“What’s a Biblical Description of Witchcraft?”

I was just curious if the Bible has any description of what witchcraft is or what characteristics of a person make them a witch?

First of all, here are the biblical references to witchcraft and other occult practices:

DEUTERONOMY 18:9-14
When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.
There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.
For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you.
You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.
For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so.

LEVITICUS 19:26-28,31
You shall not eat anything with the blood, nor practice divination or soothsaying.
You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard.
You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am the LORD.
Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; do not seek them out to

be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God.

In her excellent book *Lord, Is It Warfare?*, Kay Arthur provides this glossary of terms used in these passages:

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN DEUTERONOMY 18:9-14 AND LEVITICUS 19:26-28,31

1. **Casts spell:** the act of charming; "tying up" a person through magic; used in the sense of binding with a charm consisting of words of occult power.

2. **Divination:** the act of divining sorcery; soothsaying; pagan contrast to true prophecy or prophesying; man's attempt to know and control the world and future apart from the true God using means other than human; foretelling or foreseeing the future or discovering hidden knowledge through reading omens, dreams, using lots, astrology, or necromancy.

3. **Interpret omens:** a type of divination; seeking insight or knowledge through signs or events.

4. **Medium:** necromancer; one who foretells events or gains information by conversing with spirits of the dead; conjurer.

5. **Necromancer:** one who calls up the dead; medium.

6. **Spiritist:** familiar spirit; one who has esoteric knowledge through non-human means; diviner.

7. **Soothsaying:** witchcraft; observing clouds for augury; foretelling future events with supernatural power but not divine power; interpreting dreams; revealing secrets.

8. **Sorcerer:** magician; conjurer; enchanter; one who practices magic arts, sorcery, charms, with an intent to do harm or to delude or pervert the mind; one who claims to have supernatural power or knowledge through (evil) spirits.

9. **Witchcraft:** soothsaying; practice of witches; the use of

formulas and incantations to practice sorcery; act of producing extraordinary effects by the invocation or aid of demons; the use of magic arts, spells, or charms.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries