

HALLOWEEN, A PAGAN TRICK

By

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It will soon be that time again for stores and homes to be decorated with witches and skeletons and for the school children to be taught how to make black cats, jack-o-lanterns and witches out of construction paper. For the past century Halloween has been accepted as an innocent diversion, but that was before the rapid rise of occultism and Satanism in the past decade. With covens abound all over the country, young people seriously seek a relationship with Satan, and millions of people earnestly try to contact the dead. It may be time to take another look at Halloween, at where it came from and what it means.

It all began in England and Scotland centuries ago with the Druids, who believed that on October 31 their god Lucifer descended into the underworld, which, they thought, resulted in the falling of leaves and the dormant state of vegetation. In order to bring back their god from the underworld to the sky above on May 1st (Beltaine) they needed blood sacrifices to regenerate his life. For this they used a game called “trick or treat,” but the tricks were deadly, and so was the treat, as we shall see.

Dressed in white hooded robes, they would visit the townspeople house to house. Some would carry pumpkins with faces carved in them, representing a dead miser called Jack. Behind the procession they might drag a corpse by a rope, which added to the terror felt by those on whom they called. Upon arriving at a home they demanded a treat in the form of a young woman to sacrifice. If the people complied with the demand, they set a jack-o-lantern at the door to keep evil spirits away. But if they refused, blood from the corpse was used to mark the door of that house with a hexagram, or six-pointed star, a curse to indicate that someone there would die of fear that night.

Now you know the origin of the “trick or treat” game. Modern tricks are less severe, although often destructive, but the treats, when loaded with razor blades or poison, can still be deadly.

The Druids called October 31 “Samhain”, the name of their god, and that’s the name the followers of this religion still give it to this day. Some cultures referred to it as “the day the world died.” On that night the spirits of the dead are supposed to return to their burial places, to visit friends and relatives, or perhaps seek vengeance against their enemies.

The Roman Catholic Church attached this pagan belief back to back with what they call “All Saint’s Day” on November 1. The combined celebration is based upon the false doctrine that the “saints” are not dead, after all, but only separated from their bodies, and can thus be prayed to and expected to grant special help, as if they are something like lesser deities.

Concepts of Halloween, whether pagan (Druid) or Christian, center on the belief of the natural immortality of the soul, that when one dies, he does not really die but only lives in another state. To substantiate this claim, some would cite the case of Saul’s consultation of the “witch” of Endor, to summon Samuel from the dead (I Sam. 28:1–19). But this account proves nothing of the sort. The record does not say that Saul saw Samuel, but that he presumed it was Samuel from the way the witch described what **she**

saw. (It is interesting to note that both Saul and the woman spoke of bringing Samuel up from the dead, not down from heaven.) Although Samuel was buried at Ramah, the witch supposedly resurrected him at Endor. Ben Alexander, who was a spiritualist medium for many years before he became a Christian, says that mediums cannot “bring up” the dead, but that they get in contact with spirits who can imitate the voices of the dead. Of course! Only God has the power to raise the dead.

If Samuel was actually raised up, it was a miracle of God, just as in all other cases of resurrection, and offers no evidence of soul-immortality (I Tim. 1:17 & 6:16). In fact the very idea that one does not die at death was the original lie of Satan, when he changed God’s word to Eve, “You shall surely die,” and said to her, “You shall not surely die” (Gen. 2:17 & 3:4).

Furthermore, if Samuel actually was raised up to give a message to Saul, not that he was disturbed from his rest, in keeping with both Old and New Testament statements that the dead sleep until the day of resurrection.

Whether God actually raised up Samuel to give a message to Saul, or the witch was in touch with a demon who pretended to be Samuel, one cannot tell, but in either case Saul stood condemned for consulting the witch. Jehovah had commanded, “Turn you not unto them that have familiar spirits, nor unto the wizards (male witches): seek them not out, to be defiled by them: I am Jehovah your God” (Lev. 19:31).

The spooky activities of Halloween are usually defended on the basis that today’s participants have no connection with the ancient religion nor with Satanism, and are only having a little fun. Children enjoy planning the festivities, making the decorations and playing the games, as we did when I was a child, and it is all done in perfect innocence, with no intention to glorify the works of Satan.

In my own teen years we saw it as a time for fun, but for some reason the fun was often obtained by playing mean tricks on the neighborhood, which often resulted in vandalism and property damage. Not so innocent, after all.

But, even if no physical damage is done, just how wholesome is it to have children — of parents who profess Christ — going about trying to mimic the activities of a pagan religion which defies God and defiles man?

There can be no question about the fact that many of today’s young people, all through the school years, are fascinated by the devil and witchcraft. “Satanism, which revels in evil, destruction, instant gratification, and ritual guaranteed to shock parents, offers the ultimate rebellion,” writes Lisa Ryckman, Associated Press writer in the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* 3/88. She reports that, according to police authorities, suicides and suicide pacts are common among troubled teen-agers who become involved in the occult. And Halloween activities, at the tender pre-school ages — serve as the child’s introduction into the fascinating mysteries of the occult.

The command of God clearly forbids the work of witches, seers, and familiar spirits, which includes any séance in which the “medium” or New Age chandler tries to get in touch with the spirit world. As the people were to enter Canaan, Jehovah commanded, “Do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations...There shall not be found with you...a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard (male witch), or a necromancer (one who consults the dead). For whosoever does these things is an abomination to Jehovah” (Deut. 18:9–12).

To make light of such forbidden activities is to make light of the commandments of God. And remember that although your children may not take these things seriously, there are many Satanists and witches who do, and apparently our Heavenly Father does, also, or He would not have inveighed so strongly against them by declaring, “Thou shall not allow a sorceress to live” (Ex. 22:18). God’s child does not joke about what God denounces.

Some people find it almost unthinkable to fail to join in any holiday or celebration as widely accepted and endorsed as Halloween. They are utterly embarrassed to be seen as different, even fanatical, about their faith. But, isn’t that what being a disciple of Christ is all about — following Christ and not the world? Being different is what He demands. He was ridiculed and falsely accused, when he refused to conform to the traditions of the world. The Christians of the first century would not join the pagan festivities of Rome, sometimes at the cost of their lives, but the world recognized that they were citizens of another Kingdom, and were committed to their King, Christ Jesus.

Many churches provide an “Autumn Festival” on October 31, where their young people may spend an evening of games, refreshment and prayer, instead of participating in the spooky stuff. Others join the world and bring all the simulated witchcraft right into their group.

Our warfare is on the side of God’s truth against Satan’s lies, including those involved in Halloween and New Age concepts. Here is a tailor-made opportunity for Christ’s disciples to take issue with pagan lies and give a testimony of Christian truth.

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