

## **HALLOWE'EN**

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Hallowe'en or All Hallows Eve is 31 October, the day before All Saints Day. Hallowe'en is older than Christianity.

The two main characteristics of ancient Hallowe'en are the lighting of bonfires and the belief that this is the one night in the year when ghosts and witches are most likely to appear and wander abroad.

Druids and Romans had Hallowe'en festivals in celebration of Pomona, the goddess of apples, with its supply of nuts and apples representing winter's source of food.

Hallowe'en is a pagan event and the antithesis of Christian belief.

Today, children dress up in fancy dress to remember this event and, in some areas, they still collect nuts and fruit.

The trick or treat is the American counterpart which has now travelled the world and has become part of Hallowe'en and this activity is influencing the lives of our children.

Many will say that this is harmless fun.

It is certainly a money making commercial venture. Shops and newsagents sell witch's hats, skeleton masks and even horrific replicas of decomposing corpses. During October, schools help children to make, paint or produce something about Hallowe'en culminating in a dressing-up party often in school time when children act the parts of witches, wizards, ghosts and ghouls.

On the evening itself, children may visit homes with gruesome masks and costumes demanding a treat or some retributive mischief. They frighten old and sick people and one has to ask is this fun or blackmail?

It seems to be linked with games portraying evil powers, Satanic rituals, Dungeons and Dragons and computer games. The emphasis is on what is evil and pagan. It is also trickery and guile as well as the glorification of what is pagan and evil having its origins in the occult.

In Deuteronomy 18 verse 9 -13, as well as Exodus 22. 18, we read that because of witchcraft, the occult and spiritualism, God drove the Canaanites out of the land.

While in the Middle Ages many witches were put to death and some of them were not witches at all but, for example, used herbal remedies to cure the sick. But there were and still are evil witches and the Bible states, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live".

It would take another essay to list the evil that witches do today.

1 Samuel 15 23 describes witchcraft and spiritualism as sin. King Saul sought a medium, the witch at Endor, and God allowed this but punished Saul. In 2 Kings 23. 24 God condemns those who call upon the spirits of the dead and in 1 Chronicles 10. 13 we read that Saul died for his transgression in getting a medium to give a message from the dead prophet, Samuel. The prophet Isaiah warns against these practices and tells the people to seek the Lord.

Witchcraft, mediumship, psychics and spiritualism are condemned in the Bible and those who practise such things shall not reach Heaven or inherit the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5, 19ff.)

We must not bring up our children to embrace such things. Rather, we are to abstain from every appearance of evil (1 Thessalonian 5. 21-22).

Another concern is that of Father Christmas. We tell our children that on Christmas Eve a fat man in a red suit on a sledge drawn by eight reindeer travels across the sky and stops at homes, comes down the chimney and leaves presents. Some people leave him a snack which is gone in the morning.

We must not lie to our children. We must not allow them into anything that is evil or pagan.

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