

The Nature of Witchcraft (Part 1)



The Enemies We Face (Part 6)
by Derek Prince

In our previous talk we looked at the nature and the structure of Satan's kingdom and we saw that his kingdom operates on two levels. The upper level is in the heavenlies, somewhere in the heavenly region that is not the heaven of God and is not the visible heaven. And his upper level consists of rebellious angels who are in opposition to God. And then the lower level consists of men who are not surrendered to God and to the righteous government of Jesus the Messiah, the Savior. And I pointed out that the key word that describes all those in Satan's kingdom is the word rebel. They are all in rebellion against God, whether they are angels or whether they are men.

And then we saw that the gods of the pagan world, whether they're Greece or Rome or whatever other nation, are different ways of naming and depicting Satan's kingdom of angels. And all those who have been worshiped by pagan religions and pagan societies are satanic angels. The particular generic name for the way that men seek to contact these satanic angels is witchcraft. You could say that witchcraft is the religion of fallen humanity. It has got countless different forms and ceremonies but it has this one common feature that it is different ways of contacting different satanic spiritual beings. There are many different ceremonies. Most of them are in some way sensual or cruel or defiling. The things that men have done through the ages to somehow ingratiate themselves with Satan and his kingdom have been really terrible to contemplate.

I spoke a little bit about the American Indians as an example of a racial group that have for the most part not escaped from the dominion of Satan. And just as a matter of interest, I was reading in the National Geographic magazine, their main ceremony is what they call "the sun dance," is one in which they fasten hooks in their skin and then hang by those hooks and tear great portions of their skin out. They do this in order to worship their god.

There are countless other different forms of such worship all over the earth. As I said, go to any kind of society that still retains the marks of its primitive nature and there is one kind of person that you will find everywhere with a different name in each language, but it is witch doctor. And in many of those

societies really the most powerful person is the witch doctor.

We have a remarkable example even in the Bible. It says that Philip went down to Samaria and preached in the city of Samaria. But there was a man there who dominated the whole of that city. His name was Simon. He was a sorcerer, that is, a practitioner of witchcraft. And it says the whole city was in fear of him because of the magic that he used. That is not an unusual situation in a certain sense, that's a pretty typical picture of pagan primitive society.

So there is a direct connection between rebellion and witchcraft. When I say rebellion, I mean rebellion against God. This is brought out very clearly in 1 Samuel 15 and verse 23. These are words that were spoken by the prophet Samuel to King Saul after Saul himself had become a rebel. He had refused to obey the particular charge and commission that had been given him by God through the prophet Samuel. And here Samuel is telling Saul God's estimate of his conduct and he says (you could read verse 22):

> "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to heed than the fat of rams. [And now he goes on with this definition of witchcraft:] For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king."

Samuel makes two comparisons there. Rebellion is a twin of witchcraft; stubbornness is a twin of idolatry. I'm not going to comment on idolatry at any length, but let me point out one way in which a stubborn person is an idolater. A stubborn person makes idols of his own opinions and that is a form of idolatry. You see, it is very interesting to consider our attitude in the church today. We will not accept, for the most part, drunkards or openly immoral people; but how many stubborn people do we have in church? And in God's eyes they are idolaters. We would not have somebody who came into the kind of churches we are used to with a wooden idol, fall down and worship it in front of the church. We would say we don't tolerate that. But, alas, I'm afraid we tolerate a lot of stubborn people and often we let them get away with it.

But let's return to the other comparison. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. Very, very important. The root of witchcraft is rebellion and wherever you find rebellion you can anticipate witchcraft. I learned this in the ministry of deliverance. For instance, I learned that if a person needed deliverance from a spirit of witchcraft almost invariably they also needed deliverance from rebellion. And conversely, where you encounter a spirit of rebellion, you'd better check to see if there is not also a spirit of witchcraft. They are close together.

Let me try and explain to you simply how this comes about. You see, rebellion rejects God's authority… legitimate authority, just like King Saul rejected the authority of God's Word. But you cannot exist in life for long without authority. So if you don't have legitimate authority it's going to be replaced by illegitimate authority. And if you have illegitimate authority it has to be supported by illegitimate power. And the illegitimate power that supports rebellion is the power of witchcraft. So really, wherever you find illegitimate authority being exercised, you'd better be prepared to deal with witchcraft.

There is a very clear example in the United States in the 1960s. There was the rebellious generation. They turned their backs on almost all accepted forms of authority—parents, church, government, whatever—and they became a generation of rebels. Now I have dealt with many of them, many of them that met the Lord are my friends today. But almost without one exception, all those who went in rebellion went into the occult, went into the satanic supernatural, went into witchcraft. This is the logic of spiritual experience. It is almost impossible to be deeply involved in rebellion without sooner or later coming under the power of witchcraft.

If we go back to the example of King Saul for a moment, if you remember the story, he disobeyed Samuel's injunction to slaughter all the animals that had been captured. And he kept, as he called it, "the best" to offer to God. God said, "I'm not interested in your sacrifice, because it comes out of disobedience." Now Saul himself as king of Israel had actually put away all the witches from Israel. But just before his death, in desperation, when he could not hear from God, he himself sought to a witch. That's not an accident. That's cause and effect. I want to emphasize this: Wherever there is rebellion, sooner or later there will be witchcraft. And another point is this: that when you want to deal with witchcraft, the satanic supernatural, the occult, in all its forms, if you only deal with the occult, you have not dealt with the root because the root is rebellion.

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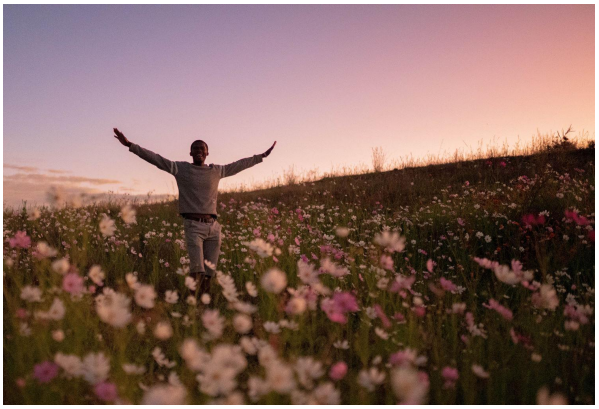

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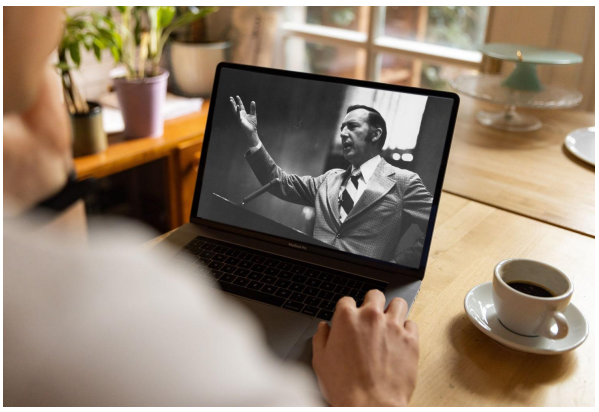

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