

## Fortune-Telling, Psychics, Astrology, Mediums, Halloween ~ For Discussion

1. Read Luke 16:19-31 (Story of the Rich Man and Lazarus). According to Jesus, what are chances of us hearing from the dead?

Throughout history attempts at fortune telling have been made by those who claim to be sorcerers, seers, wizards, swamis, necromancers, and clairvoyants. Babylon was the ancient headquarters for soothsayers, astrologers, and prognosticators who took sacrificial animals and examined their organs in order to find omens of the future. The liver was especially prized to predict the future, to tell fortunes, or to give signs. Another method used in Babylon was to throw a rock into a pool of water and examine the rings produced in the water to tell the future. Gazing at the stars, the practice of astrology, has been common since the beginning of man as a means of telling the future.

Today, in America, we are no different than the ancients were in seeking fortune-teller's predictions of the future. We see ourselves as so enlightened, yet there are literally thousands of swamis, fortunetellers, and soothsayers who claim to be able to predict the future. Many of them make fabulous salaries by foretelling tomorrow to their wealthy clients. Men of great economic power, magnates in industry, statesmen, politicians, and movie stars, will frequently do nothing without first consulting a psychic or astrologer. Many people who read their astrological forecast in the daily newspaper would not subscribe to any newspaper that did not print the astrology section. We literally see in America today what we might call a "psychic explosion."

Many thousands of people call these psychics every day. Celebrities such as Dionne Warwick, Cher, and Tori Spelling tell people that if they have questions or concerns about love, money, their job, etc., to call a live psychic for answers and advice.

In France there are more mediums today—that is, spiritualists—than there are pastors. Unfortunately, in America we see the same sad thing happening.

**Where can we find the real truth about psychics?** The only place we can find the real truth is in the Word of God. The primary passage in Scripture that deals with this phenomenon is in Deuteronomy 18:10-14 – "Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the Lord your God. The nations you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery or divination. **But as for you, the Lord your God has not permitted you to do so.**"

2. Does God say anywhere in these verses that spirits don't exist? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How could a medium give someone information about a loved one? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is the big bottom line for us? \_\_\_\_\_

In this passage (Deuteronomy 18:10-14) commanding the nation of Israel to never inquire of a wizard, soothsayer, astrologer, or a fortuneteller, there are eight means of communication with the spirit world listed.

1. *Uses or practices divination* - The idea of using divination means to give false prophecy, or to seek to determine the will of the gods by examining and interpreting omens.

2. *An observer of times [KJV] or practices sorcery [NIV]* - Refers to one who casts spells that attempt to control people or circumstances through power given by evil spirits, or demons.

3. *Enchanter [KJV] or one who interprets omens [NIV]* - is one who tells the future based on signs: fire, rain, or the movement of birds. Also a palm reader, fortune teller, or astrologer who claims to be able to tell the future by seeing the movement of the stars.

4. *Witch [KJV]* is one who practices magical incantations or *engages in witchcraft [NIV]*.

5. *A charmer [KJV]* is one who *casts spells [NIV]*, or literally one who ties knots and who binds other people by magic mutterings.

6. *A consulter with familiar spirits [KJV] or spiritist [NIV]* refers to someone who is a séance leader. They think they are communicating with the dead, but they are actually communicating with demons.

7. *Wizard [KJV] or medium [NIV]* claims to be a channel of communication (channeler) between humans in this world and spirits in another world.

8. *Necromancer [KJV] or one who consults the dead [NIV]* is one who attempts to contact dead people to gain advice or information on the future, or help in manipulating it.

This passage (Deuteronomy 18:10-14) tells us that all of these forms of fortune telling and astrology are an abomination to the Lord. Because of these things, God drove the Canaanites out of the land of Israel. He forbade the children of Israel from engaging in such things. Through this we know that he has also forbidden any person to traffic in this type of thing today. Some other passages in the Old Testament and the New Testament tell us God's view of psychics.

5. Galatians 5:19-21. What *work of the flesh [KJV] or act of sinful nature [NIV]* refers to the passage above? \_\_\_\_\_

What does Paul say will happen to those who practice this? (5:21) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Isaiah 47:12-15. God says: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Isaiah 8:18-20. Isaiah says: \_\_\_\_\_

6. 1 Chronicles 10:13-14. One reason Saul died: \_\_\_\_\_

7. 2 Chronicles 33:1-6. What was God's reaction to Manasseh? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Leviticus 19:31. What happens to you if you turn to mediums or spiritists? \_\_\_\_\_

**Witchcraft and sorcery is deceiving.** There are four different places in the book of Revelation where the word “witchcraft” or “sorcery” is used. We see that those who practice these things are depraved, unable to deliver, and in darkness; not only is this deadly and defiling, but those who practice these things are *deceived*.

In Revelation 18:23, in speaking of the fall of the great city of Babylon, an angel of God says, “The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world’s great men. *By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.*”

And in Revelation 9:21, we read, “Nor did they repent of their murders, *their magic arts*, their sexual immorality or their thefts.”

Revelation 21:8 in speaking about the new heavens and the new earth, says, “But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, *those who practice magic arts*, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

### Discussion Questions for Small Groups

9. I can see there might be a little problem calling up the dead but reading my horoscope in the paper or on the Internet can’t hurt or can it? \_\_\_\_\_
10. What does Matthew 11:28-30 have to do with this study? \_\_\_\_\_
11. What could or should you say to someone who was in a séance and heard something only a dead relative or friend would know? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Doesn’t Acts 16:16-17 indicate that divination and prediction is possible? After all, the girl knew who Paul and his group were and what they did. \_\_\_\_\_
13. What did Paul do to the slave girl? (Acts 16:18-19). \_\_\_\_\_
14. Some Christians shun Halloween. But it’s just a fun time to get dressed up in a costume and eat a lot of candy, right? \_\_\_\_\_

When witchcraft is practiced as a religion, it is called by the Old English term for witch, Wicca. This is primarily a religion that worships nature, and sees all creation as sacred. Wicca also worships both a male and female deity, a female Goddess and a male God, who had together created the world and everything in it. Spells are rituals and prayers that are conducted in witchcraft to ask for divine help in a certain aspects of life.

Wicca (witchcraft) is a pagan religion. Pagan religions worship multiple deities rather than a single god and include Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian and American Indian religions as well as all other nature-oriented religions. One central Wiccan theme is, “if it does no harm, do your own will.”

Halloween is a major holy day in Wicca (witchcraft). Every year, the Wiccan Goddess gives birth to the God on Yule. The God grows strong through spring and summer, and then in fall, the God and Goddess unite. At this time, the Goddess becomes pregnant with the new God. The old God dies on Halloween to be reborn on Yule. Also on Halloween the dead are said to be able to communicate with the living in order to be with and celebrate with their families.