

## The BIBLE and the OCCULT

### Why is the occult such a horrible evil?

God made us, and we belong to him. More than that, he made us unique among all his creatures, in that he has given us the ability to reflect his very character. We bear his image in our very being (Genesis 1:26-27).

Because of these things, we owe him our allegiance, our loyalty and our faithfulness. He alone deserves our worship, our trust and our devotion. Nothing is to have a greater place in our lives; for to give him second place is to give him less than what he rightfully deserves. It is to insult, to offend and to reject him. In fact, it is a denial of everything he is.

The occult and its practices are viewed by some as being somewhere between foolish superstition and innocent child play. Others take it with varying degrees of seriousness. God, however, takes extreme offense at it; for not only it is a denial of all that he is, but it exalts a substitute or counterfeit above him, and gives to it the trust, devotion and place in life that God alone deserves. In addition, the greater a person's participation in the occult, the greater its effect on him, distorting his perspective and influencing his conduct, to the point that everything about him becomes the opposite of the purpose for which God created him.

God made us with a glorious calling: to reflect the very nature of the Creator, in all that we do. He made us for living in a way that is morally upright - the way that Jesus would live, if he were in our circumstances. The occult, like any other sinful practice, tears this glorious calling right out of our grasp. It lowers us, sometimes to the point that we cannot even function like a decent animal.

The occult is, by its very nature, a rejection of all that God is. Because of that, we cannot go after both God and the occult. Many have tried, but we must choose one or the other. To try to follow both is, by definition, a rejection of God. We cannot serve two masters.

### Some of the Different Types of Occult Activity that Exist Today.

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Students of the occult frequently divide occult phenomena into three areas: (1) forms of divination, (2) types of mystical experience, and (3) magical manipulation.

**FORMS OF DIVINATION** (also known as fortune-telling, soothsaying, or augury). A diviner predicts future events, finds lost articles or people, locates underground water, or reveals hidden knowledge. Perhaps the most common example of divination in America today is astrology. Other common types are: palmistry, waterwitching, ouija boards, numerology, biorhythms, pyramidology, the reading of crystal balls, auras, tarot cards, or tea leaves, use of pendulums, interpretation of dreams, and many others. Forms of divination are strictly forbidden in the Scriptures (see Deuteronomy 18:10-14,20). The sinfulness of divination lies in the fact that it demonstrates a lack of trust in the One who holds the future (see Hosea 4:12). Isaiah 47:13-14 predicts an end of the astrologers, while Proverbs 3:5-6 gives the proper response for the believer (trust in the Lord).

**TYPES OF MYSTICAL EXPERIENCES.** These are experiences that transcend the bounds of the ordinary physical world or the five senses. Seeing events as they are occurring hundreds of miles away or an event still in the future, communicating with the dead, and soul travel (out-of-body experiences) are examples of paranormal experiences. Other examples of mystical experiences are: seances, necromancy, telekinesis, some forms of glossolalia, levitation, automatic writing, clairvoyance, trances, materializations, visions, psychic healing (including acupuncture), remembrance of past lives (reincarnation), Eastern forms of meditation such as T. M. (transcendental meditation) or yoga, altered consciousness, and mental telepathy. We are not implying that all mysticism is evil. Christianity has its mystical elements. Our relationship to Christ is a mystical one. However, the mystical experiences in Christianity are always tied to the objective word of God. We are always to try the spirits. (See I John 4:1.) A valid mystical experience is always parallel to the propositional revelation of scripture. A red flag of caution should always be raised when one purports to have received new or additional revelation that is contradictory to scripture.

**MAGICAL MANIPULATION** (not to be confused with the art of illusion). By employing hidden or outside forces in the spiritual realm, occultists say they can manipulate people or nature to conform to their will or the will of the gods. Various rites and ceremonies are often used. Sometimes they are public, but mostly they are accomplished in private. Often they involve very complicated formulas and specific materials. Then the rites are carried out according to astrological calculations.

One who practices magic is known by many terms, some of the most common being sorcerer, witch, wizard, or witch doctor. Several notorious practitioners of magic are mentioned in Scripture: the magicians of Egypt (Exodus 8); King Manasseh (2 Kings 21:1-9); Jezebel (2 Kings 9:22); Simon (Acts 8:9-24); and Bar-Jesus (Acts 13:4-12). Involvement in magical practices was forbidden and punishable by death under the Mosaic Law (see Exodus 22:18; Deuteronomy 18:10-11; Isaiah 47:9-15), and also in the New Testament (see Galatians 5:20; Revelations 18:23-24). The city of Nineveh was destroyed for such abominable practices (Nahum 3:4). When the Messiah comes again, the occult practitioners and their works will be destroyed (Malachi 3:5; Micah 5:12; Revelations 21:8; 22:15). Occult involvement involves giving recognition and allegiance to a power or force other than God. For that reason Scripture defines it as evil and condemns it thoroughly.

### *Some of the Words Related to Occult Activity, That Are Mentioned in the Bible.*

[NOTE: This specific list is based on the NIV. These words will vary somewhat, in different translations.]

1. Sorcerer, sorceress, sorcery
2. Fortune telling
3. Prophecy; (false) prophets; making predictions
4. Diviner, divination
5. Seeking or consulting spirits; consulting (the spirits of) the dead; conjuring
6. Dreams; interpreters of dreams; visions; foreseeing
7. Interpreting omens; seeking omens
8. Medium
9. Spiritist
10. Enchanters
11. Astrologers, astrology, worshipping stars
12. Chaldeans (in some contexts - mainly in the book of Daniel - a synonym for "astrologer"; elsewhere simply a reference to people living in the area of Babylon)
13. Secret arts
14. Witchcraft
15. Magicians, magic, magic arts; magic charms
16. The casting of spells; potent spells; magic spells
17. Magi, "wise men" (in some contexts) [The term "wise men" is also used as a general term for advisers, or for people who have (or appear to have) wisdom.]

## What does the Bible say about the Occult? (an outline)

### **I. It's Incompatibility with God and His Ways.** [See also Section 3, which focuses specifically on false prophets.]

#### **A. Its nature: pretentious, foolish, not from God.**

1. Deceptive, lying, false (applied to dreams, visions, divinations, prophecies, etc.). Examples - Jeremiah 14:14-15; 27:9-10; 29:8-9; Ezekiel 22:28; Zechariah 10:2.
2. Influenced by what the people want to hear - Jeremiah 29:8.
3. An example of how foolish the occult can be: Why consult the dead in behalf of the living? - Isaiah 8:19.
4. Filled with foolish and superstitious practices - Ezekiel 21:21; whispering and muttering - Isaiah 8:19.
5. Not sent by God. Example - Jeremiah 29:9.
6. [See also Section 2f (instances in which occult practitioners may sometimes have accurate results) and Section 3 (false prophets).]

#### **B. Its negative effects and end results**

1. It leaves the people like sheep without a shepherd (no genuine guidance) - Zechariah 10:2-3. [In this passage, God said he would punish the false leaders and restore his flock.]
2. It is a worthless, detestable practice that only results in God's deserved anger. Many verses; two examples - Deuteronomy 18:9, 12 (it even causes the person to become detestable); 2 Kings 17:15, 17 (vs. 13-20). [The reason for this is further explained in the article, "Why Is the Occult Such a Horrible Evil?"]
3. It enslaves people and earns God's judgment. Example: the destruction of Nineveh - Nahum 3:4 (vs. 1-7).
4. Widespread practice of the occult may result in judgment of an entire nation. Occult practices were among the reasons why God had to destroy certain nations and drive others out of their lands - Deuteronomy 18:12; 2 Kings 17:17-20 (context begins at v. 13); 21:2 (see also v. 8); 2 Chronicles 33:2 (see also v. 8).
5. [See also the destructive effects of false prophets, Section 3d.]

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### **II. God's Surpassing Power Contrasted to the Occultists Weak "Results."** (Examples)

#### **A. God can do what they can't.**

1. Joseph could interpret the dreams that Pharaoh's occult leaders could not interpret - Genesis 41:8, 15-16, 24-25. [God revealed the interpretation to him.]
2. God's servants were 10 times better than the occult practitioners - Daniel 1:19-20.
3. Daniel could reveal the dream; the occult practitioners couldn't - Daniel 2. [The occultists claimed that they couldn't, because only the "gods" could do it - Daniel 2:1-13; Daniel claimed that he could, because only "God" could do it (and God had done so, and had revealed it to Daniel) - Daniel 2:25-28.]
4. The occult practitioners could not interpret the dream, but Daniel could - Daniel 4:6-9.
5. The occult practitioners could not interpret the writing on the wall, but Daniel could - Daniel 5:5-17 (+).

#### **B. God can take control when a person resorts to occult practices, and can use what they are doing to accomplish his purposes.**

1. God took control when the King of Moab tried to use the occult to destroy Israel - Numbers 22-24. [Balak, king of Moab, was hoping that he could get Israel cursed, and he offered Balaam a huge reward, if he would do so. Balaam wanted the reward, but God overruled and would not let him curse Israel. See also Joshua 24:9-10 and Nehemiah 13:1-3.]
2. God used the Philistine diviners' advice, to get the ark back to Israel - 1 Samuel 6:2 (+ context). [When the Philistines captured the ark of the covenant, God sent plagues and death to them. So they asked their diviners (etc.) what to do with the ark. God used their advice to get it returned to Israel. (See also Section 5d.)]
3. Saul and the medium at Endor - 1 Samuel 28:3-14. [Saul wanted her to bring Samuel back from the dead. When the medium began to "call up" Samuel (probably a demonic counterfeit who would pretend to be Samuel), God surprised the medium, by sending Samuel himself.]

4. God was going to direct the king of Babylon toward Jerusalem, in order to bring judgment upon the city - Ezekiel 21:18-23. [God would use the king's occult practices to influence his decision.]
5. The Magi ("Wise men") brought gifts to Jesus - Matthew 2:1-2, 7, 16. [There is some debate as to the exact identity of the Magi or "Wise Men." God probably used their gifts to help finance the journey, when Joseph, Mary and Jesus had to flee to Egypt - Matthew 2:13-15.]

**C. God can nullify what they try to do.**

1. The example of Balaam - nothing he did could stop God from blessing Israel - Numbers 24:1 (also 23:23 + context). [This event is recorded in Numbers 22-24, but additional information is mentioned elsewhere in Scripture. For instance, Joshua 24:9-10 and Nehemiah 13:1-3 show us that, even though Balaam claimed (in Numbers 22-24) to be willing to do whatever God wanted, in his heart he wanted the money.]
2. God brings their plans to nothing, while at the same time accomplishing what his own servants have spoken (on his behalf) - Isaiah 19:3; 44:24-26.

**D. They can't change what God purposes to do (even when it involves his intention to judge them for their occult sins).**

1. No sorcery or divination can overrule what God has planned to do - admitted by Balaam, when he tried to curse Israel - Numbers 23:23. (See also 24:1.)
2. An example of a nation that God would punish in spite of their attempts to prevent it through occult practices - Ezekiel 21:28-29.
3. The occultists would be unable to prevent God's judgment from coming upon the people; and the occultists themselves would be destroyed - Isaiah 47:7-15. [Verse 12 (+) - God mocks them for their foolish attempts at preventing God's judgment.]

**E. They can sometimes imitate what God can do, but only to a degree. Example: The occult practitioners in Egypt, when Moses confronted Pharaoh:**

1. Their rods also turned into snakes, but Aaron's rod/snake ate their rods/snakes - Exodus 7:10-13.
2. They could also turn the water into blood - Exodus 7:20-22.
3. They could also get frogs to come up onto the land - Exodus 8:6-7.
4. They could not create gnats... and they recognized that God was doing it - Exodus 8:16-19. [Pharaoh wouldn't admit it.]
5. They couldn't even try to create the boils, because they themselves were covered with them - Exodus 9:10-12.

**F. God may sometimes allow them to have accurate results, but only for a purpose.**

1. The occult is filled with falsehood and lies (see Section 1, about its incompatibility with God and his ways). But we must realize that those who practice it do not always give wrong results. God may allow their predictions to prove right (etc.) in order to prove whether or not our loyalty to God is genuine - Deuteronomy 13:1-5.
2. God may allow accurate results in order to accomplish some other purpose. (See the examples in Section 2b, above.)

**G. New Testament examples of the occult and God's power over it.**

1. The false prophet Bar-Jesus: He opposed the proclamation of the good news (about Jesus), but was strongly rebuked and made temporarily blind - Acts 13:6-12.
2. Paul rebuked an evil spirit that controlled a slave girl, and it left her - Acts 16:16-18.
3. God used Paul to drive out demons at Ephesus; in contrast, some Jewish exorcists tried to drive out a demon (imitating Paul), and the demon overpowered and attacked them - Acts 19:11-16.

### **III. The Specific Case of False Prophets.** [Many of the Verses in Section 1 Also Apply to Them.]

**A. NOTE:** Only a limited number of verses are included in this section of the outline. The Bible says much more about false prophets.

**B. God opposes them, because he did not send them (even though they may claim that he did).**

1. God did not send them - Jeremiah 14:14-15; 23:30-32; Ezekiel 13:6.
2. God is against them - Jeremiah 23:30-32; Ezekiel 13:8-9.

**C. What they say is often influenced by their hearers.**

1. Often based on pleasant things that the people like to hear, such as promises of peace and blessings. Example - Jeremiah 14:13-14.
2. Often based on what the people are willing to pay. Example: A sizeable reward may mean favorable prophecies; the absence of reward may mean unfavorable prophecies against the people - Micah 3:5, 11. [In contrast, God's prophet has authority to speak judgment against such false prophets (vs. 8-12) and the false prophets' response (whether agreeable or not) will have no influence what God's prophet says.]

**D. What they say is false, pretentious and deceptive - especially when they claim that their words come from God.**

1. Lies and falsehood; self-made delusions; "tongue wagging," etc. - various verses, including Jeremiah 14:14; 23:26, 30-32; Ezekiel 13:6-8. [Their message often sounds very positive and affirming, whereas the truth would actually speak about judgment - Jeremiah 14:13.]
2. An expression of their own imagination; they follow their own spirit and have actually received nothing from God - Ezekiel 13:2-3, 7.
3. They claim that God has spoken, when he hasn't - Jeremiah 23:31; Ezekiel 13:6; 22:28.
4. Though they speak lies and falsehood, they may even deceive themselves into thinking that their words will be fulfilled! - Ezekiel 13:6.
5. They often "justify" (excuse) sinful conduct - Ezekiel 22:28.
6. A typical illustration of the conflict between false prophets and God's prophets can be seen in the conflict between Micaiah (a prophet from God) and King Ahab's false prophets - 2 Kings 22:1-40.

**E. What they say has a destructive effect on the people (and even on themselves).**

1. They do not benefit the people, but lead them astray - Jeremiah 23:32; Micah 3:5-12 (the end result: God would send darkness and the nation would be destroyed).
2. They ensnare people, like birds are snared in a trap - Ezekiel 13:20. [In the context of this specific verse, God was going to set free the people they were trying to ensnare.]
3. They discourage the righteous, but encourage the wicked to remain wicked - Ezekiel 13:22.
4. They (and their listeners) will be judged and destroyed - Jeremiah 14:15-16; Ezekiel 13:9; 22:23-31 (they and all the others who do evil - v. 31); Micah 3:5-12 (God would remain silent - vs. 6-7).
5. Sometimes the very things they say cause the judgments that will fall on them. Example - Jeremiah 27:10.
6. [See also Section 4.]

**F. The contrast between God's Word and the false prophets' word - Jeremiah 23:28-29.**

1. God contrasts the false prophet's word to his own Word, by contrasting straw and grain - Jeremiah 23:28. [The grain (representing God's word) has nutritional value; the straw (representing the false prophet's word) may take up space in your stomach, but it is worthless for nutritional value.]
2. The false prophet's worthless dreams are contrasted with God's Word, which is like a fire that can burn things to ashes, or like a hammer that can smash rock to powder - Jeremiah 23:29. [The false prophets' dreams are powerless. In contrast, nothing can keep God's Word from accomplishing its purpose.]

**G. Those who claim to be prophets must be tested, in order to determine whether they are genuine or false.**

1. Any miraculous signs they give (or predict) must occur and they must direct the people's attention toward the God of the Bible - Deuteronomy 13:1-3.
  2. It's not enough that their predictions prove true. God may allow their predictions to take place, in order to test (or prove) the genuineness of our loyalty to him - Deuteronomy 13:3-4.
  3. Those who claim to be prophets, and are not, are preaching rebellion against the true God, and are worthy of death - Deuteronomy 13:5.
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## **IV. The Sinfulness of Participation in the Occult; the Attitude We Should Have Toward It.**

### **A. God forbids involvement in occult practices and he promises severe consequences for those who do.**

1. Don't do it - Leviticus 19:26; Deuteronomy 18:10-11. [God has driven nations from their lands, because of such detestable practices. (Don't forget... God is the ultimate owner of those lands. If the people refuse to obey him, they have no inherent right to live there!)]
2. Those who do it deserve to be put to death - Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 20:27; Deuteronomy 13:5.
3. An example in which God said he would come in judgment against them - Malachi 3:5.
4. An example in which God would come in judgment against them, and would deliver his people from the snare of their influence - Ezekiel 13:20-23.
5. An example of God being against a nation that enslaved others by means of the occult - Nahum 3:1-7.
6. Those who participate in the occult will have their place in the fiery lake of burning sulfur - Revelation 21:6-8; they will not be allowed inside God's eternal city - Revelation 22:14-15.
7. [See also the examples in Section 5.]

### **B. God forbids people to seek counsel or advice from those who are involved in the occult (and he also promises severe consequences for those who do - consequences which such people bring upon themselves).**

1. Don't do it, or you will be defiled - Leviticus 19:31.
2. If you do it, God will be against you - Leviticus 20:6.
3. Don't listen to them - Deuteronomy 18:14.
4. Don't listen to them or you will perish - Jeremiah 27:9-10.
5. Look to God, instead - Isaiah 8:19.

### **C. Anyone who claims to have a revelation must be tested (and, if necessary, rejected).**

1. Everything the person says must be in accordance with the Word of God; otherwise he does not have the "light" of truth in him - Isaiah 8:19 (+).
2. [See also the need to test those who claim to be prophets, Section 3f.]

### **D. Can we tolerate compromise with the occult?**

1. Back then, the people often saw no problem with attempting to hold onto both the occult and the God of the Bible. Examples - Balaam (Numbers 22-24) and Saul (1 Samuel 28:10). [Today, many people who call themselves "Christian" still have this attitude.]
2. God says that it is impossible for a person who practices such sins to enter the kingdom of God - Galatians 5:19-21.
3. Turning away from any such sins (if they are present in one's life) is an integral part of salvation - Acts 19:17-20. [This passage focuses on ways that the people of Ephesus showed honor to the Lord Jesus. One of the ways they did this was by destroying the things they once used in their practice of the occult. They not only stopped practicing this sin, but they also burned their books (rather than selling them to others), so that they would not become guilty of enabling others to sin. Compare to Luke 17:1. (See also Section 6b-iv.)]
4. Ultimately, God will destroy the occultists, along with everyone else who does evil and disobeys him. Examples - Micah 5:10-15; Malachi 3:5. Also a future example - Revelation 21:6-8; 22:14-15.

### **E. The distorted perspective of an occult practitioner (examples). Sin - including occult sin - has a destructive effect on one's view of reality:**

1. The example of a nation that practiced the occult: They viewed themselves as an "eternal queen"; God viewed them as a wanton (sexually promiscuous) creature - Isaiah 47:7-8. [Often in the Bible, the act of turning away from God and toward idolatry (and the occult), is compared to adultery or prostitution. (Compare to James 4:4.) Figuratively, we are to be "married" to God, and are to not go after substitutes and counterfeits. See also Nahum 3:4.]
  2. A description of the end times, when people will be so corrupt in their thinking, that even when they know God is judging them, they will refuse to repent of their occult practices (and other sins) - Revelation 9:20-21. [God wants them to repent; instead, they want to continue in their sinful ways, even though doing so will result in their deaths!]
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## V. BIBLE EXAMPLES of Those Who Participated in the Occult & Those Who Opposed It.

- A. NOTE 1:** This includes people directly involved in those practices, as well as those who sought counsel or advice from such people. Examples of those who opposed it are marked out by the word "AGAINST."
- B. NOTE 2:** Joseph pretended to have occult powers, when he (as ruler over Egypt) was questioning his brothers (who didn't know who he was) - Genesis 44:5, 15.
- C. Balak and Balaam:** Balak wanted Balaam to curse Israel. God overruled Balaam's attempts to do so; later Balaam was killed in one of God's judgments - Numbers 22:7; 24:1 (+ the context of chapters 22-24); Joshua 13:22.
- D. The Philistines** - 1 Samuel 6:2 (+ context). [God had already shown his superiority over their "gods," yet they blindly continued in their ways. God used the diviners' recommendations to bring the ark of the testimony back to Israel. (This gold-covered chest was also called the "ark of the covenant." It contained various sacred items - see Hebrews 9:4b.)]
- E. King Saul and the medium at Endor:**
1. King Saul wanted her to bring Samuel up from the dead. God actually allowed Samuel to return - which terrified the medium and made her realize that her "guest" was Saul. 1 Samuel 28:3-14 (+). [Mediums have no genuine power over the dead, and can only "conjure up" demonic counterfeits. The fact that Samuel was truly present made her realize that something beyond her control was happening.]
  2. God judged Saul for this - 1 Chronicles 33:6.
  3. Note that Saul had originally opposed the practice of the occult - see 1 Samuel 28:3. [His unwillingness to deal with the sins in his life led him on a downward path.]
- F. Jezebel** - 2 Kings 9:22. [Because of her sins, she would be killed and her body eaten by dogs.]
- G. [AGAINST] Jehu** - 2 Kings 9:22. [He arranged to get Jezebel killed. See v. 30 (+).]
- H. King Manasseh**
1. He sinned worse than the nations God had previously destroyed - 2 Kings 21:1-9; 2 Chronicles 33:1-9.
  2. The people followed his example - 2 Kings 21:9; 2 Chronicles 33:8.
  3. God allowed him to be taken captive to Babylon. This humbled Manasseh, and he turned from his evil ways - 2 Chronicles 33:10-13.
  4. His sin was so horrible, that God's anger was not removed from the nation, even after Manasseh reformed his ways - 2 Kings 23:26. [The events of this verse come years after the events of 2 Kings 21:9 and 2 Chronicles 33:8. When Josiah began to reign, the people were still following Manasseh's example of participating in these practices. (His sin involved not only his own practice of the occult, but also the resulting encouragement he gave to others, to do the same. After all, he was their leader.)]
- I. [AGAINST] King Josiah** - he got rid of the occultists, along with the idols and other detestable things that were in the land - 2 Kings 23:24. [However, his valiant efforts could not take away God's wrath: the sins of the nation had become too great. See vs. 25-26, and the comments about Manasseh's sins, Section 5g.]
- J. Israel and Judah**
1. They provoked God to anger and he judged them by removing them from his presence - 2 Kings 17:13-20. [Only Judah was left, and they, too, were punished.]
  2. They (Judah) would be humbled and not forgiven, because they continued to reject God's ways - Isaiah 2:5-11. [If they had been willing to repent, they would have been forgiven. But they weren't willing to do so.]
  3. Their practices would leave them "famished" for truth; they would experience the "utter darkness" of judgment. Yet because of God's undeserved kindness, the light of God's graciousness would eventually shine forth in the darkness - Isaiah 8:19-9:7. [Chapter 9 is a prophecy about the coming of Jesus Christ. Its fulfillment was going to begin in the northern kingdom of Israel.]
  4. They would experience disaster - Isaiah 47:7-15.
  5. A day would come, in which God would destroy the occult practices of Israel - Micah 5:10-15.
  6. God would come against them in judgment - Malachi 3:5.

**K. Israel's leaders**

1. God would "consume" them in his anger, because they used the occult to "justify" (excuse) their sinful practices - Ezekiel 22:23-31 (especially verses 28, 31).
2. They would be punished, because they resorted to the darkness of the occult, thus leaving the people like sheep without a shepherd - Zechariah 10:2-3.

**L. Babylon** - they would experience a type of judgment that their occult practices would be unable to prevent - Isaiah 47:7-15 (especially vs. 11-15).

**M. Nineveh** - they would be destroyed because of their occult practices, and because of the way they enslaved others with it - Nahum 3:1-7 (especially v. 4).

**N. The Magi** - Matthew 2:1-2, 7, 16. [They brought gifts to Jesus. Without realizing it, they were preparing Jesus' family for their trip to Egypt (2:13-15)!]

**O. Simon** - Acts 8:9-11, 18-24. [He liked to amaze people with his powers, so he wanted to purchase the Holy Spirit's power. Peter rebuked him and warned him that his heart was not right before God. (Church history suggests that he refused to repent and later invented a false religion that attempted to compete with Christianity.)]

**P. Bar-Jesus** - Acts 13:6-12. [He tried to hinder the preaching of the good news about Jesus. He was rebuked and made temporarily blind.]

**Q. A slave girl** - Acts 16:16-18. [She was controlled by an evil spirit, until Paul cast the spirit out of her.]

**R. [AGAINST]** Those at Ephesus, who became saved - Acts 19:18-20. [They burned their occult books.]

**S. People at the end of the age** - Revelation 9:21. [They will refuse to repent.]

**T. Prophetic "Babylon,"** which used the occult to deceive the nations - Revelation 18:23. [It will be permanently destroyed.]

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## **VI. Other Sins Found in the Context of Occult Practices.**

**A. NOTE:** The following list includes sins that are either directly or indirectly connected with occult practices, or which are mentioned with them in lists of sins. (The occult practice itself may be mentioned in a different verse nearby.)

**B. A focus on money, fees for services**

1. Example: Balaam - Numbers 22:7. [Also, his greed for money is mentioned in other passages - example - 2 Peter 2:15-16.]
2. Their "prophecies" are often influenced by what the people are willing to pay them - Micah 3:5, 11.
3. Money can influence their entire perspective - even on how they obtain their abilities. Example - Simon the sorcerer: He wanted to buy the ability to give people the Holy Spirit. He was rebuked for this sin - Acts 8:18-24.
4. Contrasted with the attitude of the righteous. An example of people who, when they turned to God, were willing to destroy their occult materials, even though they could have earned a lot of money by selling them - Acts 19:20. [It was not a small amount. The 50 thousand drachmas, mentioned in verse 20, is equivalent to 50 thousand days wages! Today, based on a typical 5-day work week and working for about 45 years (from 20 years old until retirement), this would amount to nearly four and a half lifetimes of money!]
5. Contrasted with God's prophets, who aren't focused on gaining wealth. Example - Daniel 5:17. [Also compare to Elisha's attitude, when Naaman came to him and offered to pay for being healed - 2 Kings 5:15-16.]

**C. Human sacrifices** - Deuteronomy 18:10; 2 Kings 17:17; 21:6; 2 Chronicles 33:6. [Back then, people sacrificed children after they were born; today, people sacrifice them before they are born. The biggest differences are the time of the sacrifice, and the fact that most people today close their minds to the seriousness of what they are doing.]

- D. Rebellion, idolatry, the rejection of God's Word, etc.** - 1 Samuel 15:22-23 and 1 Chronicles 10:13-14. [Note that, in God's eyes, rebellion against him is just as evil as the occult. In Saul's case, he ended-up doing both.]
- E. Idolatry; the worship of various "gods"** - 2 Kings 9:22; 17:15-16 (people who follow worthless idols become worthless people); 21:3-4; 23:24; 2 Chronicles 33:3-4; Isaiah 2:8; 19:3; Jeremiah 14:14; Micah 5:10-15; Zechariah 10:2-3.
- F. Self-sufficient security (living as though the God of the Bible was not needed)**
1. A focus on their attitude of self reliance - Isaiah 2:5-11 (especially v. 8). [Financial security and military security are mentioned in this passage, in connection with idolatry and occult practices. God said he was going to "lower" them in humility: he was going to destroy their security.]
  2. Self-made "wisdom" - Isaiah 44:25.
  3. Lounging (or dwelling) in security - though their lives were filled with wickedness - Isaiah 47:8-9 (+).
- G. Detestable things; detestable practices** - Deut. 18:9, 12; 2 Kings 21:2; 23:24; 2 Chron. 33:2.
- H. Evil deeds and wickedness (in general)** - 2 Kings 17:17; 21:2, 6; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 47:10; Acts 19:18-20.
- I. Leaders being encouraged (by the occultists) to sin; their sins even being excused (or reinforced) by supposed "revelations," given by the occultists** - Ezekiel 22:23-29 (especially v. 28).
- J. The people being encouraged to follow the example of their occult-practicing leader, and themselves becoming involved in the same kinds of practices** - 2 Kings 21:9; 2 Chronicles 33:9. [The example of people who followed Manasseh's example.]
- K. Strong associations and alliances with pagans (and their practices)** - Isaiah 2:6 (clasping hands with them - NIV, or striking bargains with them - NAS).
- L. Going after the pagan ways of the surrounding nations** - 2 Kings 17:15; 21:2.
- M. Absence of the "fear of God"** - Malachi 3:5.
- N. Stubbornness, rejecting God (his word and his ways)** - 2 Kings 17:13-15.
- O. Lists of many kinds of sins** - Malachi 3:5; Galatians 5:19-21 (all are acts of the sinful nature); Revelation 9:20-21; 21:6-8; 22:14-15.

## Most of the Bible Verses Used in This Study.

Genesis 41:8, 15-16, 24-25; 44:5, 15  
 Exodus 7:10-13, 20-22; 8:6-7, 16-19; 9:10-12; 22:18  
 Leviticus 19:26, 31; 20:6, 27  
 Numbers 22:7; 23:23; 24:1 (also the entire context of ch. 22-24)  
 Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:9-14  
 Joshua 13:22  
 1 Samuel 5:10-6:3; 15:22-23; 28:3-10  
 2 Kings 9:22; 17:13-20; 21:1-9; 23:24-26  
 1 Chronicles 10:13-14  
 2 Chronicles 33:1-13  
 Isaiah 2:5-11; 8:19-9:7; 19:3; 44:24-26; 47:7-15

Jeremiah 14:13-16; 23:25-32; 27:9-10; 29:8-9  
 Ezekiel 13:1-9, 20-23; 21:18-23, 28-29; 22:23-31  
 Daniel 1:19-20; 2:1-13, 25-28; 4:6-9; 5:5-17  
 Micah 3:5-12; 5:10-15  
 Nahum 3:1-7  
 Zechariah 10:2-3  
 Malachi 3:5  
 Matthew 2:1-2, 7, 16  
 Acts 8:9-11, 18-24; 13:6-12; 16:16-18; 19:11-20  
 Galatians 5:19-21  
 2 Timothy 3:12-13  
 Revelation 9:20-21; 21:6-8; 22:14-15