



*What Does the Bible Teach  
About Christians and the  
Dark Arts*



# Meddling in the Dark Arts

- ◆ From the amusing Sorcerer's Apprentice of Disney
- ◆ To the ludicrous imagery of Anton LeVay of the church of Satan
- ◆ To the disturbing conduct of Satanists
- ◆ To the entertaining antics of Harry Potter and Constantine
- ◆ To the eerily odd customs of the Wiccan religion
- ◆ Images of the dark arts have evolved over the years into forms attractive to contemporary culture



# There Are Two Types of Sorcery Or Witchcraft:

- ◆ The authentic kind where actual demon possession was involved; limited to the five great periods of miraculous activity in the Bible
  - Acts 19:13-16
  - Matt. 8:28-32

## Acts 19:13-16

- ◆ “Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches. 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you? 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”

## Matt. 8:28-32

- ◆ “When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. 29 And suddenly they cried out, saying, What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time? 30 Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding. 31 So the demons begged Him, saying, If You cast us out, permit us to go away into the herd of swine. 32 And He said to them, Go. So when they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea, and perished in the water.”



## There Are Two Types of Sorcery Or Witchcraft:

- ◆ The kind that is fraudulent involving the use of mind, mood, and consciousness altering drugs and deceitful tricks; designed to ensnare and control people
  - 1Sam. 28:7-14 - Witch of Endor
  - Acts 8:9-19 - Simon the Sorcerer



# Fraudulent Sorcery

- ◆ We live in the time of the second
  - However, there is great danger in this kind; it can have spiritually destructive effects
  - People can get lost in it
  - Commit all manner of sin in it
  - Lead others into sin
  - Abandon God by default

# Sorcery is Sin in the Bible

- ◆ Gal. 5:19-21 - “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”





# Sorcery is Sin in the Bible

- ◆ Rev. 9:21 - “And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.”
- ◆ Rev. 18:23 - “The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.”
- ◆ Note the frequent association of sorcery and deceit



# Answering Questions About The Dark Arts

- ◆ What are the dark arts?
- ◆ Why is it sinful?
- ◆ What does it have to do with me?

# What Is Sorcery?

- ◆ “Sorcery: Magic; enchantment; witchcraft; wizardry; thaumaturgy; divination by the assistance of spirits; the power of commanding evil spirits” (Webster's)
- ◆ Sorcery is the exercise of the dark arts or other forms of supernatural insight or ability apart from the sanction of God
- ◆ Magic tricks, which generally involve illusion but not the religiosity, are not under discussion here (although they can be part of the deception of contemporary dark arts)



# What Is Sorcery?

- ◆ What is under consideration is anything involving claims of use of supernatural forces:
  - voodoo
  - magic spells
  - witchcraft in any form
  - tarot card, psychic, and palm readings
  - séances
  - astrological readings including horoscopes
- ◆ Why is this important? Some people consider such things to be at worst a superstitious carry over from a more ignorant past; others view it as a more or less harmless pastime

# Why Is Sorcery Wrong?

- ◆ From the beginning, God established that He is the spiritual power to whom people should turn
  - Ex. 20:3-5 - “You shall have no other gods before Me. 4 You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me”
  - Ex. 34:14 - “for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God”



## Col. 2:6-10

- ◆ “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. 8 Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; 10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

# Why Is Sorcery Wrong?

- ◆ There are spiritual forces of darkness
  - Eph. 6:12 - “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”
- ◆ Satan can appear as an angel of light
  - 2Cor. 11:14 - “And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.”
- ◆ Satan is called the god of this world
  - 2Cor. 4:4 - “Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.”

# Why Is Sorcery Wrong?

- ◆ The Bible implies that spiritual forces of darkness have had power
  - The sorcerers in Pharaoh's palace were able to turn their staffs into snakes, turn the Nile to blood, and brought forth a plague of frogs by their secret arts - Ex. 7:11-12, 22, 8:7
  - However, they were not able to create a plague of lice and declared it to be the finger of God - Ex. 8:16-19
  - This indicates a difference between what they were doing and what God was doing; they recognized real power when they saw it as opposed to the deceit they were practicing



# Why Is Sorcery Wrong?

- ◆ The witch of Endor conjures up the soul of Samuel for Saul, and appears shocked that it worked - 1Sam. 28:7-20
- ◆ The burning of books of magic arts as repentance can be repentance from the sin of deceit as well as doing the will of Satan
  - Acts 19:18-19 - “And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. 19 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver.”



# Why Is Sorcery Wrong?

- ◆ Whether it is the case that the Adversary actually had supernatural gifts he was able to grant to his followers during the periods of miraculous activity in the Bible
- ◆ Or, if it is simply the case that the powers were based on deceit and drugs alone,
- ◆ Or, if it is the case that God permitted the use of such powers as an opportunity to manifest His own power over them



# Why Is Sorcery Wrong?

- ◆ Regardless of which is true, these things must be understood:
  - That in every case, the practice of the dark arts is always a sin
  - The practice of the dark arts is an affront to God and His power
  - The practice of the dark arts always does harm to the practitioner and to those deceived by him



# God's Children Have No Need For The Dark Arts

- ◆ Our trust and confidence is to be in God alone
  - Heb. 11:6 - “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”
  - Rom. 1:16-17 - “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith”



# God's Children Have No Need For The Dark Arts

- ◆ Our trust and confidence is to be in God alone
  - Acts 26:18 - “To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.”
  - 1Thes. 1:9-10 - “For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”

The background of the slide features a dark, atmospheric image. On the left side, there is a close-up of bright orange and yellow flames, appearing to rise from the bottom. In the center and right, a dark, shadowed skull is visible, its features partially obscured by the light from the fire. The overall tone is somber and dramatic, fitting the theme of the text.

# God's Children Have No Need For The Dark Arts

- ◆ Eph. 6:10-13 - “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”



# God's Children Have No Need For The Dark Arts

- ◆ Why would we turn to that which is against what is good and holy?
- ◆ Why seek psychics when we can pray to God?
- ◆ Why look to stars for guidance when we can commune with the Creator
- ◆ Why tinker with witchcraft when we can do good and obtain eternal life?
- ◆ How can we fight on the Lord's side while meddling with darkness?

# Drugs Are Often Part Of The Dark Arts

- ◆ Gal. 5:20 - Greek pharmakeia (from which we derive the word pharmacy) - “the use or the administering of drugs; poisoning; sorcery, magical arts” (Thayer's)
- ◆ “Medication (pharmacy), i.e. magic (literally or figuratively), sorcery, witchcraft” (Strong's)



A background image featuring a human skull on the left side, partially obscured by bright, orange and yellow flames that appear to be rising from the bottom left corner. The rest of the background is solid black.

# Drugs Are Often Part Of The Dark Arts

- ◆ “Witchcraft - farmakeia, from farmakon, a drug or poison; because in all spells and enchantments, whether true or false, drugs were employed. As a drug, it might either be the means of removing an evil, or inflicting one; it is derived from feron akov, bringing ease, or feron acov, bringing pain. So spells and incantations were used sometimes for the restoration of the health; at others, for the destruction of an enemy. Sometimes, these farmaka were used to procure love; at other times, to produce hatred” (Clarke’s Commentary).

# Drugs Are Often Part Of The Dark Arts

- ◆ “Pretending to witchcraft. The apostle does not vouch for the actual existence of witchcraft; but he says that what was known as such was a proof of the corrupt nature of man, and was one of the fruits of it. No one can doubt it. It was a system of imposture and falsehood throughout; and nothing is a better demonstration of the depravity of the human heart than an extended and systematized attempt to impose on mankind. The word which is here used, (farmakeia, whence our word pharmacy, from farmakon: a medicine, poison, magic potion,) means, properly, the preparing and giving of medicine. Then it means also poisoning, and also magic art, or enchantment; because in savage nations, pharmacy or medicine consisted much in magical incantations. Thence it means sorcery or enchantment, and it is so used uniformly in the New Testament. It refers to the black arts, or to pretensions to witchcraft, and the numerous delusions which have grown out of it, as a striking illustration of the corrupt and depraved nature of man” (Barnes Notes).



# Drugs Are Often Part Of The Dark Arts

- ◆ Does this mean that using medicine is sinful?
  - 1Tim. 5:23 - “No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.”
  - Col. 4:14 - “Luke the beloved physician...”



## Drugs Are Often Part Of The Dark Arts

- ◆ Some drugs are consumed not for medical benefit but for recreational purposes: Most use of marijuana, cocaine, heroin, PCP, methamphetamines, crystal methadone, LSD, ecstasy, opium, and abuse of prescription medications
- ◆ Similarly, these and other drugs are still being used by some practitioners of the dark arts to enhance the deceit (voodoo; séances)

# King Saul and the Witch

- ◆ 1 Samuel 28:7-10 - “Then Saul said to his servants, Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, In fact, there is a woman who is a medium at En Dor. 8 So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him; and they came to the woman by night. And he said, Please conduct a seance for me, and bring up for me the one I shall name to you. 9 Then the woman said to him, Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life, to cause me to die? 10 And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, As the LORD lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing.”



# King Saul and the Witch

- ◆ Lev. 19:31 - “Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.”
- ◆ Lev. 20:6 - “And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people.”
- ◆ Lev. 20:27 - “A man or a woman who is a medium, or who has familiar spirits, shall surely be put to death; they shall stone them with stones. Their blood shall be upon them.”



## King Saul and the Witch

- ◆ The witch reminded him that King Saul conducted a massive campaign against witchcraft, and lives were at risk
- ◆ Saul takes an oath in God's name that she would be unharmed. He descended to the point of undoing the good he had done in the past
- ◆ Saul wanted a shortcut out of the trouble generated by his sin



# King Saul and the Witch

- ◆ Why Saul wanted Samuel: “He was incorrupt; he received no man’s bribe; he had no pension from the state; he enriched none of his relatives from the public purse; he left no private debts to be discharged by his country. He was among the Hebrews what Aristides is said to have been among the Greeks, so poor at his death, that he did not leave property enough to bury him. Justice was duly and impartially administered, and oppression and wrong had no existence. If there ever was a heaven born minister, it was Samuel, in whose public and private conduct there was no blemish.” (Adam Clarke)





## King Saul and the Witch

- ◆ Saul should have started with God.
- ◆ He knew his sin, and cried, “God has departed from me.”
- ◆ This is the lot of everyone who leaves God, discovers that their lives have become out of control, and long for a way to fix it without God.



# A Christian Must Never Meddle In The Dark Arts

- ◆ The use of drugs to enhance the experience is against the law
  - Rom. 13:1-7
- ◆ Those who practice the dark arts cannot go to heaven
  - Gal. 5:19-21
- ◆ The practice of the dark arts is both defiance and denial of God's goodness and power to provide for His children
  - Matt. 6:21-24



# A Christian Must Never Meddle In The Dark Arts

- ◆ In all things let us put our trust in God and Him alone
  - Matt. 6:33 - “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”
  - 1Peter 2:24 - “Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.”