

Witchcraft

Introduction:

1. The Bible teaches that the enemy of man is real while also describing the tactics he uses in seeking to destroy lives and souls.
2. One of Satan's lies is the promise of power if one will worship him (Luke 4:5-7).
3. Many – some of whom do not even believe in Satan – believe this promise of power from a source other than God.
4. The word 'occult' means "hidden or secret" and refers to that which is not revealed.
5. The practice of occult arts is an attempt to achieve power (in one form or another) from this hidden source.
6. Whether it is believed or not, all occult practices and powers are linked to Satan.
 - a. God has revealed Himself and His Word.
 - b. Anything not from God is of the Devil.

I. What Is Witchcraft in the Bible?

- A. The first time the word "witch" is found in the Bible, God declared: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exo. 22:18).
- B. The Hebrew word means, "To whisper a spell; to incant or enchant; to practice magic, sorcery, or witchcraft."
- C. This word appears earlier in Exodus 7:11 where it is translated as "sorcerers."
- D. The Hebrew word for "witchcraft" refers to "divination" (1 Sam. 15:23; cf. Deut. 18:10).
- E. The New Testament word for "witchcraft" is *pharmakeia* (ψαρμακεια) and refers to the use of drugs or poisons (Gal. 5:20).
 1. Some would use such things to alter a person's perceptions, claiming mystical powers.
 2. This word is translated as "sorceries" in Revelation 9:21 and 18:23.
- F. The word translated "bewitched" in Galatians 3:1 means, "To speak evil of one; to fascinate (by false representations); thus, to charm or bewitch."
- G. Simon the Sorcerer gives a clear representation of witchcraft in Bible times (Acts 8:9-25).
 1. Twice it is stated that he "bewitched" people (vs. 9, 11).
 2. This Greek word means, "To astound, astonish, amaze; to throw into wonderment; to be out of one's mind or beside one's self."
 3. To do this, he practiced sorcery or magic – *mageuo* (μαγευω).
 4. This word comes from *magos* (μαγος), referring to a mage or magi – Oriental wise men who practiced a mixture of science and sorcery.
 - a. This word came from Babylon into Hebrew and then to Greek.
 - b. It is the word for the Wise Men who followed the star to find the young child Jesus (Matt. 2).
 - c. It came to be used for false prophets and sorcerers.

The Occult

5. Using deceptive magic, Simon had convinced the people of Samaria that he was "the great power of God."
 6. However, both Simon and the people were astounded when they witnessed true miracles performed by Philip the evangelist.
 7. Though sorcerers claimed great power, in reality they only possessed the power of deception.
- H. Thus, in the Bible, witchcraft referred to the practice of divination, enchantment, and magic for malevolent purposes.
- II. What Is Modern Witchcraft?
- A. In modern times, when witchcraft is mentioned, it is usually with sympathy toward witches as an oppressed and misunderstood group.
 - B. Society is given a watered down, utopian view of witchcraft in fiction stories, television shows, movies, and even news reports and documentaries.
 - C. From its earliest practice, witchcraft has been a form of nature worship, seeking to control nature for health, weather, and agriculture.
 - D. Modern Wicca claims to be this kind of practice and discounts black magic, evil forces, and the term 'witchcraft.'
 - E. Over time, these practices came to be associated with evil spirits of the dead, demons, and Satan.
 1. At its roots, witchcraft is Satanic, because it comes from the Devil.
 2. Modern Satanism is different from witchcraft, but they share a common source.
 - F. Modern witchcraft is a religion that worships gods (plural, male and female) in a form of pantheism.
 1. Thus, they deny that Jesus is the Son of God (cf. John 3:16).
 2. Their highest deity is the goddess of fertility, birth, and rebirth.
 3. Her counterpart is the god of death and the afterlife.
 - G. A belief in reincarnation is based on the cycle of the seasons.
 - H. They believe that humans possess mystical powers that can be used for good or harm.
 1. Retribution will be visited upon one three-fold.
 2. This will take place in this life.
- III. The Bible Response to Witchcraft
- A. Idolatry is condemned (Exo. 20:3; Mat. 4:10; John 17:3).
 - B. Witchcraft is condemned (Exo. 22:18; Lev. 19:26, 31; 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:10-13; 2 Kin. 9:22; 21:6; 23:24; Isa. 47:9; Mic. 5:12-13).
 - C. Jesus is the only Savior of man (Acts 4:12; John 14:6; 1 Thes. 5:9-10).
 - D. Reincarnation is a false doctrine (Heb. 9:27; Jam. 4:14; Eph. 5:16).
 - E. Witchcraft denies the Day of Judgment and eternal rewards or punishment (Acts 17:30-31).
 - F. Witchcraft is rooted in evil error and is a lie of Satan!