

Black Magic

by Wayne Goff

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. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed” (Acts 19:19-20).

The city of Ephesus in Paul’s day seemed to be a center for occultic activity, and when one studies the book of Ephesians, he sees references to “spiritual places” and our battle against “principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (6:12). Acts 19 even notes that God counteracted this heavy influence by working “unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them” (vv. 11-12). So the evil was real, and God’s power against it was real.

Occult is a word which comes from the Latin *occultus* and means hidden, or secret, or mysterious. The word almost always has reference to the spiritual, unseen world, the world where the devil and demons hold sway and bear influence. In the New Testament, note various points made:

Mark 5:1-20. Demons had superhuman strength and possessed the man and did great damage to him.

Luke 11:14-26. Demons belong to the realm of evil, diametrically opposed to God. Jesus admitted that Satan had a “kingdom” and that it was not divided against itself. He reminded His followers that when an “unclean spirit” is cast out there is left a void which must be filled with good, or else greater evil will return and “the last state of that man is worse than the first.”

Acts 16:16-18. Divination may be done by the power of demons, such as “fortune-telling.”

Acts 19:17-20. Those who became Christians so repudiated their evil practices that they burned their books.

Colossians 1:13. When you become a Christian you are delivered “from the power of darkness and conveyed ... into the kingdom of the Son of His love.”

Ephesians 6:10-18. The “beings” against whom the Christian is wrestling are of different orders in the world of evil.

Today, demons and their influence have been greatly curtailed by God. However, they are real and have a tremendous influence in the world in which we live. Believe it and fight against it!

254401