

Dangers of the Occult

There are only two sources of supernatural power available: God and Satan.

So if we involve ourselves in the supernatural realm in any way, we enter in by one of these two ways. Obviously, as Christians, we need to be sure we enter in only through God, through the blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Occult practices are not new, we read about them in the Bible as early as in Exodus.

Exodus 7:22 - The Egyptian magicians competed with Aaron and his staff and did the same miracle.

Exodus 8:7 - Again they did the same.

Exodus 8:18 - This time they could not do it.

From this we see that there is no limit to what God can do, but there is a limit to what the devil can do. We are on the winning side! Our God has the Victory! Hallelujah!

When God was preparing his people the Israelites to enter the Promised Land, he gave them many commands as to how they were to live once they arrived. One very important command is concerning occult practices:

Deut 18:9-14: *“When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the Lord your God. The nations you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery or divination. But as for you, the Lord your God has not permitted you to do so.”*

This is not because God is a killjoy, it is because He knows the source of these things and wants to protect His people from the dangers of involvement in them.

Ecc 1:9-10: *“What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one can say, “Look! This is something new”? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time.”*

The devil has no more power today than he had in the days when the Israelites were entering the Promised Land, and he has no new practices. But what he does do, is try to disguise the same old things with different names in order to deceive us.

Sacrificing sons and daughters: Still happens today in witchcraft circles.

Divination: “The art or practice that seeks to foresee the future or discover hidden knowledge by using supernatural powers.”

Under the category of Divination today are things like: Clairvoyance, Psychic Powers, Hypnosis, Hypnotherapy, Astrology, Horoscopes, Mind Reading, Fortune Telling by means of Crystal Ball, Palm Reading, Tarot Cards, Mind Blanking etc.

If we involve ourselves in any of these things, we open the door wide to the devil and allow his demons entry into our lives. Notice in Deut 18:9-14 God mentions both those who *practice* these things and those who *listen* to them. Both fall under His judgement.

Sorcery: “The art and practice of using magical power especially with the aid of evil spirits.”

Today Sorcery covers things like Powers of Healing and practices of Witch Doctors. It’s important to remember that these things are being performed through a supernatural power source and very often will work. A person may well appear to be healed, but the spiritual consequences for that person are very serious because they have been ministered to by evil spirits.

Interprets Omens: An Omen: “An event or phenomenon believed to be a sign of some future occurrence.”

Any kind of superstition comes under this heading of Interpreting Omens.

In Luke 21 Jesus tells us to interpret the signs of the times. He tells us what the signs of the end of the age will be, and indeed we can see many of them taking place in these days. But to go outside the boundaries He set is dangerous.

Engages in Witchcraft: Witchcraft: “The use of sorcery or magic.”

Halloween is today’s most well known celebration of this. Thought by many (even some Christians) to be just innocent fun, but it is a dangerous way of having fun. Much evil goes on behind the scenes in witches’ covens in an attempt to ensnare young people as a result of their participation in Halloween. Also Freemasonry is heavily involved in witchcraft practices.

Casts Spells: A Spell: “A spoken word or form of words held to have magic power.”

This is having influence over people or circumstances by supernatural power and things like Telepathy, ESP, etc. would fall under this category.

As Christians of course, we can and should have power to influence people and circumstances, but through the supernatural power of prayer to our Father through the Name of Jesus Christ, and through speaking with the authority that He gave us.

Medium or Spiritist: “A person through whom others seek to communicate with the spirits of the dead.”

Holding Seances, playing with the Ouiji Board, etc. come in this category.

These people will give so called messages from the dead and they will often be things that no one else could know, thus convincing the seeker that they are really making contact with their lost loved one. The reason they are able to give accurate information of course, is that the knowledge is coming from the demonic realm.

Consults the Dead: The practice of Mediums and Spiritists.

It's worth saying here that people who practice any of the above forms of occult fall into two different categories:

1. Those who know fully the evil powers they are involved with and are totally aware they are serving the devil, i.e. satanists.
2. Those who are deceived into thinking they have some kind of "gift" that enables them to do these things. They may even believe the gift is from God!

Very often these people will appear to be lovely people, but 2 Cor 11:14 warns us that satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. The truth is, that to "perform" in any of these ways involves tapping into a supernatural power. Only Born Again Believers in Jesus Christ have access to the supernatural power of God, through the Name of Jesus and through the gifts He give us. [1Cor.12] Any other route of access into a supernatural power is into the wrong power, that of the devil, and is therefore demonic.

Other Suspect Practices

Homeopathy, Reflexology, Aromatherapy, Accupuncture, Yoga, Martial Arts such as Karate, Judo, etc. These type of things usually have their roots in eastern mystical religions that in themselves involve many of the "hard" occult practices we've already looked at. These "suspect" practices are the devil's way of luring us into his supernatural realm without us realising where we are going. "Come into my parlour" said the spider to the fly!

The devil is ruthless and heartless, he uses many subtle ways of getting us into his territory and he starts when we are very young. Look at children's stories, pantomimes, etc. How many of them involve supernatural happenings, magic, etc. that are obviously nothing to do with God?

Just innocent fun and amusement for children?

Or is it the devil's way of getting a grip on the minds of people while they are young?

Is it his way of introducing young minds to his supernatural realm, so that as we grow up our minds are dulled and numbed to the truth behind it all, and then we are easily led into more serious forms of occult without realising how evil they are?

Finally, **Acts 19:19-20**: *"A number who had practised sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power."*

If we have been involved in any occult practices, either actively or just as listeners, it is very important that we renounce it and repent of it, and if we have **any** items related to occult practices or deceptive practices, in our possession, we need to get rid of them.

Not only does that release us and set us free from bondage, we can see from Acts 19:20 that it also acts as a release for the Word of God to spread.