

## THE OCCULT

The dictionary definition of *occult* is “matters regarded as involving the action or influence of supernatural or supernormal powers or some secret knowledge of them.”<sup>1</sup> Another information source says, “the occult, in the broadest sense, is a category of supernatural beliefs and practices which generally fall outside the scope of religion and science, encompassing such phenomena involving otherworldly agency as mysticism, spirituality, and magic. It can also refer to supernatural ideas like extra-sensory perception and parapsychology.”<sup>2</sup>

Key words to understanding the occult in these statements are *secret, supernormal, supernatural, mysticism, and magic*. Basically, the occult involves hidden or secret beliefs and practices, supernatural in nature, that cannot be logically explained and escape human understanding. Occultic beliefs and practices fall outside of God’s will for His human family. Examples of the occult include divination, astrology, enchantment, witchcraft, charming, consulting familiar spirits, fortune telling, wizardry, and necromancy.

Humans, being curious and believing the occult to be innocent, have dabbled in these practices throughout history, but all of them are an **abomination to God**. For example, as the Israelites were about to enter the land God promised, He said to them, “**When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you. You shall be blameless before the LORD your God**” (Deuteronomy 18:9-14).

From the magicians of Egypt to the sorcerers of the New Testament and the many forms of occult practices today, God’s family of faith is always warned to steer away from and have nothing to do with them. **Why?** Because they tempt persons to venture

into dark places that God does not want them to visit or they embrace spiritual or supernatural powers other than the One True Spirit of God.

### The Bible and the Occult

In the various translations of the Bible, the word *occult* can be found 12 times – seven in the Old Testament and five in the New Testament.<sup>3</sup> Many other biblical references are made specifically to occult *practices*, without actually mentioning the word occult. Some of these will be cited directly. Every use of the word *occult* and references to practices associated with it have negative connotations because they sidestep God. They seek the use of powers reserved only for our Mighty God. All are similar in nature. Here are the primary occult practices mentioned in the Bible, with explanations and biblical references:

#### Divination

Divination is defined by Merriam-Webster as “the art or practice that seeks to foresee or foretell future events or discover hidden knowledge usually by the interpretation of omens or by the aid of supernatural powers.” God has always shown the way for his human family. This has occurred by direct communication, via chosen prophets, the biblical message recorded by any scribes and, most of all, by coming to this earth personally as Jesus of Nazareth who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (**John 14:6**). Divining anything other than by God’s Spirit is clearly addressed in scripture: **Deuteronomy 18:10-13; 1 Samuel 15:23; Jeremiah 27:9; Acts 16:16-18.**

#### Astrology

Astrology is defined as “the divination of the supposed influences of the stars and planets on human affairs and terrestrial events by their positions and aspects.”<sup>1</sup> This relates directly to divination, just explained. Human affairs are directed by God, not by the normal motion of matter in the universe. When any heavenly body has signaled earthly events, God was the source of them (**Isaiah 38:7-8; Matthew 2:1-2**). Some good scriptures on astrology can be found in **Deuteronomy 4:19; Isaiah 47:13-14**, and **Galatians 5:20-21 (ESV)**.

#### Enchantment

Enchantment sounds innocent enough in today’s languages. In biblical times and since, enchantment involves a diviner, magician, fortune teller, necromancer or astrologer casting a spell or putting a curse on someone or some thing. It is the practice of magical arts, control using magical words and rites by a power other than that of God, i.e., satanic power. A few Bible passages addressing enchantment done by diviners,

magicians, astrologers, and others can be found in **Leviticus 19:26, 2 Kings 21:6** and **Revelation 18:23**.

### Witchcraft

Our friends in ministry say “Witchcraft and its many cousins, such as fortune-telling and necromancy, are Satan’s counterfeits to holy spirituality. The Bible expressly condemns all forms of witchcraft.”<sup>3</sup> People seek supernatural powers and experiences from the satanic world when they should be seeking them from the Holy Spirit of God. Witchcraft under the Old Covenant carried a penalty of death (**Deuteronomy 18:9-13**). In the New Covenant of grace by faith in Jesus Christ, though free from the Law, we are informed that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God (**Galatians 5:19-21**). Those who would desire to spend eternity in God’s presence should only seek the mighty power of the Spirit of God.

### Charming

Charming is the practice of casting spells by an enchanter or magician. The magicians of Egypt practiced charming in front of Moses but were overpowered by the hand of God (**Exodus 8:16-19**).

### Consulting With Familiar Spirits

Familiar spirits, a term used in the Old and New Testaments, refers to demonic spirits close or near to persons, like mediums or sorcerers, who communicate with them. Children of God should have nothing to do with such consultations. Biblical references against consulting with familiar spirits include **Leviticus 19:31; Deuteronomy 18:9-13; 2 Kings 21:6; Isaiah 8:19; and Ephesians 6:12**.

### Fortune Telling

Fortune tellers are either 1) fakes or deceivers who have no clue about your future or fortunes, telling you something made-up for the purpose of making money; or 2) persons who, like those consulting with familiar spirits, tap the demonic world and pass along true or false information about your future, again for the purpose of making money. Like all other forms of the occult, the Bible provides stern warnings like **Deuteronomy 18:10-12; 1 Chronicles 10:13-14; and Acts 16:16-19**.

### Wizardry

A wizard is one who practices magic or sorcery by tapping into unknown powers apart from the power of God. Harry Potter books and films have made wizardry very popular today. Unfortunately, the central themes of wizardry are witchcraft, casting spells, and other practices previously noted. While children and their parents perceive all of this

to be harmless entertainment, the Bible strongly warns against involvement in any form of wizardry or spiritism outlined in this article. **Deuteronomy 18:10-11** is the strongest warning of many. If these practices are detestable in the sight of God, why would you want to embrace them? As followers of Christ, you are encouraged to fill your minds with **“whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – think about such things” (Philippians 4:8)**. Many today are filling their minds with things that are not true, noble, right, pure, lovely, or admirable. Most importantly, wizardry is an affront to God because He is not the source of its practices and wizardry presumes power not explained. Ask yourself this question – what is the source of the power, real or imagined?

### Necromancy

Necromancy is magically conjuring dead spirits to reveal future events or influence them. The word is used interchangeably in various translations of the Bible with sorcery, divination, and other forms of spiritism detested by God. Necromancy is to be avoided by the people of God **(Leviticus 19:26; Deuteronomy 18:10, and Galatians 5:19-20)**.

### Path to the Occult

Many believe the occult to be harmless and, out of curiosity, start dabbling with things they believe to be innocent like ouija boards, Tarot cards, palm reading, or relying on their daily horoscope. Even if, at first, they don't put much credibility in the answers they get or the futures predicted for them, increasing reliance on an unknown power can become a dangerous reality about which Paul warned Timothy – **“the Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron” (1 Timothy 4:1-2)**.

### Closing Thoughts

Occultic practices should be avoided altogether because they are a substitute for the power of God. The Bible makes it clear that such things are an abomination to God. They either summon the demonic world and the powers of darkness or they deceive curious persons and trap them in those powers at some point. The Holy Spirit of God is the one true power to Whom you need to be connected through Jesus Christ.

There are other spirits in the universe besides the Holy Spirit of God and human spirits. We encourage you to read our article entitled [The Spirit World](#). We also encourage you to **“be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power,”** putting on the whole armor of God and by being spiritually alert **(Ephesians 6:10-18)**.

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This is an introduction on the subject of **The Occult**. Here are a few other resources you may wish to explore:

<sup>1</sup> [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Occult - Wikipedia](#)

<sup>3</sup> [What does the Bible say about witchcraft / witches? Should a Christian fear witchcraft? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[What is the occult? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[What Does the Bible Say About Occult? \(openbible.info\)](#)

[The Nine Forbidden Practices of the Occult \(ericbarger.com\)](#)

[Spiritual Warfare: Forbidden Practices of the Occult \(healingdeliverance.net\)](#)

[Bible and Occult: Witchcraft, Wicca, Spiritualism, Psychics, Sorcery \(gospelway.com\)](#)

[What Does the Bible Say About Astrology? \(openbible.info\)](#)

[What's a Biblical Description of Witchcraft? \(probe.org\)](#)

[Charmer in the Bible \(4 instances\) \(knowing-jesus.com\)](#)

[Familiar spirits – What are they? \(compellingtruth.org\)](#)

[What should be the Christian view of Harry Potter? | GotQuestions.org](#)

[What does the Bible say about necromancy? | GotQuestions.org](#)