

# Divination

by Sebastian R. Fama

Ouija Boards, psychic hotlines, Tarot Cards and ESP are some of the more common forms of Divination. Many think of occult practices as being harmless entertainment while others see them as a source of comfort. Few seem to realize that such acts can produce serious consequences. But some will ask, "How can that be? What's wrong with letting people know that a deceased relative or friend is happy and in a better place? Isn't the ability to see the future a gift from God? And what about ESP? Surely that's a gift from God."

None of these practices are gifts from God. If they were He would have told us as much. Instead we find Him condemning them because their source of power is demonic. The teaching of Scripture is clear on both points:

When you come into the land which the LORD, your God, is giving you, you shall not learn to imitate **the abominations of the peoples there**. Let there not be found among you anyone who immolates his son or daughter in the fire, **nor a fortune-teller, soothsayer, charmer, diviner, or caster of spells, nor one who consults ghosts and spirits or seeks oracles from the dead. Anyone who does such things is an abomination to the LORD, and because of such abominations the LORD, your God, is driving these nations out of your way** (Deuteronomy 18:9-12).

But the children of Israel were disobedient:

They immolated their sons and daughters by fire, **practiced fortune-telling and divination**, and sold themselves into evil-doing in the Lord's sight, provoking him till, in his great anger against Israel, the Lord put them away out of his sight. Only the tribe of Judah was left (2 Kings 17:17-18).

Judah also rebelled and as a result all of Israel was exiled:

Even the people of Judah, however, did not keep the commandments of the Lord, their God, but followed the rites practiced by Israel. So, the Lord rejected the whole race of Israel. He afflicted them and delivered them over to plunderers, finally casting them out from before him... Finally, the Lord put Israel away out of his sight as he had foretold through all his servants, the prophets; **and Israel went into exile** from their native soil to Assyria, an exile lasting to the present (2 Kings 17:19-23).

Occult practices may appear good, but they are the work of Satan:

...for **even Satan masquerades as an angel of light**. So, it is not strange that his ministers also masquerade as ministers of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds (2 Corinthians 11:14-15).

False messiahs and false prophets will arise, and **they will perform signs and wonders** so great as to deceive, if that were possible, even the elect (Matthew 24:24).

As we were going to the place of prayer, we met **a slave girl with an oracular spirit**, who used to bring a large profit to her owners through her **fortune-telling**. She began to follow Paul and us, shouting, "These people are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation." She did this for many days. **Paul** became annoyed, turned, and **said to the spirit**, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to **come out of her**." Then it came out at that moment (Acts 16:16-18).

The "benefits" of occult practices are what I would call "cheese in the trap." If you didn't put any cheese in a mouse trap the mouse wouldn't put his head in it. Satan isn't stupid. He meets you where you are. Most people wouldn't respond to the temptation to rob a bank. But they might accept the invitation to talk to their Uncle Fred who has

been dead for ten years. If Satan can't get you to submit to his influence willingly, he will try to get you to submit unwittingly.

On the surface talking to Uncle Fred doesn't seem harmful. But that's a false perception because you aren't talking to Uncle Fred. You are talking to a demon who is impersonating Uncle Fred, a demon who was around during Uncle Fred's lifetime. That is how he knows things that you thought only you and Uncle Fred knew. Whenever you open yourself to demonic influences you are traveling in dangerous territory. Once you develop an appreciation for something it is much easier to be drawn deeper into it. The deeper you are drawn into the occult the farther you are from God and the more likely it is that your faith will be harmed.

Keep in mind the fact that Satan is incredibly intelligent. Also remember that the occult is his creation. Put that together with the fact that he is dedicated to your destruction and you have a recipe for disaster.

Prolonged participation in occult practices can lead to demonic oppression or even possession. Even in the cases where this does not occur a danger still exists. Your involvement could be seen by others as an endorsement of the occult, an endorsement that could possibly lead to their becoming involved. And the further possibility that they might not fare as well as you did. Occult practices include but are not limited to:

Past Life Regression  
Psychic Hotlines  
ESP  
Séances

Clairvoyance  
Ouija Boards  
Reading Tea Leaves  
Palm Reading

Fortune Telling  
Numerology  
Crystal Gazing  
Astrological Horoscope

Any practice that seeks hidden knowledge via the spiritual realm can be included on this list. Needless to say any occult practice, no matter how benign in appearance, should be avoided at all costs. The Catechism of the Catholic Church sums it up well:

All forms of divination are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to 'unveil' the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect and loving fear that we owe to God alone (CCC 2116).

The New Testament also condemns divination. It also reveals the power behind it. In Acts 16:16-18 Paul encounters a slave girl who practiced divination for the profit of her masters. I believe this passage tells us all we need to know concerning divination:

As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. She followed Paul and us crying: "These men are servants of the most high God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

In the end we have two choices. We can submit to a loving God or we can submit to the one who seeks our destruction.