

Education Corner

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As teachers and parents, we are always encouraging our children to read. We have understood for a long time that reading is important and that a child who cannot read will be handicapped for life.

In this age of video games, Internet chat-rooms, and MTV/BET, we sometimes feel that we have to bribe children to read. So, when we do see our children with a book in front of them, are we so happy just to see the book that we fail to make sure the book they're reading is wholesome reading? We also need to teach our children how to discriminate between what is wholesome reading and what is not.

I have been amazed for over a year now at the fascination with the Harry Potter series of books. According to the Washington Post, it is "the biggest phenomenon in publishing history." Amazon.com, the bookseller specializing in Internet sales, recently received unprecedented orders for 400,000 copies of the latest volume entitled Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets. A spokesperson for Amazon.com said: "This is the biggest launch of any single product in our history."

What makes these books so fascinating to children (and adults)? The hero, Harry Potter, is a small witch doctor who has great supernatural powers. In each book, the main theme is magic! These books incite children to become interested in the occult sciences, and they present magic in the most favorable light, and make it highly desirable.

As Seventh-day Adventists, do we want our children becoming interested in the occult, paganism, magic, and spiritism? Should we, as parents and teachers, become extremely concerned about this? After all, children seem to be highly interested in these books and will stay up all night just to finish one. Remember the TV sitcom "Bewitched" when we were kids? Wasn't the premise behind Samantha's powers all about magic? Was it a harmless funny show?

The Adventist Review recently published a supplement to their on-line edition titled "Sorcery In a Stone: A Closer Look." It summarizes an exclusive excerpt from the book Harry Potter and the Bible by Richard Abanes. What it says is truly alarming. The books are like a declaration of open war that had been previously hidden. It is as if the demons had taken to the streets to do their seductive work equipped with driver's licences and official identity cards.

For Adventists, it is as if the penetrating announcement in The Great Controversy, page 516, were being fulfilled before our very eyes: "Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. The foundation of his work was laid by the assurance given to Eve in Eden: 'Ye shall not surely die.' 'In the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil'. Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of spiritualism. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time."

Don't panic if your child has all the books in the series. Now is a good time to lead him/her in a discussion/Bible study on the dangers of the occult and how this ties into the Great Controversy. Happy discussion!