

# Is it real or is it Harry Potter?

The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention publishes a series of Belief Bulletins outlining the basic tenets of other faiths and world religions. This chart draws from the NAMB Belief Bulletin on the occult, showing areas of occultic practice warned against by NAMB in one column, practices found in the Harry Potter books in the next column and biblical admonitions in the third column.

| NAMB Belief Bulletin warnings on the occult  | Harry Potter  | Biblical admonitions  |
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| Divination, such as the act of foretelling events by astrology, crystal gazing, Ouija boards, palm reading, runes, tarot cards and tea leaves. Divination is called "the most widespread occultic practice." | Harry and his friends do take divination classes at Hogwarts, but these classes and the divination teacher are portrayed in a negative light, with other teachers saying they don't believe divination really works.  | "Do not practice divination or sorcery." Leviticus 19:26b<br><br>"Let no one be found among you who ... practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft or casts spells or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead." Deuteronomy 18:10-11  |
| Spiritualism, such as the belief that the dead communicate with the living as through a medium.  | The living and the dead do intermingle in Harry Potter's world, but not usually through the work of a medium. Mainly, the dead are represented by mischevious ghosts who inhabit Hogwarts Castle and move around in the paintings on the walls.   | "Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the Lord." Leviticus 19:31<br><br>2 Kings 21:6 tells of Manasseh, king of Judah, who "practiced sorcery and divination and consulted mediums and spiritists" and "did much evil in the eyes of the Lord, provoking him to anger." |
| Occult magick and witchcraft, such as the forecasting of natural events or forces by invoking the supernatural; the practice of using charms, spells and rituals; and engaging in Wiccan rituals.            | The closest Harry comes to forecasting events is through premonitions and dreams based in his own fears. He and his friends do learn a lot about charms and spells, which they practice and perform. These charms and spells are fantastical in nature. Wiccan rituals, if present, are not identified as such. | "Many of those who believed now came and confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly." Acts 19:19  |
| Satanism, meaning submission to Satan's will, worship of Satan or use of Satan as a symbol of opposition to God.   | Harry and those in his world do not worship anyone. There is no reference to Satan, although the main antagonist is a Satan-like figure whom Harry strives to defeat. Although no direct mention is made of Christ, Hogwarts students do celebrate Christmas and Easter.  | "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." Ephesians 6:12<br><br>"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work." 1 John 3:8       |

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