Elenctic Theology: Demonology & the Occult

Kevin Lewis

*The Occult*

## Introduction to the Occult

### Prolegomena to the Study of the Occult

#### *Christian Presuppositions to the study of the Occult (cf. Satanology & Demonology)*

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#### *Christian Guidelines for Occult Study*

##### Remain Christ-centered (Christocentric), not demon-centered (demonocentric).

##### Scripture, not experience, is the final guide.

##### Faith and freedom in Christ, not bondage and fear is the desired result of our study.

##### Christian service, not sensationalism, is the primary goal.

##### The warning of C. S. Lewis in the preface of his book *The Screwtape Letters*: “There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.”

#### *I Chronicles 12:32: Wisdom & Discernment*

##### “Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, 200 chiefs, and all their kinsmen under their command.”

##### We need to know the times as well.

## The Dangers of the Occult

### Occult Activity Rejects God’s Will for Man.

#### It is hazardous because it is a clear violation of the will of God for mankind.

##### God clearly forbids us to engage in occultic practices; they are an abomination to God (Deut. 18:9-12; Is. 47:8-15).

##### God says clearly that those who disobey Him and practice these things will ultimately be destroyed.

#### Ignorance of God’s law does not cancel the common, necessary, or logical consequences of violating the law.

#### Occult activity is distinguished from other forms of disobedience to God.

##### To engage in occult activity, you must align yourself with the spiritual enemies of God (Satan and his demons).

##### In short, the degree of confrontation with God is the issue at hand. Occult activity directly and actively opposes God. “Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft” (I Sam. 15:23).

### Fallen humanity is not properly equipped for encounters with the principalities and powers of the occult.

#### Humanity is spiritually, morally and physically fallen. Hence, we are not equipped to deal safely in the realm of the supernatural. Humanity is not essentially designed to function well in the spiritual realm.

#### Illustration: Trying to function in the spiritual realm is like playing tennis with your side of the court underwater. You cannot win regardless of how well you play the game. You are out of your element.

#### Our knowledge of the physical universe is limited at best. Our knowledge of the supernatural or spiritual realm is exceedingly more miniscule.

#### Illustration: Entering the world of the occult is like walking unprotected in a mine field without knowing the number or location of the mines. No sane person would attempt this.

#### The inherent consequences for contacting the supernatural realm are significantly greater than the normal consequences of ignorance, pride or power-seeking. Ignorance in auto repair is one thing, ignorance in the ways of Satan, evil spirits and the supernatural world is far more serious and risky.

### Occult activity exposes people to malevolent spiritual beings who seek their destruction.

#### Demons are not only the enemies of God, but the enemies of humanity as well.

#### An enemy may initially “fake” a friendship for ulterior motives. The result is destruction. The spiritual underworld and the criminal underworld operate under the same principles.

## The Modern Occult Revival

### Introduction

#### Evangelical Christianity has virtually eliminated the occult in almost every place the Church has flourished.

#### When the church is doctrinally and spiritually weak, the occult flourishes.

#### The occult is flourishing in contemporary American culture.

### Reasons for the Modern Occult Revival

#### Secular humanism and materialism failed as comprehensive world views.

##### They cannot solve the problem of evil.

##### They cannot produce true justice or joy.

#### The abandonment of orthodox Christianity, coupled with the acceptance of liberalism, skepticism, and postmodernism has produced a spiritual vacuum in our culture, providing the foundation for the cultural acceptance of an occult/mystical worldview.

#### Humans have a natural hunger for the supernatural. They always desire to fill the “God shaped vacuum” in their hearts.

#### The concept of God has been “depersonalized” in our culture.

#### The culture is pluralistic, accepting most religions. This provides the foundation for the rapid growth of new religions (cults & the occult).

#### Occult practices and powers have been reclassified as “parapsychology” or New Age, avant-garde ways of fulfilling our human potential.

#### We are now, allegedly, free from traditional morality and dogma.

## Introduction to the Occult

### Definition of Terms

#### ***World Religion*** A world religion is a religious belief system that is generally recognized as having independent status from other religions.

#### ***Cult***

#### A cult of Christianity is a group of people, claiming to be Christian, who embrace a particular doctrinal system taught by an individual leader, group of leaders, or organization, which (system) denies (either explicitly or implicitly) one or more of the central (essential) doctrines of the Christian faith, as taught in the sixty-six books of the Bible (Alan Gomes, *Unmasking the Cults*, 7).

#### ***The Occult***

##### The word “occult” means “secret” or “hidden” and when used in a religious context indicates a number of groups or practices that are generally rejected or forbidden in a Christian culture. These groups and practices are usually, but not exclusively, associated with polytheism and a magical worldview. (Kevin Lewis)

##### The Occult is that which is “beyond the realm of empirical knowledge; the supernatural; that which is secret or hidden” (George A. Mather & Larry A. Nichols, *Dictionary of Cults, Sects, Religions and the Occult* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993) 212. DCSRO

##### “The word ‘occult’ comes from the Latin word *occultus,* which means: hidden, secret, sinister, dark or mysterious. The term can be applied in general to extra-sensory experiences and phenomena which parapsychology makes the subject of its study” (Kurt Koch, *Demonology, Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1973) 11-12.

##### The Occult is not a Cult, but some cults practice the occult.

## biblical data regarding Demonology & The Occult

### Why Study the Occult?

#### **Ephesians 6:10-20**

##### Be ready and alert for spiritual warfare.

##### Be Prepared:

###### Soldiers do not fight all the time.

###### But they should always be prepared to fight.

#### **II Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15**

##### Different Jesus

##### Different Spirit

##### Different Gospel

##### Satan appears as an angel of light.

#### **Revelation 2:24**

##### It is satanic in origin.

##### Be ready to face what the Bible clearly says will happen.

### Scriptures Connecting Demons with Occultism

#### **Deut. 32:17**—They sacrifice to demons…to gods whom they have not known.

#### **Psalms 106:34-43**—“They even sacrificed their sons and daughters to the demons.”

#### **I Cor. 10:19-20**—“…the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God.”

#### **Rev. 9:20-21**—Mankind did not “repent…so as not to worship demons…and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries.”

### Scriptural Prohibitions & Condemnations of the Occult

#### **Deut. 18:9-14**: Detestable Things

#### **Lev. 19:26, 31**—Divination & Soothsaying, Mediums & Spiritists

#### **Lev. 20:6**—Mediums & Spiritists

#### **I Samuel 15:23**—“Rebellion is as of the sin of witchcraft…”

#### **II Kings 21:6; II Chr. 33:6**

##### Manasseh did “evil in the sight of the Lord” (II Kings 21:2).

##### “He made his son pass through fire, practiced witchcraft, used divination, and dealt with mediums and spiritists” (6).

#### **Jer. 27:9**—[false] prophets, diviners, dreamers, soothsayers

#### **Isaiah 8:19-22**—Mediums & Spiritists

#### **Isaiah 47:8-15**

##### People trust in Sorceries, Charms, Spells, Astrologers instead of God.

##### The result is that when disaster comes—and it will—“there is none to save you” (v. 15)

#### **Acts 16:16-18** – Slave girl with spirit of divination. Demon cast out

#### **Acts 19:19 -** And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.

#### **Gal. 5:20**—Sorcery is a deed of the flesh.

#### **Rev. 9:20-21**—Worship of Demons & Sorceries

#### **Rev. 21:8; 22:15**—Sorcerers

### Philosophy of the Occult

#### The basic occult philosophy has its origin in the Garden of Eden.

#### The basic philosophy began when the father of the occult (Satan) lied to our first parents.

#### There is no clear Creator/creature distinction. Man makes God in his own image.

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| ***Genesis 3:4-5*** | ***Occult Philosophy*** |
| **“You surely shall not die,”** | **Man will live forever even if he disobeys the commands of God.** |
| **“Your eyes will be opened,”** | **Man can independently discover secret understanding of his true condition and gain hidden knowledge.** |
| **“You will be like God,”** | **By means of self-will and disobedience to God, Man can become godlike, that is, equal to God, by gaining forbidden knowledge and power.** |
| **“Knowing Good and evil”** | **A state of innocence and following God is counterproductive to man’s best interest. Only personal *experience* will determine for the individual what is good and evil and, hence, make man like God.** |

## General occult practice

### The Essence of Occultic Practice

In its demonic forms, occult practices involve three supernaturally related phenomena. These three characteristics cannot be successfully achieved apart from supernatural assistance:

#### **Magick**: The acquisition of power to manipulate or control things, people, the spirit world;

#### **Divination**: Reception of secret knowledge which is normally not available through the five senses;

#### **Spiritism:** Contact with the spirit world in various forms and at various levels, usually to obtain power or knowledge

### Basic Classification of Occultic Practices (Expanded Explanation)

Occultism is classified into three, sometimes four distinct categories:   
(1) Divination, (2) Magic(k), (3) Spiritism, and (4) Superstition (sometimes).

#### **Magic(k) & Sorcery**

##### ***The Concept of Magic(k)***

Magic is the attempt to know and control and cause changes in both the physical and spiritual reality in accordance with one’s will or desires by invoking or employing spirits, hidden powers, or hidden rules of the universe.

##### ***Types of Magic(k)***

###### Hypnosis

###### Suggestion: The transmission of mental or emotional forces at a distance

###### Mesmerism (Hypnosis)

###### Black Magic-The use of demonic forces

###### White Magic-allegedly the power of God is employed

###### Grey (Neutral) Magic-ordinary forces

##### ***Areas of Applied Magic***

###### Healing Magic

###### Disease Magic

###### Love Magic

###### Hate Magic

###### Persecution Magic

###### Defense Magic

###### Spells

###### Death Magic

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#### **Divination**

##### ***The Concept of Divination***

Divination is an attempt to acquire information about the past, present or future in a supernatural, biblically prohibited manner.

##### ***Examples of Types of Divination***

###### Astrology

###### Cartomancy

###### Palmistry

###### Divining (Rod & Pendulum)

###### Mirror Mantic

#### **Spiritism & Necromancy**

##### *The Concept of Spiritism*

###### Spiritism occurs when one contacts and interacts with personal spirits. These “spirits” include: angels, demons, higher life forces, ghosts, spirit guides, avatars or any other personal, non-corporeal (non-physical) entity.

##### This communication is accomplished through the following means:

###### Visions

###### Table-Lifting

###### Glass-Moving

###### Automatic Writing

###### Speaking in a Trance

###### Materializations

###### Excursion of the Soul (Soul Travel)

##### Physical Phenomena Usually Associated with Spiritism

###### Telekinesis

###### Levitation

##### Spiritistic-Magic Phenomena

###### Persecution

###### Defense

##### Metaphysical Phenomena

###### Ghosts

###### Apparitions

###### Poltergeists

#### **Superstition (Some authors include this as a 4th category)**

##### Definition: the interpretation of signs and omens

##### This category includes such things as unlucky numbers (13), walking under ladders, black cats etc.

##### The Scriptures are clear that signs and omens should not be controlling our lives, God’s Revelation should be our guide.

##### People who practice this form of occultism are giving control of their lives to unpredictable and uncontrollable forces.

## the general divisions of occultic groups

### General Occultism

### Esoteric Groups

### Ritual/Ceremonial Magic(k)

### New Age

### Neopaganism

### Satanism

### Regional Occultism

### Eastern Occultism

## Perspectives on "How" Occult Practices Work

### Latent (Human) Psychic Power

### Forces & Powers (Non-Human)

### Idealism & Monistic Power

### A Hierarchy of Entities

### Combinations of the Above

### Materialist/Physicalist

### Atheistic/Agnostic