119 MINISTRIES

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Children of Light on the Darkest Night

Picture a family for a moment. Not a real family, just an illustration. They pray at the table. They read the Scriptures together. For years their front door has welcomed neighbors, hurting friends, and guests at the Sabbath table.

And then, one night every autumn, that same doorway is hung with skeletons, gravestones, and witches. A plastic skull grins from the step. A fortune teller's crystal ball glows in the window. The children dress as the dead, and the whole house glows orange in the dark.

If Moses stood at that doorway, what would he say? And if the apostle Paul stood beside him, what would he say?

That is the question we want to bring before the Word. Not before our fond memories of candy and costumes. Not before what everyone else on the street is doing. Before the Word.
Let's begin where Moses begins. Israel is standing at the edge of the promised land, about to enter a country full of nations with their own ways of reaching into the unseen world. And YHWH speaks to them in Deuteronomy 18:9-12

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> "When you come into the land that the LORD [YHWH] your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD [YHWH]."

Notice where the instruction begins. You shall not learn. Before a single practice is named, God speaks about learning. Israel was not only to refuse to bow to other gods. They were not to absorb the way those nations approached the dead and the spirit world, not even as a curiosity.

Then look at the list. Divination. Fortune telling. Omens. Charms. Mediums. Necromancers. Those who inquire of the dead. YHWH does not call these harmless folklore. He does not call them a bit of seasonal

fun. He calls them an abomination.

And then he tells his people why they must be different. In verses 13-14: "you shall be blameless before YHWH your God, for these nations, which you are about to dispossess, listen to fortune-tellers and to diviners. But as for you, the LORD [YHWH] your God has not allowed you to do this."
But as for you. Those words are the center of the passage. The nations had their way of handling death and the spirit world. God's people were given another way.

Now, the honest question. Is Halloween really connected to any of this?

Many historians trace the holiday, at least in part, to an ancient Celtic festival called Samhain, held at the turn of the season, when the boundary between the living and the dead was believed to grow thin. That connection is likely. But historians still debate how much of it actually passed down, and how much was added in later centuries. So we will not claim more than the evidence shows.
And here is the point. We do not need to settle the history to answer the question. We only need to look at the doorway.

What does the night celebrate today, in plain sight? Death turned into decoration. Fear turned into entertainment. Witches and spells, ghosts and seances, fortune tellers and the dead walking among the living. Many of the very practices Moses listed are not buried in some ancient past. They are hanging on the costume racks and standing in the front yards.

Now, let's be fair. The neighbor handing out candy is almost never worshiping anything. Most people who take part mean no harm, and we should never speak as if we can read their hearts. But Scripture does not only ask what we intend. It asks what we are learning, and what we are choosing to celebrate. Whatever we turn into a game, our children learn to take lightly. And that is exactly what Moses warned about. You shall not learn.

Now let's hear from Paul. He wrote to believers in Ephesus, a city steeped in idols and magic. In Acts 19, we read that many of those believers who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in public. They did not keep a little of the old darkness for special occasions. And to them Paul writes in Ephesians 5:8-11.

"For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true, and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them."
Listen to how Paul says it. Not, you were in darkness. You were darkness. And now, you are light. That is not a costume we put on for an evening. It is who the Father has made us in Messiah Yeshua.

So what does a child of light do with a celebration of darkness?
Paul answers in three words. Take no part.

He does not say, take a small part. Take a harmless part. Take part for the sake of the children. He tells us to discern what pleases the Lord. Not how close we can stand to the dark without getting burned, but what brings him joy. And then he tells us to walk away from what belongs to the night.
John says the same thing from another angle. Listen to 1 John 1:5-7. "This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Yeshua his son

cleanses us from all sin."

In him is no darkness at all. Not a little. Not one night a year. To walk with him is to walk where he is. And he is light.

Now we need to be careful and honest here. Scripture never names the thirty-first of October. You will not find Halloween in the Torah. What Scripture does give us is plain. YHWH calls divination, sorcery, and inquiring of the dead an abomination. And he calls his people to take no part in the works of darkness.

Our conclusion, that a household walking in the light should step away from this night, is how we believe those commands apply. It is an application, not a new commandment. But it is not a hard application to see.

And yet, a dark porch on Halloween is not the same thing as a life full of light. We could keep our door shut on that one night and still walk in darkness the rest of the year. Holiness is more than what we refuse. It is truthful speech. It is justice. It is kindness to the family next door, and a humble heart before the Father.

None of that makes the outward choice unimportant. It means the outward choice has to come from a heart that loves the light. If stepping away from Halloween makes us proud, or harsh with our neighbors, then we have closed the door and still missed the light.

So what might a faithful home do instead? These are only suggestions, not commandments. Spend the evening together around the table. Explain to your children, gently and without fear, why your family steps away. Read together about the light that came into the world. And choose another day to bless a neighbor with a meal or a plate of something warm, so your home is known for its welcome, and not only for its closed door.

Children tend to remember what we gave them far more than what we kept from them. Give them something better than fear. Give them light.

And if you are listening with a twinge of regret, because your family has celebrated this night for years, hear this clearly. The passage that calls us into the light ends with cleansing. The blood of Yeshua his son cleanses us from all sin. And just two verses later, John writes, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
The call is not to shame. It is to come home into the light.

So let's return to that doorway. Long before Halloween existed, Moses told Israel to write YHWH's words at the entrance of their homes. In Deuteronomy 6:9, he says, "you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." The doorway was always meant to say something about who lives inside.

So let our doors say it every night of the year. This house belongs to the light.
Not because we are afraid of the dark. But because we have seen the light. And in him is no darkness at all.

We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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