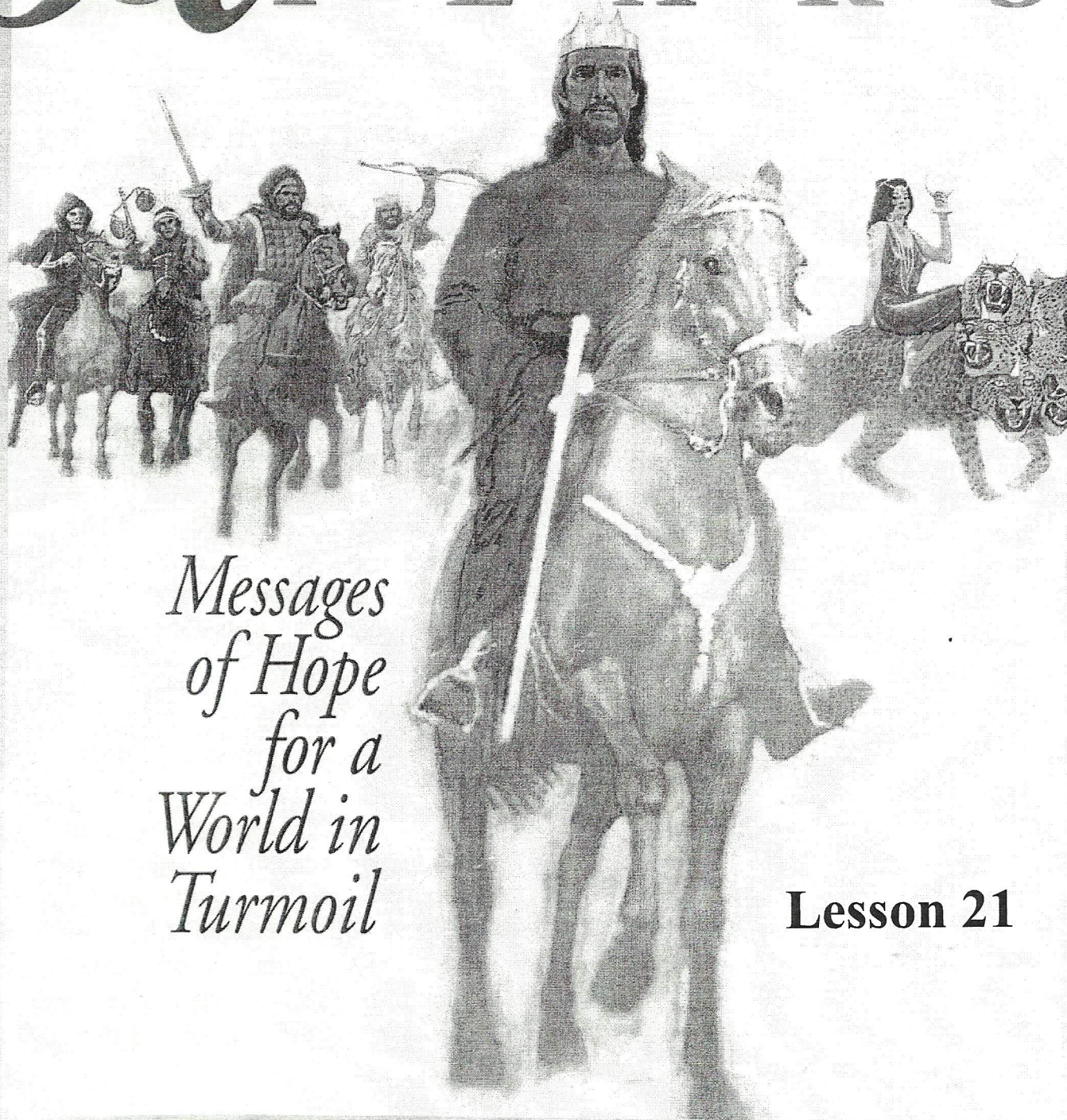


Revelation

S P E A K S



*Messages
of Hope
for a
World in
Turmoil*

Lesson 21

The Great Occult Explosion

[This chapter is based on Revelation, Chapter 18]

Revelation reveals an unprecedented increase of interest in the occult in the last days of human history. This occult explosion is Satan's final attempt to take the world captive through his deceptions. Speaking through the serpent, Satan deceived Eve into thinking obedience was unnecessary. Throughout the centuries, Satan has used spiritualism to deceive thousands.

The entire system of spiritualism is based on two fundamental principles. First, that human beings are naturally immortal and that they have an immortal soul which survives bodily death. Second, that under some circumstances the dead can break the barrier of silence between the dead and the living to communicate with the living.

Sir Oliver Lodge, the prominent English spiritualist, states: "There is no death in the graveyard. I have frequent talks with the dead." Even some American churchmen have dabbled in spiritualism in recent years. Episcopal Bishop James Pike's son committed suicide in a New York City apartment in 1966. While studying the Dead Sea Scrolls at Cambridge University in England, the bishop began to observe a series of bizarre happenings in his apartment. As a result, he believed his son was trying to contact him. This led him to seek out one of England's leading spiritualists. In a seance, he claimed to have contacted his son. When asked about Jesus, the so-called son declared: "Dad, He's a good man, a wonderful moral teacher but not the Son of God."

Revelation - 2

What source would claim that Jesus was not God's Son? What source would so capture Bishop Pike's thinking that he would be led on an excursion to his own death in the desert *near* the Dead Sea? Spiritualism has a supernatural power which is real! Satan is playing the game of life for the minds of men and women.

In this chapter we shall unmask his devices. Throughout the centuries men and women have asked: "What happens when a person dies?" "What is beyond the grave?" "Can the dead communicate with the living?" The answers are clearly revealed in the Bible.

1. Who dwells in spiritual Babylon? Revelation 18:2.

2. How will Satan attempt to deceive thousands? Revelation 18:23.

3. Is it possible for Satan to work miracles to deceive people? Revelation 16:13, 14.

4. Why will many be deceived and receive the Mark of the Beast? Revelation 19:20.

5. Is it possible for Satan to masquerade as an angel of light or, for that matter, as one of our dead loved ones? 2 Corinthians 11:14.

NOTE: Satan is a great impostor. If it serves his purpose, he will appear as an angel of light working through churches that have disregarded God's commandments. As he did with Saul, he can even pretend to be a dead friend or loved one claiming to have a message from God.

A fascinating *story* is recorded in 1 Samuel 28. *After* disregarding the counsel of God, Saul sought for wisdom from the witch of Endor. He requested an audience with the dead prophet, Samuel. The witch claimed she had brought Samuel up from the grave. When the woman asked Saul what he saw, he claimed it was a "spirit ascending out of the earth." 1 Samuel 28:13. The spirit had the appearance of Samuel! Saul followed the counsel of the spirit. Rather than repenting of his sin and leading Israel into a great revival, he listened to an evil spirit. The next day his armies were defeated. In utter despair he fell upon his own sword and killed himself. 1 Samuel 31:3, 4.

Spiritualism leads to death! The concept of the immortality of the soul is preparing thousands to be deceived through Satan's spiritualistic deceptions.

6. Did God place an immortal soul within man when he was created? How was man created? Genesis 2:7.

NOTE: The Bible does not teach that God placed a soul in man at creation. It rather specifically states that God formed man (body) out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul (person or being). To state it in equation form: body + breath = living soul.

The King James Version of the Bible uses the term *soul* 1,600 times. Never once does it use the term *immortal soul*. Human beings may use it freely, but the Bible never uses it. The idea of the immortal soul entered the church through Greek philosophy.

7. Is the soul mortal or immortal? Can the soul die? Ezekiel 18:4.

NOTE: "Mortal" means subject to death. "Immortal" means not subject to death, imperishable.

8. How does the Bible describe man in his present condition? Job 4:17.

9. For what do we seek? Romans 2:7.

10. When will we receive immortality? 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.

11. Who only has immortality now? 1 Timothy 6:15, 16.

12. Are human beings conscious at death? Ecclesiastes 9:5.

Revelation - 4

13. What about the thought processes? Do they continue after death? Psalm 146:3, 4.

14. What other term is applied to the breath that returns to God? Job 27:3.

NOTE: The spirit and the breath are the same throughout Scripture. That which returns to God is His life-giving power. It is not a functioning, conscious entity. It was not conscious before it entered human beings, and it is not conscious when it leaves.

15. Can the dead worship God? Psalm 115:17; 6:5.

16. When will the dead meet their Lord? 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Job 14:12-15.

17. Who has the keys to the grave? Revelation 1:17, 18.

18. How did Jesus prove He has the ability to raise the dead to life? John 11:39-45.

NOTE: Death is a peaceful sleep until the return of Jesus. There is no consciousness of the passage of time in the grave. For the righteous, the next event after death is redemption. Death for the believer is no more to be feared than a rest in the arms of the loving Saviour. Fifty-three times the Bible calls death a sleep. Lazarus was dead for four days. He is absolutely silent regarding what happens when one dies. If he were in heaven for those four days, he would have protested returning to earth. He was resting or sleeping like all the righteous do until the climax of the ages, when Jesus calls them forth. Since Jesus raised Lazarus, it is positive proof He has power over the grave.

19. Since Jesus alone has immortality and will grant it to us at the second advent, how can we be sure to receive it? 1 John 5:11, 12.

My Response

☐ I want to receive the gift of eternal life Jesus has for me.

☐ It is clear to me that death is a sleep until the resurrection.