

1 Samuel Lesson 51 Saul and The Medium at Endor Part Two

- The connection between our obedience and our relationship to God
- God opposes the proud and exalts the humble
- Despite human evil, God is working out His purposes in history
- Kingship in Israel and God's plan to one day raise up an anointed divine king

Background:

"mediums and spiritists": the practitioners of spiritism and sorcery are condemned in Old Testament law (Deuteronomy 18: 9-22) because of their association with Canaanite religion and because their art attempted to circumvent Yahweh by seeking knowledge and power from "spirits". In the practice of Canaanite religion, spiritists and mediums would often conjure up ancestral spirits to speak to the living about the future.

"ritual pits" these were pits used by mediums to conjure up the dead. The pits were believed to be magical portals through which spirits could pass between the realms of the living and the dead. The medium would have special knowledge of the location of such a pit and the procedures required to raise up the spirits. The medium Saul consulted apparently used such a pit as the spirit of Samuel was seen "coming up out of the earth".

Key Word:

medium: Strong's H178 " ob" a feminine term referring to a woman who consulted ghosts. The original meaning of the word "ob" is a wineskin. When a wineskin was empty it made a hollow sound. Mediums would often make hollow, guttural sounds to simulate the voice of the dead speaking through them.

Read 1 Samuel 28:7-25

The Israelites were being attacked by the Philistines. When Saul saw the assembled army of the Philistines, he reacted in fear. He inquired of the Lord and the Lord did not answer him. In desperation, he then had his men seek out a medium for him. He wanted to inquire of the dead.

1. We read in 1 Samuel 28:8-14 of Saul's encounter with Samuel's spirit through the medium at Endor. According to 28:8 what time did this encounter take place and how was Saul dressed? Why do you think he arrived when he did and dressed the way he did? By sinfully seeking out the medium who else did he cause to sin?

Application: Saul was seeking guidance in a way strictly forbidden by God. As Christians who are in a relationship with God, we are commanded to seek divine guidance and God promises to give it. What are some ways we as Christians can seek divine guidance today? See Psalm 119:105,133; Proverbs 1:5, 3:5-6, 11:14; James 1:5-8

2. In 28:14 what was Saul's attitude towards Samuel's spirit? How did this differ from Saul's attitude towards Samuel in the past. See 1 Samuel 13:8-14. Why do you think his attitude had changed? In 28:15 what does Saul tell Samuel is the reason he has had him called up?

3. Read through 28:16-19 and summarize the message the Lord gave to Saul through Samuel? What do you learn from this about sin, God's long suffering and His judgment?

4. In 28:20 how did Saul react to Samuel's words and the pronouncement of his own end? Looking back over Saul's life what would you say were the tragic flaws that led to his downfall?

5. How can you relate the 4 Key Themes to this passage of scripture?

