

What About Halloween?

People's interest in the occult is growing. In some countries in the world, it has become the fastest growing religion with millions of people being involved. In this country, "pagan societies" exist in a number of cities. One can hardly turn on the television or watch a movie without seeing something that has been influenced by the world of the occult. The word "occult" is derived from the Latin *occultus*, which means "hidden, secret or mysterious." It almost always has to do with the spiritual, unseen world, the world where the devil and demons hold sway and bear influence.

The basic assumption behind any area of the world of the occult is that the spirits possess knowledge or power desired by men and that they are willing to impart it to men under certain conditions. This knowledge or power is desired either for the person's protection from evil, or for his own well-being.

The most well-known day in the occult and the day witches celebrate above all others is October 31st, which is All Hallows Eve or Halloween. It is believed that on this night Satan and his witches have their greatest power.

The origin of Halloween goes back 2,000 years before the days of Christ to a practice of the ancient Druids in Britain, France, Germany and the Celtic countries. The celebration honored their god Samhain, lord of the dead. The Celtic people considered November 1st as being the day of death because it was the end of autumn and the beginning of winter for them. The Druids believed that on this evening the spirits of the dead returned to their former home to visit the living in search of bodies to possess for the next year. It was believed to be their only hope for the afterlife. The Celts believed all laws of space and time were suspended during this time, allowing the spirit world to intermingle with the living. Naturally, the still-living did not want to be possessed. So on the night of October 31st, the Celts wore animal skins and animal heads to hide from these evil spirits and Druid priests burned sacrifices to appease the spirits. Villagers would also extinguish the fires in their homes in order to make them cold and undesirable.

"Witchcraft" is a title commonly linked with those in league with evil spirits and their practices. The Old Testament speaks of witchcraft or sorcery several times (Exodus 22:18; Deuteronomy 18:10; 1 Samuel 15:23; 28:7-25; 2 Kings 9:22; 2 Chronicles 33:6; Micah 5:12; Nahum 3:4). The New Testament speaks of witchcraft and sorcery too, but not as much (Acts 8:9, 11; 19:18-19; Galatians 5:20; Revelation 9:21; 18:23). All practices of this nature are strictly condemned (Exodus 22:18; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 1 Samuel 28:3, 9; 2 Kings 23:24; Isaiah 8:19; Acts 19:18-19; Galatians 5:20).

Halloween has held an association with the occult throughout its history, and to a degree that stigma still exists today. However, Halloween is now largely considered a secular holiday, with various traditions of Halloween, including trick or treating, bobbing for apples, dressing in costumes and jack-o-lanterns, all evolving from differing customs down through the years. Like any other day with a pagan background (such as Christmas), one can make it as evil as they wish. For some, they believe that they should not participate in any way in Halloween. Others have come to the conclusion that they can celebrate it without its darker overtones. "*Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind*" (Romans 14:5).

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