

Thou Shalt Not Learn the Abominations of those Nations

Deuteronomy 18:9-14 . . .

Today I would like to teach you the importance of avoiding the occult world. Unfortunately, many years ago our culture commercialized the pagan/occult holiday of Halloween. It is a gigantic promotion both in stores and in the entertainment business. But Halloween is not a generic, harmless holiday.

While we all cross paths with Halloween as the day comes and goes, discerning Christians will resist the temptation to imitate the world's celebration of the day.

We do not celebrate evil, nor do we intend to trivialize Satan. We will not promote witchcraft or any other occult practice as though it is harmless. We do not celebrate death, blood, gore, fear, or terror.

Furthermore, Christians functioning as light in our culture need to avoid traditional Halloween parties that glorify the occult world. Instead, the Christian community should wisely use this season as an opportunity to teach their children to avoid the occult world.

As well, we should be proactive in our witness for Christ during this season. October 31st belongs to the Lord just as every other day does. It is a day the Lord makes and we can rejoice and be glad in it—just don't compromise with evil!

Instead, rebuke it. Plan to be a witness and shine a light in the darkness! Plan an outing with your children if you like and even have a treat if you like, just don't mimic the world's celebration of darkness! Plan now to be a creative witness for Christ and do not trivialize the darkness that is a very real part of this pagan holiday.

Read the text: Deut. 18:9-14 . . .

The subject of the occult is a serious matter and it seems most appropriate to address the subject during this particular time of the year. There is so much commercial activity and levity around the occult holiday we know as Halloween I fear that many reduce Satan, witchcraft, and demons to the category of myth and make believe.

That would be bad enough. But at the other end of the spectrum is the reality this occult holiday initiates many into its' web of deception by way of the curiosity generated by the season.

My friend, Satan is real and his ultimate goal is to lead souls away from the knowledge of the one, true and living God. The occult world is Satan's world and he manifests enough spiritual power in it to lure many into a snare from which they never escape.

Satan, the arch enemy of the Lord and his saints, should not be cuddled by the Christian community in any way. Rather, we must be ready to resist Satan steadfastly in the faith. Whenever and wherever he raises his ugly head we must be ready to expose him.

Christians should celebrate the opportunity at Halloween to expose Satan and the kingdom of darkness for what it really is. We must not send a message to the unbelieving world that Satan and witchcraft are nothing more than a figment of our busy imaginations.

Nor should we send a message by our behavior the occult world is something one can engage without consequence. The point is, there is no one else to sound the alarm about the dangers of the kingdom of darkness other than the Christian counterculture.

Consequently, God forbid Christians become so lukewarm toward the kingdom of darkness they actually succumb to revelry in the highest occult holiday of the year instead of sounding the alarm concerning its dangers!

Now let's consider our text which contains some very clear teaching on the subject of the occult.

Verse nine contains an important spiritual message for New Testament Christians.

I might paraphrase it this way: *as you journey on your pilgrimage through this*

world, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of the lost world around you!

The Holy Spirit says to believers in Ephesians chapter five, “*you were sometimes darkness, but now are you light in the Lord: walk as children of light—that is, demonstrating to those around you what is acceptable unto the Lord.*”

“ And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is too shameful even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light . . .

See then that you (the Christian community) walk circumspectly (that is, you walk very carefully, purposefully, and worthily), not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time (or taking advantage of every opportunity), because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

We discern the mind of the Lord by coming to the pages of his holy word with a deep respect. In the pages of God’s written word we discover the will of God for our walk in this troubled world. Do not be unwise concerning God’s will, rather receive instruction and allow God’s word to correct your behavior as necessary.

Now look at our text again and we find in verse 10 these words:

There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire . . . At times the pagan practice of offering sacrifices to idol

gods included the sacrifice of children.

The depth of such depravity is difficult to grasp. All forms of idolatry grieve the Lord, but idolatry is especially egregious when practitioners engage in the worship of devils by sacrificing their children in exchange for appeasement and supposed favor.

Sadly at times in the occult world some stoop to such atrocities in blind worship of devils masquerading as a god.

Of course, there is no *bland* kind of idolatry. It is all designed by Satan to lead mankind away from the true worship of the Lord. In the New Testament we are taught by the Holy Spirit to “*flee from idolatry.*”

The Apostle Paul states clearly under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

“But I say, that the things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?”

Indeed, are we willing to ignore the Lord’s clear instruction to avoid contact with the occult world? Shall we compromise with occult idolatry, divination,

witchcraft, and sorcery?

My advice to you (as one called to watch for your soul) is this: *fear the Lord and depart from evil!* Make it your business to honor the Lord in everything. Be carefully concerning the things you allow in your life and the lives of your children. We should never grieve the Lord with our behavior.

Now let's continue on in verse 10 and 11 . . . *There shall not be found among you any one that uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.*

My friend, these are the trades of those who traffic in demons. Now listen closely.

It is important to understand occultists deny the living God, *but they do not deny the realm of the spirit.* The dangerous spirituality they practice replaces the living God with the concept of an impersonal force which is said to permeate the universe. *The delusion of the occult world is the deception one can manipulate that force for their good.*

Their craft aims at manipulating that force, but opens them to interaction with lying spirits from the world of darkness. Although they deny it, they end up trafficking in demons!

I need to remind you there are only two sources of spiritual power in the universe. There is the living God who has *all* power and there is Satan who has *limited*

power. Satan is free to interact with the human race and for deceptive purposes he is willing to manifest spiritual phenomenon.

And therein is the great danger of toying with this world! Those who get a taste of Satan's deceptive power are often easy prey for his destructive work. Consequently, the Lord strictly forbids any contact with the occult world.

It is interesting to note as the gospel advanced into the gentile world of the apostolic era the apostles faced cultures often steeped in occultism. They simply did not tolerate it. Rather, they rebuked it openly and exercising the authority of the name of Jesus they boldly took back ground the enemy held in the lives of many living in darkness.

We need to follow their example and always resist Satan's advances into the lives of our family and those around us.

Now, looking back at our text we read in verse 12 . . . *“For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.”* The bottom line for the nations dwelling in the land of Canaan at that time was this: *your time is up!*

While the Lord waited for repentance, those nations persisted in evil practices. Therefore the Lord removed them from the land. My friend, those nations experienced God's judgment because of idolatry and occult practices. Sadly, I

must tell you our world is headed toward certain judgment for the same reasons.

In Revelation chapter nine the scripture predicts a time of judgment when one third of the earth's population will die as a result of events unleashed upon the planet at that time. And when this happens the Bible says:

*“The rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not **worship devils**, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their **sorceries**, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”*

My friend, the Lord is calling this world to repentance, which means among other things he is calling men to turn from involvement in witchcraft, sorceries, and any kind of occult activity.

I warn you today: ***if you are a psychic, or you are dabbling in sorcery or witchcraft, or perhaps you are trafficking in demons as a medium (or through the practice of channeling), if you do not repent you will perish!***

The scripture also says in Revelation chapter 21:

“He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and

whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

It is most serious to fall into the hands of the living God! What will you say to him on that day if you refuse the mercy and grace he is offering you in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ?