

# The Occult, Witchcraft & Superstitions

**Introduction:** Many people today either practice or believe in the **paranormal** - This deals with experiences that are beyond the five senses and are extra-sensory or mystical in nature. ESP is a catch phrase. You will often hear it referred to as a sixth sense, or third eye, which enables one to see something that the ordinary person is unable to sense or see. --- Then, there is belief in the **supernatural**, but not the Bible kind - This is the manipulation of natural laws through such things as psychokinesis or telekinesis (the movement of objects through the mind) or levitation. --- Next, many folks believe in the **occult** - This refers to things that are hidden or secret; which are somehow hidden in symbols, but able to be revealed by a few. --- Finally, there are perverted beliefs **about God**. There is Monism - Man and the universe are all part of the same universal energy or life force. The ultimate goal of monism is to experience this oneness with the universe through an alteration of one's consciousness. Various chants or mantras maybe employed to this end or even drugs. Pantheism - That a god, goddess or some divine energy pervades the universe. That we are all part of this divine force and that there is no distinction between humans and nature or god.

## Need For Study:

- 1) It's Popularity - TV shows like Angel; Charmed; Buffy, the Vampire Slayer; X- Files; Ghost Whisperer; Medium; etc. Movies are too many to even count. And books galore. --- Police departments use psychics to solve crimes. --- Colleges offer classes on various aspects of the occult.
- 2) Little children are being greatly exposed to it - Pokemon, Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, Chronicles of Narnia; Dungeons and Dragons, Sabrina the teenage witch, etc. Many computer games like World of Warcraft have fantasy worlds of the occult; then there are ouija boards and eight balls which may all have an innocent toy-like appeal, but must be considered.
- 3) The Ignorance of many make it a needed study
- 4) It is a Bible subject, thus worthy of attention
- 5) It has the potential to be Spiritually detrimental, to say the least.

**Definitions:** The word occult means secret things, hidden - not to be confused with religious cults, though these sometimes dabble in the occult or may even be primarily devoted to such. Efforts are made to search into the unknown and unrevealed, especially the future. -- Modern witchcraft will be discussed later, but in the Bible it is synonymous with sorcery and basically means to use potions, spells, wizardry or enchantments. -- Superstitions are things done or avoided due to a thought of how outcomes might be affected. In the Bible it was more just being very religious.

I) **Divination or fortunetelling** (that pertaining to God; to foresee - the Bible word is "sorcery"). This is probably the most popularly used of all occult practices.

- A) Augury (the reading of certain signs). The best known are Tarot cards, crystal balls, tea leaves, numbers, and palm reading. There are many others less known.
- B) Direct Influence (mediums). ie. Jeane Dixon, gurus of the east, or other so-called clairvoyants. New Age Channeling would fall into this category.
- C) Scriptures: Acts 8:9-10; 13:8; 16:16
- D) Condemnation: Ex. 22:18; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 2:18; Rev. 21:8; 22:15  
Greek "Pharmakeia" = drugs, magic potions = sorcery

II) **Necromancy** (consulting the dead, seances, "familiar spirits")

Scripture: The witch (medium) of Endor - I Sam. 28:7-16  
Condemnation: I Chron. 10:13; Lev. 19:31; 20:27

III) **Astrology** (dividing the heavens, "soothsayers" - not to be confused with astronomy...study of outer space)

Horoscopes - "What sign are you?" In music: "When the moon is in the seventh house, and Jupiter aligns with Mars..."

Condemnation: Lev. 19:26; Isa. 47:12-15; Acts 7:41-43. "star of your god Remphan" (Saturn?); "worship the host of heaven"; "golden calf" (Taurus, the bull?)

#### IV) Demonology (influence of evil spirits)

Products: charms, incantations, superstitions, voodoo dolls, lucky jewelry

Scriptures: Isa. 3:18-20 - "amulets" (charms) "crescents"; I Sam. 15:23 - sin of witchcraft;  
Gen.35:1-4 - idol gods and earrings put away.

Modern Practices:

Positive - rabbit's foot, four leaf clover, wearing crosses, sign of the cross;  
"cross my heart and hope to die", crossing fingers; penny in the doorway,  
horseshoe, knock on wood, no changing socks or underwear so as not to jinx,  
casting salt over shoulder etc.

Negative - black cat crossing path, broken mirror, walking under a ladder, opening an  
umbrella indoors, Friday, the 13th, etc.

#### V) General Condemnation

Scriptures: Deut. 18:9-14; Acts 19:18-20

\* The occult is incompatible with Christianity for at least seven reasons:

1. Futile in the end - Remember Isa. 47?
2. Seeks unrevealed things - Notice conclusion Scripture reference
3. Denies the sufficiency of the Scriptures - II Tim. 3:16-17
4. Rejects Christ as sole mediator - I Tim. 2:5
5. It is forbidden - see many passages above
6. Worships the creation rather than the Creator - Romans 1:21-25
7. It is idolatry! - God has been dethroned and something else has taken His place.

**Conclusion:** Remember, the secret things belong to **God** - Deut. 29:29

**A Word About Modern Witchcraft** - Modern practitioners of witchcraft dislike being called witches and prefer to be called practitioners of Wicca or "Wiccans." This term comes from an Anglo-Saxon word for "wise ones." They worship a creator, but the creator is both male and female. They do not see god as being above, in the heavens, but as being all around us in the earth. The god or goddess of Wicca is creative energy or nature. The reason why their god is depicted with horns is because he represents both man and animal. They have many names for their god such as Pan, Kerminos, Mars, Zeus, Apollo, Thor, and Odin. They claim they do not worship many gods, but rather, one god and one goddess with many names. Wiccans are pantheistic and believe that all things are part of God.

Witches today deny that they believe in or worship the devil. Neither do they believe that hell exists. They do believe that "self" always comes first because the body is a temple. They also believe that upon death their spirit will become part of the natural energy of creation (the god/goddess) and will be channeled into whatever is next.

The modern Wiccan movement can be traced back to Gerald B. Gardner (1884-1964) who is considered the founder of contemporary witchcraft. As a student of the occult, Gardner used his occult research to originate modern witchcraft. In 1954, Gardner's book, *Witchcraft Today* was published. Witches refer to their groups as a nest, grove, circle or coven (first used in 1662) which consists of thirteen people, both men and women, and are led by a high priest or priestess. The Wiccan religion is based

on the natural cycles of the earth and all things celestially. They normally meet weekly (usually a Friday night) or twice a month during the full and new moon. These meeting times are called esbats. They also celebrate eight major festivals during the year called sabbats. They are the spring equinox (March 21), the fall equinox (September 21), the Yule (December 21), the summer solstice (June 21), Samhain (October 31), Imbolc or Candlemas (February 2), Beltane (May 1), and Lammas (August 1).

Closely connected with witches is the occult practice of magick which is the use of charms, spells, or rituals to produce supernatural effects or control and forecast natural events. This differs from the kind of magic (spelled with only a "c") that is the use of sleight of hand techniques for the purpose of amusement.

