

DOWSING IS IN THE BIBLE

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Did you know that the Bible speaks about dowsing? Well, believe it or not, it does. In fact, some people claim that Moses and Aaron were dowsers. And, since this subject is mentioned in the Bible, I think it would be a good idea to take a look at what it is and then to see what God says about it.

Dowsing is a practice that is often used as a means to find underground water. To dowse, a person takes a Y-shaped twig of wood (usually hazel) and begins to walk over a piece of ground. When the dowser hits a spot where there is underground water, the twig dips downward, indicating that water has been found at that area. The rod often reacts violently, sometimes snapping in two. Not only does the rod often break, but the dowser himself is affected. A book entitled *The Divining Rod*, states this about the condition of the dowser:

The holder of the rod generally appears exhausted by the effort; in some cases he complains of sickness or giddiness, occasionally the pulse rises, he breaks out in a violent perspiration, and trembles all over.¹

Although some people claim that Moses and Aaron were dowsers, no one really knows how old dowsing is, or where it really originated. There are, however, written records that mention dowsing that go back to at least the 15th century. Let's look at what some of these older records have to say about dowsing before we look at what the Bible says concerning this subject.

The *Grimorium Verum*, published in 1517, directed the dowser to engrave **MAGICAL** words on his wand or rod. Again, turning to *The Divining Rod* we find this:

Descriptions of the preparation of a **MAGICIAN'S WAND** in the old **MAGICAL** treatises **CLEARLY HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON WITH DOWSING**.² [Emphasis mine through-out booklet]

This book also tells us that the natives in Melanesia would use rods of bamboo for their spiritualistic sittings. If the rod moved, it was a sign that a ghost was present.³ It also relates one of the methods of **DIVINATION** used by the Malays as such:

Yet another plan is to place in the hand of the pawang, MAGICIAN, or MEDIUM, a DIVINING-ROD formed of three lengths of rattan, tied together at one end, and when he gets close to the person "wanted," or to the place where anything stolen is concealed, the rod vibrates in a remarkable manner .4

One more instance states:

The SORCERER who wished to use it [the rod] grasps the butt-end of the rod in his right fist, and after burning incense and scattering sacrificial rice, repeats the appropriate charm., which commences with a summons to the spirit to descend from the mountains and enter into his embodiment. If the invocation is properly performed, the spirit descends, and entering the SORCERER'S head by way of the fontanel, proceeds down his arm and into the rod itself. The result is that the tip of the rod commences to rotate with rapidly increasing velocity, until the SORCERER loses consciousness in which case the rod will point in the direction of any sort of lost or hidden treasure, which it may be the object of the operation to discover.5

Are the previous two quotations a fair representation of the practice of dowsing? Could dowsing (water-witching) possibly be a practice that MAGICIANS and SORCERERS once used, but NOW is used as an acceptable method to find underground water?

In 1518, Luther condemned its practice, listing it as one of the sins that broke the first commandment.6 Was Luther correct in listing dowsing as a sin? It was about this time that those who practiced dowsing decided to REPLACE THE OCCULT SPELLS with such words as: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost....."7 Does the inclusion of the name of God make the practice acceptable?

Although dowsing is accepted today as a recognized "scientific" technique, the authors of The Divining Rod admit that it "is still uneasily poised between science and magic ."8

Actually, dowsing is DIVINATION, although many people are most likely unaware of this. Does it come as a surprise to you that under "DIVINATION" in The World Book Encyclopedia mention is made of foretelling the future by means of dreams; reading crystal balls, tea leaves and playing cards; astrology; numerology; horoscopes; use of the Ouija board; palmistry; and, of course, DOWSING, or use of the DIVINING ROD?9

The Psychic Connection is a motion picture that is openly advertised in Psychic Guide, a New Age magazine, as containing "OCCULT MANIFESTATIONS" which include psychic surgery, animal ESP, seance, Haitian Voodoo, ghost manifestation, and, believe it or not, DOWSING!" Has dowsing really become "respectable" in the last few centuries or has it kept its "magical" origin? The ad just mentioned was not advertised in the 1700s or 1800s, but in 1985!

An occult magazine, New Times, had a survey form listing "New Age" subjects. Can you guess what is mentioned along with astrology, hypnosis, yoga, meditation, herbal magic, crystal ball reading, Wicca (witchcraft), sex magic, spiritualism, out-of-the-body experiences, etc.? You're right! It's DOWSING!11

Earlier I mentioned that DOWSING IS IN THE BIBLE. Just what does God say about DOWSING? Let's turn to Deuteronomy 18:10-12, where we read:

There SHALL NOT be found among you ANY ONE that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or THAT USETH DIVINATION, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a WITCH, Or a charmer, or a CONSULTER WITH FAMILIAR SPIRITS, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For ALL that DO THESE THINGS are an ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD.

It is clear from these few verses that any one who practices DIVINATION is an ABOMINATION in the Lord's sight. Since DOWSING IS DIVINATION, God FORBIDS its practice, regardless of how "respectable" ANY ONE tries to make it seem. Even the name of the rod that the dowser uses is called the DIVINING (or DIVINATION) ROD, and another name for dowsing is WATER-WITCHING! The name should be a give-away, but many people never stop and think about it.

I can hear some people say, "The verse you gave about DIVINATION is from the OLD TESTAMENT. That is no longer applicable for today. So, perhaps, DOWSING is okay." God said that "ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," so that is enough. HOWEVER, the NEW TESTAMENT also mentions DIVINATION! You will find it in Acts 16:16:

And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel POSSESSED with a spirit of DIVINATION met us, which brought her masters much gain by SOOTHSAYING: The same followed Paul and us, and cried saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the SPIRIT, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to COME OUT OF HER. And he came out the same hour. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains WAS GONE, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers.

Let's notice several things about this passage. First, we see that this damsel was POSSESSED with this SPIRIT OF DIVINATION. We also see that DIVINATION and SOOTHSAYING go together in this verse. The Greek word, manteuomai, means "to DIVINE, practice DIVINATION." In Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words we find:

The word is allied to mainomai, to rave, and mania, fury displayed by those who were possessed by the evil spirit (represented by the pagan god or goddess) while delivering their oracular messages.

Next, we find that this damsel, even though POSSESSED, recognized that Paul was preaching the TRUE way. She said: "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto US the way of salvation," proving that her way WAS NOT the way that led to salvation. Lastly, we notice Paul commanded, in the name of Jesus, that the SPIRIT OF DIVINATION (the evil spirit) to COME OUT of her. When the spirit came out, her "gift" of divination was gone, as well as her masters' profit.

Those who try to defend DOWSING may say that this girl's DIVINATION has nothing to do with dowsing. However, no matter what FORM DIVINATION takes, God CONDEMNES the practice of it. People have given WATER WITCHING better sounding names, but a wolf dressed in sheep's clothing is STILL a wolf. A cake that contains arsenic will kill you no matter how beautifully it is decorated. A practice that God CONDEMNES is FORBIDDEN, REGARDLESS of the name given to camouflage it.

Earlier I stated that some people claim that Moses and Aaron did dowsing. Did Moses and Aaron REALLY dowse as it is claimed? What do YOU think? If God CONDEMNES DOWSING do you think that He would have told Moses and Aaron to do it? Let's look at the "proof" passages that dowzers point to to justify their wrong. Turn first to Exodus 17:5-6. The Israelites were complaining that they had no water so: ... the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people and take thy ROD Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou SHALT SMITE THE ROCK, and there shall COME WATER OUT OF IT, that the people may drink.

The other "proof" passage is in Numbers 20:7-11. Again, the Israelites were complaining for lack of water.

This is where Moses SUPPOSEDLY dowsed. Again, let's take notice to a few PLAIN facts. Moses SMOTE a ROCK in both instances. He did not take a divining rod and walk over ground looking for underground water. I would like to challenge ANY dowser to SMITE a ROCK and get water! Also, Moses knew that there would be water in that rock BEFORE he even got there, because God had told him that there would be. He was not randomly traversing ground in SEARCH OF water.

We also notice that in Numbers 20, God told Moses to SPEAK to the ROCK. (Again, I challenge ANY dowser to SPEAK to a ROCK and GET WATER!) Moses, however, DID NOT LISTEN to God, and SMOTE the ROCK, rather than SPEAKING to it, bringing painful consequences to Aaron and himself. God said: "Because ye BELIEVED Me NOT .. ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them" (Numbers 20:12). Then in verse 24 we find: "Aaron ... shall not enter into the land ... BECAUSE ye REBELLED against My word at the water of Meribah." God told Moses what to do, and he DISOBEYED, and suffered great remorse the rest of his life. Deuteronomy 3:25-26 shows us that Moses begged God to allow him to enter the promised land, but God said: "Speak NO MORE unto Me of this matter."

Today, we see that God is speaking to us telling us what to do and what not to do. One area in which God is speaking is that of DIVINATION. Are you going to obey or rebel? If you rebel, you, too, may miss the promised land. Choose ye THIS DAY whom ye will serve ... but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15)!

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ENDNOTES

1. William Barrett and Theodore Besterman, The Divining Rod (New Hyde Park, New York: University Books, 1968), p. xxi.

2. Ibid., p. vi.
3. Ibid., p. 4.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
6. Ibid., p. 6.; Milbourne Christopher ESP, Seers & Psychics (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1970), p. 133.
7. Milbourne Christopher, ESP, Seers & Psychics (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1970), p. 133.
8. Ibid, p. ix.
9. Wilson D. Wallis, "Divination," The World Book Encyclopedia, 1961 ed., Vol. 4, p. 199.
10. Ad in Psychic Guide (Mar/Apr/May 1985), p. 25.
11. Llewellyn's New Times, #844, p. 64.

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THE END