



Spells, Sorcerers and Spirits: Magic and the Occult in the Bible

Kirsten Birkett

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Cultures, for as long as we have had history, have had some sense of magic. This book contends that some of it, at least, is real; it describes what that is, and why the Bible is so negative about it. However, to say 'magic is real' in our contemporary culture could be very misleading. In fact, wrong. For what our culture thinks of as 'magic' - as vague and diffuse as that is - is likely to be very different from what was practised in the Ancient Near East (the things that modern English translations of the Old Testament call, for instance, sorcery or witchcraft) or in the Greco-Roman world (what the New Testament calls magic). It also may be very different from what is called 'magic' or 'witchcraft' in animistic or ancestor-worshipping cultures today. This book unpacks the background and explores the implications of the biblical teaching about the supernatural. There is a supernatural world, and it contains more than just God in Trinity; but Christians should not be afraid of it. Kirsty Birkett is Latimer Research Fellow at Oak Hill College, where she is responsible for Learning Architecture and Educational Development, and teaches Ethics, Philosophy and Church History. Her many publications cover the whole area of relationships between science and religion. She has also written on psychology, feminism and the family for both a popular and academic audience.

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