

# The Latent Power of the Soul

by Watchman Nee

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*Watchman Nee's sermon explores the latent power of the soul and its implications for spiritual warfare and discernment in the modern age.*

**Scripture:** Revelation 18:11

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "The Nature of the Soul"

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## Description

Watchman Nee delivers a profound message on 'The Latent Power of the Soul,' emphasizing the distinction between the spirit, soul, and body, and how the fall of Adam has confined the inherent power of the soul. He warns that in the last days, Satan seeks to exploit this latent power, turning souls into commodities for manipulation and control. Nee highlights the importance of understanding the spiritual warfare at play, urging believers to rely on the Holy Spirit rather than the deceptive allure of soul power. He stresses that true power comes from God and that Christians must be vigilant against the temptations of the flesh and the enemy's schemes. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a deeper relationship with God to navigate the challenges of the end times.

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## Transcript

And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls . . . and cattle, and sheep, and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves (Gr.bodies); and souls of men. (Rev. 18.11-13) Please note here that in this passage the list of merchandise commences with gold and silver and ends with souls of men. Gold and silver, horses and chariots are all natural commodities which can be bartered. Even slaves can be bartered or traded-yet this is a trading in human bodies. Further, though, is an exchanging of the souls of men as merchandise.

So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. (1 Cor. 15.45,46)

And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (Gen. 2.7)

Over the past two years I have felt strongly the need of giving such a message as will now be given. It is a message both intricate and profound. It will not be easy for the speaker to speak nor for the hearers to

understand. For this reason, I did not insert this message into Part Three of The Spiritual Man.\* Yet I have always felt I should give it, especially after having read various books and magazines and having had contact to a certain extent with the people of this world. I sense how precious is the truth we are privileged to know. In view of the current situation and tendency of the church as well as of the world, we are constrained to share what is given to us. Otherwise we will be hiding the lamp under a bushel.

What I would mention in the message for our consideration today concerns spiritual warfare and its relation to the end of this age. Now for the sake of those who have not read The Spiritual Man, I will briefly touch on the trilogy of spirit, soul, and body.

### Trilogy of Spirit, Soul, and Body

"And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground" (Gen. 2.7). This refers to the human body. "And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." This describes how God gave spirit to man; it was Adam's spirit. So man's body was formed of the dust of the ground, and man's spirit was given to him by God. "And man became a living soul." After the breath of life had entered into his nostrils man became a living soul. The spirit, the soul, and the body are three separate entities. "May your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire" (1 Thess. 5.23. The spirit is God-given; the soul is a living soul; and the body is God-formed.

According to common understanding the soul is our personality. When the spirit and the body were joined, man became a living soul. The characteristic of the angels is spirit and that of the lower animals such as beasts is flesh. We humans have both spirit and body; but our characteristic is neither spirit nor body but soul. We have a living soul. Hence the Bible calls man soul. For example, when Jacob went down into Egypt with his family, the Scriptures tell us that "all the souls of the house of Jacob, that came into Egypt, were threescore and ten" (Gen. 46.27. Again, those who had received Peter's word on Pentecost were baptised and "there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2.41. Hence soul stands for our personality, for what makes us as man.

What are the various functions of spirit, soul, and body? These have already been explained in Part One of The Spiritual Man. But I was most happy one day to find on the bookshelf a volume of Andrew Murray's writings in which is to be found an explanation of the spirit, soul, and body in the appended notes that is quite similar to our interpretation. What follows is a quotation from one of the notes: I

In the history of man's creation we read, 'The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground'thus was his body made-'and breathed into his nostrils the breath' or spirit 'of life': thus his spirit came from God; 'and man became a living soul.' The spirit quickening the body made man a living soul, a living person with the consciousness of himself. The soul was the meeting-place, the point of union between body and spirit. Through the body, man, the living soul, stood related to the external world of sense; could influence it, or be influenced by it. Through the spirit he stood related to the spiritual world and the Spirit of God, whence he had his origin; could be the recipient and the minister of its life and power. Standing thus midway between two worlds, belonging to both, the soul had the power of determining itself, of choosing or refusing the objects by which it was surrounded, and to which it stood related.

In the constitution of these three parts of man's nature, the spirit, as linking him with the Divine, was the highest; the body, connecting him with the sensible and animal, the lowest; intermediate stood the soul, partaker of the nature of the others, the bond that united them and through which they could act on each other. Its work, as the central power, was to maintain them in their due relation; to keep the body, as the

lowest, in subjection to the spirit; itself to receive through the spirit, as the higher, from the Divine Spirit what was waiting (sic) it for its perfection: and so to pass down, even to the body, that by which it might be partaker of the Spirit's perfection and become a spiritual body. (Andrew Murray, *The Spirit of Christ*. Fort Washington, PA, Christian Literature Crusade, 1964. Note C: The Place of the Indwelling, p227-228.)

What is the spirit? That which makes us conscious of God and relates us to God is the spirit. What is the soul? It is that which relates us to ourselves and gives us self-consciousness. What is the body? It causes us to be related to the world. C. I. Scofield, in his reference Bible, explains that the spirit gives God-consciousness, the soul self-consciousness, the body world-consciousness. Horse and ox are not conscious of God because they have no spirit. They are only conscious of their own beings. The body causes us to sense the world—such as our seeing the things of the world, our feeling hot or cold, and so forth.

What is mentioned above refers to the functions of spirit, soul, and body. I will now come to the very important problem here. Many view this matter of spirit, soul, and body as being related only to spiritual life; but we need to realize that it is also relevant to spiritual work and warfare. We tend to compare ourselves as being almost equal to Adam before his fall. We assume that since we are human beings just as Adam was, there is not too much difference between us. We think that what we cannot do, neither could Adam do. But we do not see that there are two things here: (a) that on the one hand, it is true that we cannot do what Adam could not do; yet also (b) that we cannot do what Adam could do. I am afraid we do not realize how capable Adam was. If we study the Bible carefully we will understand what kind of man Adam actually was before his fall.

#### Adam's Authority and Physical Prowess

"And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. 1.27,28). Have dominion over the earth, says God.

Friends, have you ever thought how immense the earth is? Suppose a master asks a servant to manage two houses. He makes the appointment on the basis of the latter's ability to take care of them. No one servant is able to handle all the houses located on a given lane, for he cannot do what is beyond his ability. A hard master may demand his servant to do a little more than his duty requires, but never will he demand his servant to undertake anything beyond his ability. Would God, then, ask Adam to do what he was incapable of doing? We can therefore conclude that if Adam was capable of managing the earth, his prowess was most certainly superior to ours today. He had power, ability, and skill. He received all of these abilities freshly from the Creator.

Although we may not rate Adam's power as being a billion times over ours, we can nonetheless safely reckon it to be a million times over ours. Else he would not have been able to perform the duty commanded him of God. As for us today, though, if we were required to merely sweep a lane three times daily, we would not be able afterwards to straighten our back. How then could we possibly rule the earth? Yet Adam not only ruled the earth but he also had dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, and every living thing on the earth. To rule is not just to sit by doing nothing. It requires management and work. From a seeing of this we should recognize the superior power which Adam in fact possessed. It far exceeds our present situation.

But do you think that this insight is something new? Actually this is the teaching of the Bible. Before his fall Adam had such strength that he never felt tired after work. It was only after his fall that God told him, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread."

#### Adam's Brain Power and Memory

"And out of the ground Jehovah God formed every beast of the field, and every bird of the heavens; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them; and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof" (Gen. 2.19). My friends, is this not marvelous? Suppose you were to take a dictionary and to read all the names of the animals; would you not confess that you could neither recognize nor memorize them all? Yet Adam gave names to all the birds and animals. How intelligent he must have been! Those of us who are not so brilliant would no doubt soon give up the study of zoology once we saw our inability to memorize all the details. But Adam was not one who memorized these zoological names; he was the denominator, for he gave names to all. Hereby do we know how rich and perfect was Adam's rational power.

#### Adam's Managerial Power

"And Jehovah God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Gen. 2.15). From looking into how Adam governed the earth let us now dwell somewhat on the things which God charged him to do. God commanded him to dress the garden of Eden. This needed to be done systematically. How big was the garden? Genesis 2.10-14 mentions four rivers; namely, Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel and Euphrates. They all flowed from Eden and divided into four river regions. Can you imagine now how big the garden was? How strong must Adam be to be charged with dressing a land which was surrounded by four rivers! He was not only to dress it but also to keep it; to keep the garden from being invaded by the enemy. Therefore the power which Adam had in that day must have been tremendous. He must have been a man with astounding ability. All his powers were inherent in his living soul. We may look upon Adam's power as supernatural and miraculous, but so far as Adam was concerned these abilities were not miraculous but human, not supernatural but natural.

Did Adam use up all his powers on that day? From what can be seen in our study of Genesis, he had not exhausted his power. For after he was newly created by God, but before he could manifest all his abilities, he fell.

What was the bait which the enemy used in enticing Eve? What did the enemy promise her? It was this: "In the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3.5). "Be as God" was the enemy's promise. He told Eve that notwithstanding the power which she already possessed there was still a great chasm between her and God, but that if she ate this fruit she would then have God's authority, wisdom, and power. And on that day Eve was tempted and fell.

#### The Power God Gave to Adam

We are not, by our probing in this fashion, being inordinately curious; we only desire to know what God actually gave to Adam. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1.26). The words "image" and "likeness" may seem to be alike in meaning and may therefore appear repetitious. But in Hebrew the word "image" does not point to physical likeness, rather it denotes moral or spiritual similarity. Someone has put it as: "change into likeness"; that is, "to be conformed to a likeness". The purpose in God creating man is for man to be transformed according to His image. God wanted Adam to

be like Him. The devil said, "Ye shall be as God." But God's original intention was that Adam should be transformed to become like Him.

From this we conclude that before the fall Adam had in him the power to become like God. He possessed a hidden ability which made it possible for him to become like God. He was already like Him in outward appearance, but he was ordained by God to become like Him morally (I use the word "morally" to indicate that which is above the material, not what merely points to man's good behavior). Thus are we shown how much loss mankind has suffered through the fall. The magnitude of the damage is probably beyond our imagination.

### The Fall of Man

Adam is a soul. His spirit and body are joined in his soul. That astonishing power which we have just mentioned is present in Adam's soul. In other words, the living soul, which is the result of the coming together of the spirit and the body, possesses unthinkable supernatural power. At the fall, though, the power which distinguishes Adam from us is lost. Yet this does not mean there is no longer such power; it only denotes that though this ability is still in man, it is nonetheless "frozen" or immobilized. According to Genesis 6, after the fall man becomes flesh. The flesh envelops the whole being and subjugates him. Man was originally a living soul; now, having fallen, he becomes flesh. His soul had been meant to submit to the spirit's control; now it is subject to the dominion of the flesh. Hence the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever, for that he also is flesh" (Gen. 6.3). When God here mentioned man, He called him flesh, for in His eyes that was now what he was. Consequently it is recorded in the Bible that "all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth" (Gen. 6.12); and again, "upon the flesh of man shall it (the holy anointing oil, representing in type the Holy Spirit) not be poured." (Ex. 30.32); and further, "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom. 3.20).

Why do I dwell at some length on this? In Revelation 18 things are mentioned which shall come to pass in the last days. I indicated at the very beginning how man's soul will become a commodity in Babylon—that which can be sold and bought. But why is man's soul treated as a commodity? Because Satan and his puppet the Antichrist wish to use the human soul as an instrument for their activities at the end of this age. When Adam fell in the garden of Eden his power was immobilized. He had not lost this power altogether, only it was now buried within him. He had become flesh, and his flesh now enclosed tightly this marvelous power within it. Generation has succeeded generation with the result that this primordial ability of Adam has become a "latent" force in his descendants. It has turned to become a kind of "hidden" power. It is not lost to man, it is simply bound up by the flesh.

Today in each and every person who lives on earth lies this Adamic power, though it is confined in him and is not able to freely express itself. Yet such power is in every man's soul just as it was in Adam's soul at the beginning. Since today's soul is under siege by the flesh, this power is likewise confined by the flesh. The work of the devil nowadays is to stir up man's soul and to release this latent power within it as a deception for spiritual power. The reason for my mentioning these things is to warn ourselves of the special relationship between man's soul and Satan in the last days.

We have already seen how Adam possessed special supernatural ability, though in actuality what he had was not at all special or supernatural, however much it may appear that way to us today. Before his fall Adam could quite naturally exercise this ability with ease, since it was embodied in his soul. But after his fall, this power of his was interned by his body. Formerly the body was a help to Adam's powerful soul;

now the soul had fallen, and his power was circumscribed by the shell of the flesh. Satan, however, attempts to break open this fleshly shell and to release the power dormant in man's soul in order to gain control over man. Many do not understand this strategy, being deceived into accepting it as of God.

### Viewing Religiously

Yet this does not happen in Christianity alone. The Babylonians, the Arabs, the Buddhists, the Taoists, and the Hindus all try in their respective way to release the power which Adam has left to our soul. In any religion, using whatever means or ways of instruction, there stands a common principle behind all their apparent differences. This common principle is to aim at overcoming the outward flesh so as to deliver the soul power from all kinds of bondage for freer expression. Some lessons of instruction given in these religions are directed at destroying the obstruction of the body, some at uniting the body and the soul, while some are aimed at strengthening the soul through training and thus enabling it to overcome the body. Whatever the ways may be, the principle behind them all is the same. It is important to know this or else we will be deceived.

I do not know how people are informed of the marvelous energy dormant in man's soul, the release of which, presently bound by the flesh, will result in the display of miraculous power even to the attaining of the status of a "fairy" or "buddha". Probably they are all informed by the devil, the evil spirit. Their elucidations may vary, nevertheless the underlying principle is the same, which is, the use of special means to release the power of the soul. They may not employ, as used by us, this terminology of soul power; yet the fact is unmistakable. For example, in Buddhism and Taoism, and even in some sects of Christianity, special supernatural power is available to all of them to perform miracles in the healing of diseases and in predicting the future.

Take as an instance the ascetic practices and breathings of Taoism or even the simplest form of abstract meditation: these are all done according to the one principle of subjugating the body under the soul with the purpose of releasing the latter's power. No wonder many miraculous things do happen which we cannot simply dismiss as superstition. Buddhism was originally atheistic. Gautama Siddharta was an atheist. This is the consensus of many scholars and critics on the teaching of Buddhism. He believed in the soul's transmigration as well as in nirvana\*. (\* That state, according to The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, "of absolute blessedness, characterized by release from the cycle of reincarnations and attained through the extinction of self." ) Now I have no intention here of lecturing on Buddhism; I only wish to explain why and how many a wonder has been performed in this religion.

In Buddhism there is the teaching on escaping the world. Those who take the Buddhist vow must abstain from marriage and meat. They must not kill any living thing. Through ascetic practices they may eventually attain to the elimination of all food. Some monks of high degree can even pierce the unknown past and predict the future. They perform many wonders by Buddhist magic. When what they call their "heart blood" flushes, they are able to foretell the things to come. The engaging in all these different kinds of abstinences and ascetic practices flows from one single governing principle: the Buddhist is attempting to break all physical and material bonds so as to get his soul power released.

I know some people, my seniors in age, who joined the Unity Club. They and their fellow-Club members practice abstract meditation and so forth. They tell me that each degree they enter into has its own magnitude of light. The light they perceive follows the truth they penetrate. I believe in what they say, for they are able to be liberated from the suppression of the body and so release the power which Adam

possessed before his fall. There is really nothing extraordinary about it.

The modern-day Church of Christ, Scientist was founded by Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy. She denied the existence of sickness, pain, sin, and death (though Mrs. Eddy has already died. Since according to her teaching there is no such thing as sickness, whenever one is sick he only needs to exercise his mind against any recognition of pain and he will be healed. This means, then, that if one believes in no sickness he will not be sick. So too, if he does not believe in sin he will not sin. By training man's will, mind, and emotion to the point of absolutely denying the existence of these things-viewing them as false and deceptive he will find them nonexistent indeed.

When this teaching was first promulgated, it was opposed by many people. Physicians especially opposed it, for if this were true, then there would be no need for physicians. Yet following their examination of those people healed by the Christian Scientist, these doctors were unable to repudiate it as false. Consequently, more and more people believe; even many famous scientists and physicians embrace this teaching. This is not at all surprising, though, since there is a reservoir of tremendous power in the soul just waiting to be released from the confines of the flesh.

### Viewing Scientifically

Let us now view this matter scientifically. The field of psychology has undertaken unprecedented research in the modern age. What is psychology? The word itself is the combination of two Greek words: "psyche" which means soul and "logia" which means discourse. Hence psychology is "the science of the soul". The research engaged in by modern scientists is but a probing into the soul part of our being. It is limited to that part, the spirit not being touched.

Modern parapsychology began with Franz Anton Mesmer. His first discovery, made in 1778, is now known as mesmerism (hypnotism as practised by Mesmer himself). His disciples excelled him through their own discoveries, just as the green which is derived from the blue excels the blue. Some of their experiments are almost unbelievable in results. Their method not unexpectedly is to discharge that hidden power within man's soul. For example, in clairvoyance (the power to perceive things which are out of the natural range of human senses) or telepathy (communication by scientifically unknown or inexplicable means, as by the exercise of mystic power), people are able to see or hear or smell things thousands of miles away.

It has been said that mesmerism "is the rock from which all mental sciences . . . were hewn."\* (\*Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis, Soul and Spirit. Poole, Dorset, England Overcomer Literature Trust, 1968?, p.67. Also available in the United States from Christian Literature Crusade, Fort Washington, Pa.) Before the time of Mesmer psychic research was not an independent branch of science; it occupied only an insignificant place in natural science. But due to these astonishing discoveries, it has become a system of its own.

I wish to draw your attention not to the study of psychology but to the fact that all these miraculous phenomena are obtained through the release of the latent power of man's soul, that ability which was hidden in man after the fall. Why is this called "latent" power? Because in Adam's fall God had not withdrawn from him that "supernatural" power which he once possessed. Instead, this power fell with him and became imprisoned in his body. The power was there; only it could not be expressed. Hence the term latent power.

The phenomena of our human life such as speaking and thinking are abilities which are quite remarkable; but the latent power that is hidden in man is also striking. And were this power to be activated, many more

remarkable phenomena would be displayed in our life. The many miraculous occurrences which modern parapsychologists discover in no way attest to their supernatural character. They merely prove that the latent power of the soul may be released by the appropriate means.

A list of some of the 'discoveries' which followed the obtaining by Mesmer of the basic knowledge of the mysterious forces latent in the human frame, shows how amazingly the movement advanced, once man had obtained the key. In 1784, a pupil of Mesmer's discovered 'clairvoyance' as the result of Mesmeric sleep, and incidentally stumbled upon 'Thought Reading'.\* (\*Penn-Lewis, op. cit., p.67.)

Telepathy-being communication between mind and mind otherwise than through the known channels of the senses-enables a person to use his own psychic force to ascertain another's thought without the need of being told. "Hypnotism, Neurology, and Psychometry . . . and numberless other 'discoveries' followed as the years went by."\* Now hypnosis is an artificially induced sleep-like condition in which an individual is extremely responsive to suggestions made by the hypnotist. Not only man, even lower animals can also be hypnotised. And psychometry is the discovery that the mind can act outside the human body and that the 'psychometric sensitive' can read the past like an open book. Then came a discovery, called statuvolism, signifying a peculiar condition produced by the will, in which the subject can 'throw his mind' to any distant place, and see, hear, feel, smell and taste, what is going on there. Then . . . came a discovery . . . called 'Pathetism' . . . By this the mind could withdraw itself from the consciousness of pain, and cure diseases.

At first, scientific men only followed up these 'discoveries' as branches of Natural Science . . . .\*

But due to multiplication of these miraculous phenomena, parapsychology soon became a science itself. To the practitioners of this science these many miraculous phenomena are quite natural. To us believers they are even more natural. For we know they are merely the consequences of the releasing of the latent power of the soul. \*Penn-Lewis, op. cit., p.67-68.

Psychologists declare that within man is a tremendous array of power: the power of self-control, creative power, reconstructive power, the power of faith, the power of quickening, the power of revivification. These can all be released by men. One psychology book even goes so far as to proclaim that all humans are gods, only that the god is imprisoned within us. By releasing the god within us we all become gods. How alike are these words to those of Satan!

### The Common Rule

Whether it is in China or in Western nations, all these practices of breathing, ascetic exercise, hypnosis, prediction, responses, and communications are but the release and manifestation of the power within. I suppose we have all heard something of the miraculous acts of hypnosis. In China are fortune-tellers whose feats of prediction are well-known. Each day they interview only a few customers. They have devoted much time and energy in perfecting their art. And their predictions are amazingly accurate. Buddhists and Taoists have their miraculous performances too. Though evidence of deception is not lacking, apparently supernatural manifestations are undeniable.

The explanation for these phenomena is simple they either by chance or at the direction of the evil spirit hit upon some way or ways of ascetic practice that enable them to perform extraordinary feats. Common people do not know they have this power in themselves. Others with some scientific knowledge know this power is hidden in them, though they cannot tell how it is so. We who have been taught of God know that

this ability is the latent power of man's soul which is now bound in the flesh through Adam's fall. This power had fallen with man, so that according to God's will it should not be used any further. But it is Satan's desire to develop this latent ability so as to make man feel he is as rich as God in accordance with what Satan had promised. Thus will man worship himself, though indirectly it is a worship of Satan.

Hence Satan is behind all these parapsychic researches. He is trying his best to use the latent energy of the soul to accomplish his goal. For this reason, all who develop their soul power cannot avoid being contacted and used by the evil spirit.

G. H. Pember, in his book *Earth's Earliest Ages*, has stated this matter from still another angle:

It appears that there are two methods by which men can acquire unlawful power and knowledge, and gain admittance to a prohibited intercourse. He who would follow the first . . . must so bring his body under the control of his own soul that he can project his soul . . . . The development of these faculties is, doubtless, possible but to few, and even in their case can only be compassed by a long and severe course of training, the object of which is, to break down the body to a complete subjection, and to produce a perfect apathy in regard to all the pleasures, pains, and emotions, of this life, so that no disturbing elements may ruffle the calm of the aspirant's mind and hinder his progress . . . The second method is by a passive submission to the control of foreign intelligences ....\* (\*G. H. Pember, *Earth's Earliest Ages*. New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d., p.251254.)

What we would especially pay attention to here is the first method, that is, activating the latent power of one's own soul. His view coincides with ours completely. The ascetic practices of the Buddhists, the breathing and abstract meditation of the Taoists, the meditation and thought concentration of the hypnotists, the silent sitting by those in the Unity Club, and all the varieties of meditations, contemplations, concentrated thought to no thought at all, and hundreds of similar actions which people practice, follow the same rule-however varied their knowledge and faith may be. What all do is nothing more than bring man's external confused thought, wavy emotion, and weak will to a place of tranquillity, with his flesh completely subdued, hence making possible the release of the soul's latent power. The reason this is not manifested in every person is because not all can break through the barriers of the flesh and bring all common psychic expressions to perfect calmness.

#### Some Facts

Several years ago I made the acquaintance of an Indian. He told me of a friend of his in Hinduism who could reveal secrets of people accurately. Once he wished to test the ability of his Hindu friend. So he invited him to his home, and sure enough the Hindu was able to reveal everything that had been put into each drawer of the home. Later my Indian acquaintance asked his friend to go outside and wait while he wrapped a most valuable object in cloth and paper before placing it in a box and depositing it in a locked drawer. His Hindu friend returned inside and was able to reveal what the valuable object was without error. This was unquestionably due to the exercise of soul power that was able to penetrate all physical barriers. Mrs. Jessie PennLewis, whom we have quoted earlier, once wrote the following:

I once met a man in North India, who had access to the highest circles of society in Simla, the summer seat of the Government of India, who told me one evening of his connection with the Mahatmas in India and in other countries of Asia. He said that he knew of great political events weeks and months before they came to pass. 'I do not depend for news on telegrams and newspapers. They only record past events, we know events before they take place,' he said. How can a man in London know the events

happening in India, and viceversa? It was explained to me that it was through `soul-force' being projected by men who knew the secret of the Mahatmas.\* (\*Overcomer magazine for 1921-23, quoted in Mrs. Jessie Penn-Lewis, Soul and Spirit. Poole, Dorset, England, Overcomer Literature Trust, 1968?, p.55-56. Also available in the United States from Christian Literature Crusade, Fort Washington, Pa.)

In quoting from Wild's Spiritual Dynamics, Pember has recorded that an adept can consciously see the minds of others. He can act by his soul-force on external spirits. He can accelerate the growth of plants and quench fire; and, like Daniel, subdue ferocious wild beasts. He can send his soul to a distance, and there not only read the thoughts of others, but speak to and touch those distant objects; and not only so, but he can exhibit to his distant friends his spiritual body in the exact likeness of that of the flesh. Moreover . . . the adept . . . can . . . create out of the surrounding multiplex atmosphere the likeness of any physical object, or he can command physical objects to come into his presence.\*\* \*\*Pember, op. cit., p.252.

### The Christian's Attitude

These miraculous phenomena in religion and science are but the manifestation of man's latent power which in turn is used by the evil spirit. They all follow one common rule: to break through the bonds of the flesh and release the power of the soul. The difference between us (the Christians) and them lies in. the fact that all our miracles are performed by God through the Holy Spirit. Satan makes use of man's soul force to manifest his strength. Man's soul power is Satan's working instrument, through which he works out his evil end.

God, though, never works with man's soul power, for it is unusable to Him. When we are born again, we are born of the Holy Spirit. God works by the Holy Spirit and our renewed spirit. He has no desire to use soul power. Since the fall God has forbidden man to again use his original power of the soul. It is for this reason that the Lord Jesus often declares how we need to lose our soul life, that is, our soul power. God wishes us today not to use this soul power at all.

We cannot say that all the wonders performed in the world are false; we have to acknowledge that many of them are real. But all these phenomena are produced by the latent power of the soul after Adam's fall. As Christians we must be very careful in this last age not to stir up soul's latent energy- either purposely or unwittingly.

Let us return again to the Scriptures read at the beginning. We notice that at the end of the age the particular work Satan and the evil spirits under him will do is to trade in man's soul power. The aim is simply to fill this world with the latent power of the soul. One correspondent to the Overcomer magazine made the following comparison: "the forces of Psyche (soul) arrayed against the forces of pneuma (spirit)." (\*As quoted in Penn-Lewis, op. cit., p.55.) All who have spiritual insight and sensitivity know the reality of this statement. Soul power is rushing towards us like a torrent. Making use of science (psychology and parapsychology), religion, and even an ignorant church (in her seeking excessively supernatural manifestations and in her not controlling supernatural gifts according to the guidance of the Bible), Satan is causing this world to be filled with the power of darkness. Yet this is but Satan's last and final preparation for the manifestation of the Antichrist. Those who are truly spiritual (that is, those who reject soul power) sense all around them the acceleration of opposition from the evil spirits. The whole atmosphere is so darkened that they find it hard to advance. Nevertheless this is also God's preparation for the rapture of the overcomers.

We need to understand what soul power is and what this force of the soul can do. Let me say that before the Lord's return similar things to these will be greatly increased, perhaps even more than a hundred-fold. Satan will perform many astonishing feats by utilizing this soul power so as to deceive God's elect.

We are now drawing nearer to the time of great apostasy. "The momentum is increasing rapidly," observed Mrs. Penn-Lewis. "The hand of the Arch-enemy of God and man is on the helm, and the world is rushing to the dark hour, when, for a brief period, will actually be the 'god of this age', ruling through a superman whose 'parousia' (appearance) cannot long be delayed."\* (\*Penn-Lewis, op. cit., p.69.) What is soul power? By going to the Scriptures and under the illumination of the Holy Spirit believers ought to realize that this power is so hellish as to spread over all nations on earth and to turn the whole world into chaos.

Satan is now engaging this soul power to serve as a substitute for God's gospel and its power. He tries to blind people's hearts, through the marvel of soul force, into accepting a bloodless religion. He also uses the discoveries of psychic sciences to cast doubt upon the value of supernatural occurrences in Christianity-causing people to consider the latter as likewise being nothing but the latent power of the soul. He aims at substituting Christ's salvation with psychic force. The modern attempt to change evil habits and bad temperaments by hypnosis is a forerunner to this objective.

The children of God can be protected only by knowing the difference between spirit and soul. If the deeper work of the cross is not applied to our Adamic life and by the Holy Spirit a real life union is effected with the Resurrected Lord, we may unwittingly develop our soul power.

It may be helpful here to quote again from Mrs. Penn-Lewis.

'Soul-force' versus 'Spirit-force' is the battle ground today. The Body of Christ is by the energy of the Holy Spirit within her, advancing heavenward. The atmosphere of the world is thickening with psychic currents behind which are massed the aerial foes. The only safety for the child of God is an experimental knowledge of the life in union with Christ wherein he dwells with Christ in God, above the poisonous air in which the prince of the power of the air carries on his work. The Blood of Christ for cleansing. The Cross of Christ for identification in death. The Power of the Risen Ascended Lord by the Holy Ghost, continually declared, laid hold of and wielded, will alone bring the members of the Body through in victory to join the Ascended Head.\* (\*Penn-Lewis, op. cit., p.70.)

My hope for today is that you may be helped to know the source and the operations of the latent power of the soul. May God impress us with the fact that where soul force is, there also is the evil spirit. We must not use the power which comes from us, rather must we use the power which proceeds from the Holy Spirit. May we especially deny the latent power of the soul, lest we fall into Satan's hand. For the soul's power has, through Adam's sin, already fallen under the dominion of Satan and has become the latter's working instrument. We therefore need to exercise great caution against Satan's deception.

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