

~MAGIC AND SORCERY (465)

.. Condemned By The Bible

- Secret arts and uncanny powers presumably used to accomplish things beyond what is natural associated with spiritistic, occult powers.
- Black magic is said to consist of spells, special curses, and the evil eye that bring harm to ones enemies. White magic, on the other hand, is said by its practicers to produce good results by breaking the spells and canceling the curses.
- Among some ancient peoples black magic was forbidden under penalty of death. The Bible, however, goes a step further and forbids every form of spiritistic magic.
- You must eat nothing along with blood. You must not look for omens, and you must not practice magic. (Leviticus 19:26)
- When you are entered into the land that Yehowah your God is giving you, you must not learn to do according to the detestable things of those nations. (Deuteronomy 18:9)
- There should not be found in you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, anyone who employs divination, a practicer of magic or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer. (Deuteronomy 18:10)
- Or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events or anyone who inquires of the dead. (Deuteronomy 18:11)
- For everybody doing these things is something detestable to Yehowah, and on account of these detestable things Yehowah your God is driving them away from before you. (Deuteronomy 18:12)
- You should prove yourself faultless with Yehowah your God. (Deuteronomy 18:13)
- For these nations whom you are dispossessing used to listen to those practicing magic and to those who divine, but as for you,

**Yehowah your God has not given you anything like this.
(Deuteronomy 18:14)**

- By the use of **magic** formulas, said to be obtained through supernatural knowledge and wisdom, the practitioner attempts to influence people and alter future events. In this respect **magic** differs from divination, which attempts only to discover future events rather than influence or change them.

See Also DIVINATION

- Much of the concept of **magic**-working sorcery is based on the belief that evil spirits can be induced either to leave or to enter a person, that they can be tricked and deceived, and that they can be captured or trapped in a piece of wood or a clay image.
- For example, it is claimed that by making **magic** paths of honey or other agreeable things, the demons can be led around at the will of the **magician**.
- All such notions naturally gave rise to a crafty class of **magic**-practicing priests, who exercised great power over the lives of the people, extorting large payments from those under their influence on the pretense of possessing supernatural powers over and beyond those of the demons.
- The people believed that these professional sorcerers could invoke the demons to obey but that the demons had no power over the sorcerers.
- These spiritistic practices, so-called sciences, were developed and used by the ancient Chaldeans of Babylonia. Isaiah, in the **Eighth Century B.C.E**, tells us that Babylon of his day was rife with sorceries of all sorts.
- Stand still, now, with your spells and with the abundance of your sorceries, in which you have toiled from your youth, that perhaps you might be able to benefit, that perhaps you might strike people with awe. (**Isaiah 47:12**)
- You have grown weary with the multitude of your counselors. Let them stand up, now, and save you, the worshipers of the heavens, the lookers at the stars, those giving out knowledge at the new moons concerning the things that will come upon you.

(Isaiah 47:13)

- **Look! They have become like stubble. A fire itself will certainly burn them up. They will not deliver their soul from the power of the flame. There will be no glow of charcoals for people to warm themselves, no firelight in front of which to sit down. (Isaiah 47:14)**
- **Thus they will certainly become to you, with whom you have toiled as your charmers from your youth. They will actually wander, each one to his own region. There will be no one to save you. (Isaiah 47:15)**
- **More than a century later, in the days of Daniel, the **magic-practicing** priests were still a part of the Babylonian court.**
- **And as regards every matter of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired about from them, he even got to find them ten times better than all the **magic-practicing** priests and the conjurers that were in all his royal realm. (Daniel 1:20)**
- **So the king said to call the **magic-practicing** priests and the conjurers and the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. And they proceeded to come in and to stand before the king. (Daniel 2:2)**
- **The Chaldeans answered before the king, and they were saying; There does not exist a man on the dry land that is able to show the matter of the king, forasmuch as no grand king or governor has asked such a thing as this of any **magic-practicing** priest or conjurer or Chaldean. (Daniel 2:10)**
- **Daniel was answering before the king and saying; The secret that the king himself is asking, the wise men, the conjurers, the **magic-practicing** priests and the astrologers themselves are unable to show to the king. (Daniel 2:27)**
- **At that time the **magic-practicing** priests, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the astrologers were entering, and I was saying before them what the dream was, but its interpretation they were not making known to me. (Daniel 4:7)**
- **There exists a capable man in your kingdom in whom there is the spirit of holy gods, and in the days of your father illumination and**

insight and wisdom like the wisdom of gods were found in him, and King Nebuchadnezzar your father himself set him up as chief of the **magic**-practicing priests, the conjurers, the Chaldeans and the astrologers, even your father, O king. (**Daniel 5:11**)

- This expression, **magic-practicing** priests, is a literal and explicit translation of the **Hebrew**.
- The Babylonians had a great fear of physically deformed persons called warlocks and witches, in the belief that they were dispensers of **black magic**.
- The priests, on the other hand, were said to be masters of white **magic**. They believed that the same incantation that made a sick man well if spoken by a priest would kill the man if uttered by a warlock or witch.
- It is possible that when people scattered around the earth because of the confusion of languages at Babel, they took with them some concept of such **magical** arts.
- Accordingly Yehowah scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth, and they gradually left off building the city. (**Genesis 11:8**)
- That is why its name was called Babel, because there Yehowah had confused the language of all the earth, and Yehowah had scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth. (**Genesis 11:9**)
- Today millions practice the **magic** of mantra, that is, the mystic formula, hymn, or spellbinding prayer of popular Hinduism. **Magic**-practicing priests, witch doctors, medicine men, and sorcerers of all sorts are found in many places the world over, as they were among the Egyptians of the **18th Century B.C.E**, in the days of Joseph
- And it developed in the morning that his spirit became agitated. So he sent and called all the **magic-practicing** priests of Egypt and all her wise men, and Pharaoh went on to relate his dreams to them. But there was no interpreter of them for Pharaoh. (**Genesis 41:8**)
- And the thin ears of grain began to swallow up the seven good ears of grain. So I stated it to the **magic-practicing** priests, but

there was none telling me. ([Genesis 41:24](#))

- Over two centuries after Joseph was sold into slavery, the **magic-practicing** priests of Egypt seemingly duplicated to an extent the first two miracles performed by Moses.
- However, Pharaoh also called for the wise men and the sorcerers, and the **magic-practicing** priests of Egypt themselves also proceeded to do the same thing with their magic arts. ([Exodus 7:11](#))
- Nevertheless, the **magic-practicing** priests of Egypt proceeded to do the same thing with their secret arts, so that Pharaoh's heart continued to be obstinate, and he did not listen to them, just as Yehowah had spoken. ([Exodus 7:22](#))
- However, the **magic-practicing** priests did the same thing by their secret arts and made the frogs come up over the land of Egypt. ([Exodus 8:7](#))
- But they were powerless when it came to producing gnats, having to admit that it was the finger of God! They were likewise helpless in preventing the plague of boils from afflicting themselves.
- And the **magic-practicing** priests tried to do the same by their secret arts, in order to bring forth gnats, but they were unable. And the gnats came to be on man and beast. ([Exodus 8:18](#))
- Hence the **magic-practicing** priests said to Pharaoh; It is the finger of God! But Pharaoh's heart continued to be obstinate, and he did not listen to them, just as Yehowah had spoken. ([Exodus 8:19](#))
- And the **magic-practicing** priests were unable to stand before Moses as a result of the boils, because the boils had developed on the **magic-practicing** priests and on all the Egyptians. ([Exodus 9:11](#))

.. Condemned By The Bible

- The Bible is singularly different from the writings of other ancient people in that its references to uncanny powers and **magical** arts are all condemnatory. Nowhere does it recommend **white magic** to cancel spells of **black magic**.

- Rather, it urges faith, prayer, and trust in Yehowah as the protection against unseen wicked spirit forces and all their related activities, including **magical** influences.
- Put on the complete suit of armor from God that you may be able to stand firm against **the machinations of the Devil**. (**Ephesians 6:11**)
- Because we have a wrestling, not against blood and flesh, but against the governments, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places. (**Ephesians 6:12**)
- On this account take up the complete suit of armor from God, that you may be able to resist in the wicked day and, after you have done all things thoroughly, to stand firm. (**Ephesians 6:13**)
- Stand firm, therefore, with your loins girded about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness. (**Ephesians 6:14**)
- And with your feet shod with the equipment of the Good News of peace. (**Ephesians 6:15**)
- Above all things, take up the large shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the wicked ones burning missiles. (**Ephesians 6:16**)
- Also, accept the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, that is, God's word. (**Ephesians 6:17**)
- While with every form of prayer and supplication you carry on prayer on every occasion in spirit. And to that end keep awake with all constancy and with supplication in behalf of all the holy ones. (**Ephesians 6:18**)
- In the Psalms the righteous pray for deliverance from evil, Jesus taught us to pray for deliverance, from the wicked one.
- And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one. (**Matthew 6:13**)

See Also APOCRYPHA (Tobit)

- The nation of Israel was, therefore, unlike its contemporaries in this respect, and in order, that it might remain so, Yehowah gave his people some very explicit laws concerning those who were intimate with the occult powers.
- You must not preserve a sorceress alive. (**Exodus 22:18**)
- You must eat nothing along with blood. You must not look for omens, and you must not practice **magic**. (**Leviticus 19:26**)
- And as for a man or woman in whom there proves to be a mediumistic spirit or spirit of prediction, they should be put to death without fail. They should pelt them to death with stones. Their own blood is upon them. (**Leviticus 20:27**)
- There should not be found in you a **practicer** of **magic** or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer, or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium.
- There should not be found in you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, anyone who employs divination, a practicer of **magic** or anyone who looks for omens or a sorcerer. (**Deuteronomy 18:10**)
- Or one who binds others with a spell or anyone who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events or anyone who inquires of the dead. (**Deuteronomy 18:11**)
- For everybody doing these things is something detestable to Yehowah, and on account of these detestable things Yehowah your God is driving them away from before you. (**Deuteronomy 18:12**)
- You should prove yourself faultless with Yehowah your God. (**Deuteronomy 18:13**)
- For these nations whom you are dispossessing used to listen to those practicing **magic** and to those who divine, but as for you, Yehowah your God has not given you anything like this. (**Deuteronomy 18:14**)
- Yehowah's prophet also declared that God would cut off all those who indulged in sorceries.

- And I will cut off sorceries out of your hand, and no practitioners of **magic** will you continue to have. (**Micah 5:12**)
- Certain individuals such as Saul, Jezebel, and Manasseh, who forsook Yehowah and turned to sorceries of one kind or another, are examples of the past not to be copied.
- Finally Saul said to his servants; Seek for me a woman who is a mistress of spirit mediumship, and I will go to her and consult her. Then his servants said to him; Look! There is a woman who is a mistress of spirit mediumship in En-dor. (**1 Samuel 28:7**)
- And it came about that as soon as Jehoram saw Jehu, he immediately said; Is there peace, Jehu? But he said; What peace could there be as long as there are the fornications of Jezebel your mother and her many sorceries? (**2 Kings 9:22**)
- Twelve years old was Manasseh when he began to reign, and for fifty-five years he reigned in Jerusalem. (**2 Chronicles 33:1**)
- And he proceeded to do what was bad in Yehowah's eyes, according to the detestable things of the nations that Yehowah had driven out from before the sons of Israel. (**2 Chronicles 33:2**)
- And he himself made his own sons pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and practiced **magic** and used divination and practiced sorcery and made spiritistic mediums and professional foretellers of events. He did on a grand scale what was bad in the eyes of Yehowah, to offend him. (**2 Chronicles 33:6**)
- The **Christian Greek Scriptures** also tell of the prevalence of **sorcerers** throughout the Roman Empire in the days of Jesus and the apostles. On the island of Cyprus, there was such a one named Bar-Jesus, whom Paul denounced as, full of every sort of fraud and every sort of villainy, **son of the Devil**.
- When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they met up with a certain man, a **sorcerer**, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus. (**Acts of Apostles 13:6**)
- And he was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. Calling Barnabas and Saul to him, this man earnestly sought to hear the word of God. (**Acts of Apostles 13:7**)

- But Elymas the sorcerer, that, in fact, is the way his name is translated, began opposing them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. ([Acts of Apostles 13:8](#))
- Saul, who is also Paul, becoming filled with Holy Spirit, looked at him intently. ([Acts of Apostles 13:9](#))
- And said; O man full of every sort of fraud and every sort of villainy, you son of the Devil, you enemy of everything righteous, will you not quit distorting the right ways of Yehowah? ([Acts of Apostles 13:10](#))
- Well, then, look! Yehowah's hand is upon you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sunlight for a period of time. Instantly a thick mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went around seeking men to lead him by the hand. ([Acts of Apostles 13:11](#))
- There were others, however, such as Simon of Samaria who gave up their **magic-working** practices and embraced Christianity.
- Philip, for one, went down to the city of Samaria and began to preach the Christ to them. ([Acts of Apostles 8:5](#))
- Now in the city there was a certain man named Simon, who, prior to this, had been practicing magical arts and amazing the nation of Samaria, saying he himself was somebody great. ([Acts of Apostles 8:9](#))
- And all of them, from the least to the greatest, would pay attention to him and say; This man is the Power of God, which can be called Great. ([Acts of Apostles 8:10](#))
- So they would pay attention to him because of his having amazed them for quite a while by his magical arts. ([Acts of Apostles 8:11](#))
- But when they believed Philip, who was declaring the Good News of the kingdom of God and of the name of Jesus Christ, they proceeded to be baptized, both men and women. ([Acts of Apostles 8:12](#))
- Simon himself also became a believer, and, after being baptized, he was in constant attendance upon Philip, and he was amazed at beholding signs and great powerful works taking place. ([Acts](#)

of Apostles 8:13)

- On one occasion in Ephesus, quite a number of those who **practiced magical arts** brought their books together and burned them up before everybody. And they calculated together the prices of them and found them worth fifty thousand pieces of silver, if denarii, \$37,200.
- And many of those who had become believers would come and confess and report their practices openly. (**Acts of Apostles 19:18**)
- Indeed, quite a number of those who practiced **magical** arts brought their books together and burned them up before everybody. And they calculated together the prices of them and found them worth fifty thousand pieces of silver. (**Acts of Apostles 19:19**)
- Writing to those in Galatia, the apostle Paul included spiritistic occultism among the works of the flesh, warning them that those who **practice** such things will not inherit God's kingdom.
- Now the works of the flesh are manifest, and they are fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct. (**Galatians 5:19**)
- Idolatry, practice of spiritism, enmities, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, contentions, divisions, sects. (**Galatians 5:20**)
- Envies, drunken bouts, revelries, and things like these. As to these things I am forewarning you, the same way as I did forewarn you, that those who practice such things will not inherit God's kingdom. (**Galatians 5:21**)
- Outside that glorious Kingdom will be all those who persist in these Babylonish practices.
- But as for the cowards and those without faith and those who are disgusting in their filth and murderers and fornicators and those practicing spiritism and idolaters and all the liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur. This means the second death. (**Revelation 21:8**)
- Outside are the dogs and those who **practice spiritism** and the fornicators and the murderers and the idolaters and everyone

liking and carrying on a lie. (**Revelation 22:15**)

- **Together with Babylon the Great, so notorious for misleading the nations by her **sorceries**, they will all be destroyed.**
- **And no light of a lamp will ever shine in you again, and no voice of a bridegroom and of a bride will ever be heard in you again, because your traveling merchants were the top-ranking men of the earth, for by your **spiritistic practice** all the nations were misled. (**Revelation 18:23**)**

See Also POWER, POWERFUL WORKS (Responsible use of power)