

" . . . Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error"

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THE PRESENT-DAY RESTLESSNESS STIMULATES CULTIC ACTIVITY

Prof. John E. Dahlin, Editor

One of the dominant characteristics of this age is universal restlessness among multitudes of people. Two global wars in this generation and widespread economic debacles, with its accompanying poverty of millions of people, have contributed to the present situation. An extended series of frustrations and perplexities have resulted in the disengagement of multitudes from the moorings of historic stability. Let us proceed in identifying some of the major areas of restlessness.

POLITICAL RESTLESSNESS

More governmental systems have toppled since the turn of the century than during the past millennium. The stability and continuity of governments no longer exist. Revolutionary patterns have replaced the older systems in nearly every area of the earth. The best example of stability remains among the English-speaking nations, but even within these, the present restlessness is evident. During the recently held Democratic Convention in Miami, Florida, we have seen a striking example of present-day struggles and deep-seated tensions. Rules, which have been binding for decades in the party, were repudiated by the so-called reform movement. Party leaders and delegates well known

and recognized in past decades lost control and were strangely absent at Miami. The reform movement, led by dissenters and youth, is now in the driver's seat and succeeded in beating back the old leadership, especially the conservatives. The present political restlessness is a part and parcel of the new revolutionary force throughout the world. Old landmarks are being removed and new guide-lines are established. Millions of youthful voters have been added by constitutional changes. These 10 million new voters in the U.S. will have great weight in reshaping American politics.

The restlessness and ferment in the political area are giving an impetus to cultic groups in propagandizing and pressing for innovations in the religious sphere. Indeed, the clamor for political change is spilling out into other areas, especially within the religious sphere. Millions are ready to listen to those who are coming forth with a new dynamic emphasis. The present political restlessness is providing a fertile field for the cultic groups in which to carry on their activities.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESTLESSNESS

More Americans live better and have more of the good things in

life now than during any previous generation. But the social planners and schemers are more vocal than ever, always trying to point out the imbalance in our society and the poverty of tens of millions of people. These social and economic innovators are seeking to replace our present system with a socialistic, or a total welfare state. The constant lambasting of the government and the present leadership, by those who clamor for revolutionary changes, is bound to undermine the peoples confidence and respect for our present system. The present-day cults are deriving great benefits and encouragement through the down-grading of the capitalistic system. It is well to point out that the cultic groups identify the regular denominations with entrenched greed and religious selfishness. In addition, the cults are continually offering people new paths and values which (they say) have been denied to the people by the old religious establishment. In a day of economic and social restlessness such propaganda will deceive many people who are naive and unable to use proper discrimination in such matters.

RELIGIOUS RESTLESSNESS

In recent decades most of the well known religious denominations have abandoned their independent status and have merged with other groups. In fact, we have witnessed in recent decades the most massive religious consolidation in history. Historic creeds have been diluted or changed substantially among certain major religious organizations. Moreover, new non-denominational movements have been launched, most of which are detached from the church and are carrying out their activities under new leadership.

And, among many local congregations worship services are changed fundamentally. The former stable musical arrangements are undergoing far-reaching changes. The dignified musical emphasis has no longer the priority. The charismatic concept is ever widening throughout the religious world. It is well for us to understand that the cultic groups are fully aware of the present situation and they lose no time in exploiting this condition within Christendom. With this fluid situation prevailing the field becomes more accessible for the cults. Since Christian doctrines are being de-emphasized by the major groups, the cults have less formidable obstacles. And with the accommodations and compromises prevalent today, it becomes relatively simple for the spurious groups to step into the confusing situation of our time. Cultic groups are under rigid control and with their organizational capability they are making very great progress. All the major cults have gained membership in a phenomenal way during recent years. In fact, some have doubled and even trebled their membership. The restlessness and lack of convictions among numerous denominations provide the open door through which the cults are entering with a redoubled effort in gaining adherents. Our present-day restlessness within the religious sphere serves to stimulate the activity of the cults. The whole domain of Churchianity is experiencing a crisis. Some of the larger denominations report a loss of membership, others are remaining at a status quo situation. Our Lord makes it plain that cultic activities and delusions will characterize the End-Time (Mt. 24:7; 24,25). We are witnessing a remarkable fulfillment of the words of Christ.

THE PRACTICE OF WITCHCRAFT IN THE SCRIPTURES

by Roy B. Zuck

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WITCHCRAFT TODAY

In recent years, witchcraft—the alleged power to cast spells of influence on people or events—has become almost commonplace in America. The publishing of books on how to practice witchcraft; the offering of courses on witchcraft at the University of Alabama, New York University, and other schools; the scheduling of radio and television interviews with self-claimed witches; the publishing of articles in large circulation daily newspapers—all these offer tips on how to cast curses or spells.

Involvement in witchcraft used to be limited to the eccentric few, but is now the experience of many. For example, an article in *The Wall Street Journal* describes a thirty-four-year-old woman who cast a love spell on a friend she just started dating. In her New York apartment she drew around her a “magic circle” on a sheet on the floor with a stick of charcoal. Then as incense swirled around her and as candles flickered, she chanted, “By all the names of princes and by the ineffable name on which all things are created, I conjure you . . .” Louise Huebner, the so-called official witch of Los Angeles, explains in her book *Power through Witchcraft* how to cast spells of love to lure a person with whom one is having romantic problems, spells of emotional bondage, money spells, and so forth.

Some present-day witches meet monthly in covens, usually when the moon is full. A coven consists of six males called warlocks, six

females, and a high priest or priestess. They also hold eight festivals a year, with the most significant one being on Halloween. In these meetings spells of influence are conjured either for the benefit of others (to heal physically or to help in numerous other ways), or for the harm (physical or otherwise) of others. The former is commonly known as white magic and the latter as black magic.

Dr. Kurt Koch, noted German theologian and pastor, has counseled thousands of persons entangled in various forms of occultism. He reports that through black magical powers, witches are able to bring upon others oppression, disease, harassment, and even death. Through white magic, persons have been healed, crops have improved, protection from harm has been maintained, and so forth.

Many missionaries report having witnessed evidences of the supernatural power of witchcraft in foreign lands. But the American public at large has only recently been confronted directly with the open display of these powers on a wide scale.

What does the Bible say about witchcraft? Are instances of magic charming with incantations recorded in the Scriptures? How does God view this practice? Is it a harmless pastime or a dangerous engagement with demonic forces? An understanding of what the Bible teaches on this subject will better enable one to analyze and counteract the present-day growth of witchcraft.

WITCHCRAFT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Supernatural powers possessed by the "magicians" of Egypt and of Babylon were not unlike the powers and the chantings of some witches today.

The morning after the Pharaoh (of Joseph's day) dreamed about seven fat cows devoured by seven thin ones and seven full ears of corn consumed by seven thin ones, he called in his magicians to interpret the dream (Gen. 41:1-8). The word translated "magicians" in the Authorized Version occurs twice in this chapter (41:8, 24). It is the word חרטמים, which comes from חרט "stylus" and literally means "scribes" or "engravers." They were "men of the priestly caste, who occupied themselves with the sacred arts and sciences of the Egyptians, the hieroglyphic writings, astrology, the interpretation of dreams, the fortelling of events, magic, and conjuring, and who were regarded as the possessors of secret arts . . ." Kidner suggests these magicians were "expert in handling the ritual books of priesthood and magic."

In Moses' and Aaron's contest with Pharaoh the Egyptian magicians duplicated three of the miracles: rods were turned to snakes (Exod. 7:11), water was turned to blood (7:22), and frogs appeared (8:7). However, the magicians could not produce lice, as Aaron did (8:18). The three demonstrations of their magical powers were accompanied by "enchantments" or "incantations," a word from the verb לוט meaning "to wrap tightly or to envelop" and thus suggesting secret, mysterious ways. Jehovah's supremacy over these magicians is demonstrated in a threefold way: (1) their snakes were devoured by Aaron's (7:12),

(2) Aaron's miracles did not require incantations, and (3) they were unable to duplicate the plague of lice.

The same word for "magicians" is listed along with names for other occultists in the book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar called in magicians, sorcerers, Chaldeans (Dan. 2:2) and wise men (2:27) to interpret his image dream, but they were unable to do so. Also these occultists were unable to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a large tree (4:7).

The word "witch" occurs twice in the Authorized Version—in Exodus 22:18 and Deuteronomy 18:10. In both occurrences the Hebrew word is a piel participle from כשף, "to practice sorcery," and could be translated "sorcerer" or "sorceress." Unger explains that this Hebrew word denotes "one who practices magic by using occult formulas, incantations, and mystic mutterings." J. S. Wright points out that this root verb "probably means 'to cut,' and could refer to herbs cut for charms and spells."

God's attitude toward witchcraft is bluntly stated in Exodus 22:18, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch (מכשפה) to live." "There must not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through the fire, anyone practicing divination or soothsaying, observing omens, applying sorcery (מכשף), a charmer, a medium, a wizard, or a necromancer. For all who do these things are offensive to the Lord" (Deut. 18:10-12, Berkeley). God gave these stringent orders in order to preserve the Israelites from spiritual contamination with the degraded occultic practice of Canaan.

The profession of the sorcerers in both Egypt and Babylon along

with the magicians and the enchanters in Babylon "is condemned through the O.T. as representing black magic."

Jezebel, the wicked queen of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, was deeply involved in witchcraft ("her sorceries were many," 2 Kings 9:22). Therefore Joram asked how there could be any peace in Israel so long as Jezebel's magical practices prevailed. This "cursed woman" (9:34) died a violent death (9:33-35), which is typical of the fate of so many who are involved in this kind of evil practice.

King Manasseh of Judah practiced numerous kinds of occultism, including spiritism and magical sorcery (2 Chron. 33:6). God called these deeds "abominations" and stated that Manasseh had "done wickedly" (2 Kings 21:11). Therefore Manasseh and his kingdom suffered greatly (21:10-16). "The term 'abomination' has the clear connotation of outrageously affronting God by contaminating His holy worship with the adoration of finite, polluted, false deities." It is certainly shameful that the chief monarch of God's people fell to such low depths of sin.

In Jehoiakim's reign, just before the Babylonian Captivity of Judah, Jeremiah warned Judah that her occultic leaders were false in predicting that she would not become subservient to Babylon (Jer. 27:9-10). This points up two things: (1) an entire nation can become susceptible to the influences of occultists, and (2) many of the seers' and sorcerers' predictions are not reliable.

God does not let sorcery go unpunished. Through Isaiah He informed Babylon that within one day she would lose her children and her husband, meaning that her

people would be taken captive and her king killed (Isa. 47:9). This was fulfilled by the attack of Cyrus—in spite of her sorceries and incantations (47:9). "Babylon was famed for expiations or sacrifices, and other incantations, whereby they tried to avert evil and obtain good." In fact, "Babylonia was the birthplace of astrology from which sprung the twelve-fold division of the day, the horoscope and sundial (Herod. ii. 109); but it was also the home of magic, which pretended to bind the course of events, . . ."

The word "incantation" in Isaiah 47:9, 12 is חֲבֵר , which could be rendered "spell" or "charm." It comes from the root which means "to unite or bind."

Isaiah sarcastically challenged Babylon to continue on in her incantations and magical practices, in her effort to avert the invasions of the Medes and Persians (47:12-13). But the efforts of Babylon's magicians and astrologers to save their nation were doomed to failure (47:14-15). This poignantly illustrates that sorcery is incapable of exercising power over God's plans.

The ancient world was deeply entrenched in occultism. Not only were the nations Canaan, Israel, Judah, and Babylon engaged in witchcraft; Assyria too was an active participant in the black arts. The city of Ninevah, known for its bloody atrocities and torturous inhumane treatment of its prisoners, is called "the mistress of sorceries (כַּשְׁפִּים)" (Nah. 3:4). Entire nations ("families") were subjugated by her witchcraft.

Witchcraft will not continue indefinitely. When the Messiah, Israel's Prince of Peace, returns (Mic. 5:2-5), He will deprive Israel of any possible reliance on material strength (5:10, 11). In addition,

“all man-made religions—with their sorceries, diviners, idols, shrines, and cities devoted to idolatry—by which Israel has been led astray, Jehovah will pluck up” (5:12-14).

Malachi also refers to the removal of witchcraft as part of the future judgment on the nation Israel at the Lord's return. The Lord will be “a swift witness against the sorcerers” (Mal. 3:5). This judgmental attitude of the Lord toward sorcery and its practitioners indicates that witchcraft has a defiling effect on Israel. Complete removal of every trace of this sin is necessary to prepare Israel for the millennium.

WITCHCRAFT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament there are several striking examples of the clash of Christianity with demonic magic.

Simon, of Samaria, had gained a great following through his practicing of witchcraft (μαγείων, participle). People on all levels of society (“from the least to the greatest”) followed him for some time (Acts 8:10, 12). They were amazed because of his magical arts (μαγείαις, 8:12) and his claim that he was “some great one” (8:9). So overwhelmed and deceived were they by his power that they claimed, “This man is the great power of God” (8:10). However, on hearing the Gospel from Philip, Simon believed and was baptized. Interestingly, Simon himself was amazed as he saw that the miracles Philip performed were far greater than his own (8:13). This points to the superiority of God's power over that of sorcery.

The noun μάγοι, translated “wise men” in Matthew 2:1, 16, is

related to the verb μάγέω. However, men from the East (Persia or Arabia) were not sorcerers like Simon. They were experts in philosophy, religion, astronomy, and medicine. Barnes suggests that μάγοι “came afterwards to signify those who made use of the knowledge of those arts for the purpose of imposing on mankind—astrologers, soothsayers, necromancers, fortunetellers, etc. Such persons pretended to predict future events by the positions of the stars, and to cure diseases by incantations, etc.” Delling states that the specific meaning of μάγος was “a member of the Persian priestly caste” and then came to mean more generally a possessor of supernatural knowledge and ability, or one who practices magical arts, or figuratively, a deceiver.

It is noteworthy that on each of Paul's missionary journeys he confronted some form of satanic occultic powers. On Paul's first journey, Bar-Jesus, a Jewish sorcerer (μάγος) who was also called Elymas, opposed Barnabas and Saul on the island of Cyprus. Bar-Jesus tried to prevent Sergius Paulus the governor from turning to the Lord (Acts 13:6-8). Perhaps Bar-Jesus sensed that if the governor accepted Christ, Bar-Jesus would be ousted as the governor's sorcerer. Saul denounced Bar-Jesus with strong words: “O full of all deceit and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?” (13:10) In this denunciation Paul indicates that witchcraft is deceiving, satanic, the opposite of righteousness, and a spiritual perversion.

At Ephesus many of the Christian converts confessed to having engaged in magical practices. Many

of those burned their books (apparently volumes with instructions on the performance of magical arts). The words "magical arts" in the New Scofield Reference Bible are the translation of περιέργα, a word meaning irrelevant, trifling, or curious (Acts 19:19).

In Galatians 5:20 witchcraft is listed among the "works of the flesh." The word for witchcraft here is φαρμακεία (from which comes our word "pharmacy" from φάρμακον, a medicine, poison, magic potion, or drug), which is the preparing and giving of medicine. From the primary notion of administering medicines and drugs, the word came to mean preparing and giving magical potions possibly with incantations.

The practice of witchcraft will continue in the tribulation period. As Revelation 9:21 makes clear, the people not killed by God's trumpet judgments will not repent of their murders, sorceries (φαρμακείων), fornication, nor thievery. The gross sins listed along with φαρμακεία in Galatians 5:19-21 and Revelation 9:21 are clear evidence that God considers this practice a serious judgment-deserving transgression.

In the latter half of the tribulation, one reason ecclesiastical Babylon will be destroyed is that she will have deceived many nations by her practices in witchcraft (φαρμακεία, Rev. 18:23).

Sorcerers (φαρμακοίς) will have no part in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:15) for they will be cast into the lake of fire (21:8).

CONCLUSION

Several things become evident from this study of the practice of witchcraft as recorded in the Old and New Testaments.

First, witchcraft is *demonic*, opposing all that is godly. Egyptian and Babylonian magicians were in direct opposition to Jehovah and His followers; Manesseh's witchcraft was wicked and an abomination to the Lord; witchcraft will be cleansed from Israel before the millennium; Bar-Jesus, who withstood the ministry of Paul, was an enemy of righteousness; witchcraft is one of the works of the flesh; and sorcerers will be cast into the lake of fire.

Second, witchcraft is *deceitful*. At first glance the performances of the Egyptian magicians appeared identical with those of Aaron, but in actuality were less powerful. Simon, the Samaritan sorcerer, deceived many for a long time by means of his magical powers. Bar-Jesus was "full of all deceit." And ecclesiastical Babylon will deceive many nations. Obviously, then, satanic powers are noted for their blinding deception. Because Satan performs miracles "with limitless deceit" (2 Thess. 2:9-10, Berkley), masquerading as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), many "yield to deluding spirits" (1 Tim. 4:1, Berkeley).

Third, witchcraft is *deteriorating* and *destructive*. God ordered the Israelites to put witches (sorcerers) to death lest His people become contaminated spiritually. Jezebel's involvement in this sin resulted in her own violent death, and Judah suffered greatly because of Manesseh's witchcraft. Koch cites numerous modern-day examples of persons who have suffered physical harm, mental depression, emotional upheaval, and spiritual defeat as a result of dabbling in black or white magic. Experimentation with any form of witchcraft is highly dangerous. Those who

participate in witchcraft do so to the serious detriment and endangerment of their own souls.

Fourth, witchcraft is *doomed*. Though sorcerers may have tremendous supranatural powers because of their subjugation to and alignment with demonic forces, God's power is superior. A person trapped by magical practices can experience deliverance from that bondage through faith in Christ (Heb. 2:14; Col. 1:13; 1 John 4:4).

The wise believer refuses to toy with any form of sorcery or witchcraft. Instead he continually appropriates the whole armor of God, he claims the protective power of the blood of Jesus Christ, and steadfastly resists the devil. Only in this way can the power of witchcraft be broken and its growth be counteracted.

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WHAT ABOUT THE OUIJA BOARD?

by Prof. Edmond C. Gruss

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The occultism craze which is sweeping America has led increasing numbers of people to experimentation with the Ouija board. An article in the March 17, 1967 issue of *The Wall Street Journal* reported:

"Sales of the 'Mystifying Oracle' this year are expected to total two million boards, about three times the number sold in 1965. This rise came despite the fact Parker Brothers doesn't promote or advertise the board—an almost unheard of practice, in the game industry" (p. 1).

The March, 1970 *McCalls* showed that the popularity of the board had not slackened, for "more than two million boards were sold" in 1969 (p. 63).

The Ouija board became very popular in connection with the two World Wars. In 1920, Eleanor C. Kemp could write: "So common is the ouija board in homes, in clubs, and in stores that it really needs no description" (*The Outlook*, April 28, 1920, p. 758). Gertrude Berger, in her article, "The Ouija Comes Back," observed:

"In spite of airmail, V-mail

and soldier franks, America has returned to spiritualism as a speedy and exciting means of wartime communication. Between February and June, 1944, one New York department store alone has sold more than 50,000 ouija boards to credulous and incredulous customers. This is strictly a 1944 development, since last year there were few calls" (*New York Times Magazine*, September 10, 1944, p. 46).

With the resurgence of popularity reflected in the sales of millions of Ouija boards in recent years, it is only natural to ask the question: "What about the Ouija board?" This has been asked of the present writer a number of times. The presentation which follows is a brief attempt to answer this question.

HISTORY OF THE BOARD

While the "Ouija" board (from the French, *oui* and the German, *ja*: "yes") was developed during the 1890's (see "Ouija, Ouija, Who's Got the Ouija?" *The Literary Digest*, July 3, 1920, pp. 66-68 for further history), it is an historic fact that "as an invention it is

very old. It was in use in the days of Pythagoras, about 540 B.C." (Nandor Fodor, *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science*, p. 270). A similar device was also known to the Egyptians and other ancient peoples. According to one account of its modern revival at the end of the nineteenth century, the board was known first as the "Witch Board" (*The Literary Digest*, *op. cit.*, p. 66). Parker Brothers Inc. purchased the Ouija patents in 1966 from William Fuld Inc. (*The Wall Street Journal*, *loc. cit.*).

THE BOARD AND HOW IT IS OPERATED

With some minor variations, the board is a rectangular piece of masonite or wood about two feet long and eighteen inches wide. It has the numbers 0 through 9, the letters of the alphabet, the words "yes" and "no" at opposite upper corners and "good bye" at the bottom.

To operate the board, two people sit facing each other with it on their knees and with their fingertips resting lightly on a heart-shaped indicator. Questions are asked and the indicator slides over the board and spells out messages.

WHAT MAKES IT WORK?

In material on the Ouija board distributed by Parker Brothers no explanation of what makes the board work is given: "How or why it works is a mystery . . ." (*The Weird and Wonderful Ouija Talking Board Set*, p. 2). But the phenomena has been explained by others and these interpretations may be grouped into two main categories. (1) "The users are either consciously or subconsciously sliding the indicator" (*The Wall Street Journal* (*loc. cit.*)). Even some Christian authors, while rejecting the occult, accept the same explan-

ation: "The Ouija is merely a board whose 'answers' are man-directed by the subconscious and nerve impulses" (*The United Brethren*, April 5, 1972, p. 4). (2) This position concludes that the natural explanation can not cover all the phenomena and therefore the full answer must be sought in another realm, the spiritual. Many who hold this position accept the spiritualist claim that the contacts through the board are the spirits of the departed. From a Biblical standpoint such an explanation is untenable because Scripture indicates that those who die go to specific places: "paradise," "hades," "heaven." In addition, the spirits representing themselves as departed individuals often make gross mistakes concerning "their" former lives. But what is the source of their accurate knowledge? J. Raupert gives one explanation:

Some years ago I had myself a striking experience of this kind, the spirit for many months claiming to be a deceased friend of mine and furnishing many remarkable proofs of his identity. Upon being discovered in a manifest contradiction and falsehood, however, and charged in the name of God to reveal the true source of his information, he declared that he had got it all out of our own silly 'thought boxes', it being possible for him to read the contents of the passive mind with the same ease with which we read a book or newspaper" (*The Ecclesiastical Review*, November, 1918, p. 470).

If this "mind tapping" is true, and there is no reason to reject it, information which is beyond the experience of the ones working the board could reflect the mental resources of others "tapped" by the

spirit.

It also should be remembered that when communications through the board go beyond the natural explanation and are the work of evil spirits (demons), as most conservative Christian scholars believe, then intelligence should be expected. As Merrill F. Unger explained:

“Plato derived the etymology of the word ‘demon’ (Greek, *daimon*) from an adjective meaning ‘intelligent’ or ‘knowing.’ If this derivation is correct, it suggests that intelligence was considered a prominent characteristic of demons. This would be expected, if demons are fallen angels . . .” (*Demons in the World Today*, pp. 25, 26).

In conclusion to the question, “What makes it work?”, it is answered that both interpretations, the natural and the supernatural may be reconciled. Much of that which comes through the Ouija board may be reasonably explained as reflecting the conscious or subconscious activity of the operators. But in addition, much cannot be explained in this way and so demands that the board be seen as giving access to evil spirits (demons) and their manifestation.

THE DANGER OF OCULT ENTRAPMENT

Many persons have been drawn to the Ouija board as a game or toy. This initial impression of the board is often encouraged by the stores where the board is sold and the advertisements on it. This writer found the Ouija board in a number of stores in the midst of games and toys for young children. One newspaper ad presented the Ouija board as giving “entertainment you have not experienced before.” That the board has been attractive to the young is obvious: “Officials

of F.A.O. Schwarz, the New York toy store, say youngsters are big buyers of the board. Teenagers often ask the Ouija about their dates and the school exams, sales people say” (*The Wall Street Journal*, loc. cit.). That it is not a mere toy or game is clear. For example, *Colliers Encyclopedia* discusses the Ouija board under “Fortune Telling and Divination” (Vol. 10, 1964 ed., p. 212). And historically, devices like the Ouija board have been used for spiritistic practices. Even the Parker Brothers material states:

“WHERE DOES THE OUIJA TALKING BOARD FIT IN? Frankly, Parker Brothers does not know. They are a leading manufacturer of games, but they doubt whether the OUIJA talking board should really be regarded as a game. They do know that many people have a lot of fun with it, and that those who enjoy using it are often interested in the occult” (*The Weird and Wonderful Ouija Talking Board Set*, p. 6).

One of the greatest dangers of the board is what might be termed “progressive entrapment.” This is well illustrated by the following experience:

“A certain young woman of the most exceptional purity in thought and character wase led to experiment with an ouija board.

She was amazed to find that she had what is called ‘the psychic force.’

Messages began to come thick and fast.

At first they were perfectly harmless. They were mysterious. They revealed some things known only to herself . . .

Then little by little the messages began to change their char-

acter. . . .

The messages grew bolder, from suggestions they grew to open statements, they became daringly tempting and openly obscene.

In horror she flung the board from her and hid her face in her hands. . . .

For several days she would not look at the thing, the memories of it haunted her; but it had a fascination she could not escape. She went back to it. She listened to it. It continued its terrible messages" (I. M. Halde- man, *Can the Dead Communi- cate with the Living?*, pp. 119, 120).

In this case there was deliver- ance, but in many cases there is not. Such progressive entrapment is the testimony of many who have experimented with the board.

THE DANGERS OF THE BOARD

The use of the Ouija Board has caused decline in the physical, mental and moral realms in many individuals. This result was taken up by Raupert:

"Persons habitually and sys- tematically using the ouija or planchette board, or similar au- tomatic devices for obaining spirit messages, experience, af- ter a time, a peculiar condition of lassitude and exhaustion, in many instances accompanied by severe pain at the top of the spine and gradually spreading over the entire brain. . . .

In professional mediums who exert their power incessantly . . . prostration is apt to be so great that they become helpless nerv- ous wrecks after a time . . . The general health begins to fail; there manifests a kind of apathy or weariness of living which quite unfits the person for the ordinary duties of life and de-

prives him of all interest in them, and which is only relieved by resort to the board.

As the 'psychic development' advances, the entire mental and moral nature of the experimenter becomes disordered; and he discovers to his cost that, while it was an easy thing for him to *open* the mental door by which the mind could be invaded, it is a difficult, if not impossible thing, to *shut* that door and ex- pel the invader" (*The Ecclesiastical Review*, op. cit., pp. 473-475).

There have been frequent cases of insanity as a result of experim- entation with the board. Mil- bourne Christopher, in his book which is skeptical concerning the occult, quotes a clipping from Houdini's files:

"A serious warning comes from Dr. Curry, medical director of the State Insane Asylum of New Jersey, with regard to the use of 'Ouija board' which he de- clares is a 'dangerous factor' in unbalancing the mind. . . . He predicts that the insane asylums will be flooded with patients if popular taste does not soon swing to more wholesome diver- sions" (*ESP, Seens and Psychics*, p. 130).

In Hugh Caye's treatment of "Automatic Writing and Ouija Boards," in *Venture Inward*, he gives several case histories from his files. In his introduction to these he states: "The frightening thing about them is that they can be duplicated by the thousands from the case histories of present- day inmates of mental institutions all over the world" (p. 130).

The most tragic result of the use of the Ouija board in many lives has been a spiritual damage. This has often been related by authors.

Occult involvement through the board by a non-Christian could make it difficult for him to turn to Christ at a later date. Christian involvement has resulted in spiritual coldness and lack of desire for prayer or the reading of the Bible. (See the discussion by Kurt Koch, *Occult Bondage and Deliverance*, pp. 34-42).

Some Experiences Reported to the Writer by Students

As a college teacher for twelve years many occult encounters have been related to this writer by students. In addition, this year one hundred students were given a questionnaire which asked concerning their experiences with the Ouija board. Most who gave such information added that they would now have nothing to do with the board. From a number of interesting and significant experiences related, only several can be mentioned.

The most significant account was the case in which a spirit identifying itself as Cathy was contacted and for several hours discussed the former life experiences of the sitters, who the spirit said had lived in Salem, Massachusetts during the witch trials. When the spirit was later exposed it admitted fabricating the entire story but indicated that it did so to bring the couple closer together because it wanted to be their child. Another student stated that she lived in a commune "where Satan was worshipped and one of the main ways of communicating with him and his demons was the Ouija board." One account, typical of many, told how the spirit through the board "kept spelling dirty words and cursing God." Another student said that on several occasions he and his fiance asked the board for suggestions as to what they should do

on their dates, "and every time the suggestions were grossly immoral in character." In a number of cases the board predicted danger or the impending death of a friend or relative. Some of these predictions were realized. It is also of interest that students frequently mentioned that the message indicator would either not move, go in circles, or fly off the board when certain questions relating to spiritual things were asked.

CONCLUSION

What should one's attitude be toward the Ouija board? Since it is so clearly identified with the occult and the demonic, Scripture must be heeded. The Bible condemns all forms of occultism (Leviticus 19:31; 20:6; Deuteronomy 18:9-14). The experiences of many involved also argues for complete avoidance of the board.

The Bible is clear as to where the Christian should go for guidance, understanding and wisdom:

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? . . ." (Isaiah 8:19).

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5).

I. M. Haldeman saw the Ouija board as the deadly enemy of the Christian:

"Above all, let every Christian shun this Satanic and perilous ground. No more think of having an ouija board in your home or fooling with it . . . than you would invite the arch-enemy of God and man to dwell intimately with you" (*op. cit.*, p. 116).

"What about the Ouija board?"
Have nothing to do with it.

BOOK REVIEW

THE PLAIN TRUTH ABOUT ARMSTRONGISM by Roger R. Chambers, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Cloth, \$1.25.

The book is, from the viewpoint of journalism, well written. It could be quite easily divided into three parts:

1. Chapters 1-3
2. Chapter 4
3. Chapters 5 and 6.

Reading the titles of the first three chapters, gives a good clue as to their contents.

Ch. 1, The Lost Key, gives the Armstrong position that Gospel preaching was a non-entity for centuries, in fact, until he suddenly appeared on the scene, preaching, as he states, the true Gospel, which had been replaced by false teaching all these years.

Ch. 2, The Lost Tribes, gives the real premise of Armstrongism, viz that the tribes of the Northern Kingdom were lost to view until it was revealed, of course, by Herbert W. Armstrong, that they were United States and Britian.

Ch. 3, It's In Your Bible, an oft-repeated statement in the Armstrong ministries, is shown to be a meaningless statement, since they seldom give the Bible references where these things are supposed to appear. It is shown that partial quotations are very often used, then interpreted to mean what the verse completely quoted, and ex-

plained in its contextual setting, does not mean at all.

Ch. 4, The Hope of Israel, details the author's position that Israel is not to be regathered to the land of Israel, as Bible believers almost universally believe that the Bible declares. The Church, in the New Testament, according to him, replaces Israel of the Old Testament. This can be easily summarized by the last sentence of the chapter: "The hope of Israel is to be reconciled to God by the cross. Israel has no other hope." It speaks for itself.

Ch. 5 is a fairly good presentation of the Biblical distinction of the law and grace.

Ch. 6 shows how the Armstrongs pervert words, including proper names, to propogate their particular theories.

My conclusion is that I would only recommend this book to mature Bible scholars, since the author takes exception to the generally-understood Bible teaching regarding Israel's present and future. I fear that those not well versed in Scriptural Truth could well be led astray by Mr. Chambers anti-Biblical teaching in this area. It appears to this reviewer that anti-Semitism may appear on the horizon, or perhaps, more specifically, in the shadows. He, likewise, refuses the dispensational interpretation of the Scriptures, held by many Bible scholars.

Rev. E. Loren Pugsley

LISTINGS FROM OUR CATALOG

1. **BIBLICAL DEMONOLOGY**, Dr. Merrill F. Unger of Dallas Theological Seminary. This book is undoubtedly the best and most comprehensive one written on the subject of Demonism today. What does the Bible have to say? Read this book. Cloth, \$4.95, Paper, \$2.95.
2. **SATAN—HIS MOTIVE AND METHODS**, Lewis Sperry Chafer. Only one copy left. \$3.95.
3. **HOW TO RESIST SATAN**, Dr. Theodore H. Epp. Many, many people who realize the presence and power of a personal devil—and demons—still do not know the Bible method of dealing with him. An excellent booklet telling how. Paper, \$30.
4. **SOUL AND SPIRIT**, Jessie Penn-Lewis. Many people believe they are living a Spirit-filled life, when actually they are living “soulishly”. The believer will profit by reading this book, making the distinction clear. Paper, \$1.00.
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PERTINENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Prof. John E. Dahlin

QUESTION . . . What is the present status of witchcraft and other allied practices?

ANSWER . . . Unfortunately witchcraft has been spread widely and even popularized in recent years. It is also being given a very extensive recognition through the news media as well as by other channels of communication. This has brought about a dangerous situation, as when a practice is popularized and promoted the result is the general removal of the fear and stigma which have been associated with witchcraft in past generations. The present situation is thus favorable for a continuous expansion of this evil.

QUESTION . . . How might Bible-believing people be equipped to combat the evil of witchcraft?

ANSWER . . . First of all, it is essential that God's people understand clearly the Scriptural position on the subject. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament offer strong condemnation of this practice. And, in conformity with the Scriptures, Christians must repudiate witchcraft as an evil practice which is completely contradictory to historic Christianity. In Biblical times witchcraft was an abomination, and it is equally essential today that no encouragement or recognition be given to this evil. The fact is God has condemned witchcraft and His people have been forbidden to be identified with it.