

I Samuel Lesson 28

I Samuel Chapter 28

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Memory verses for this week: *Acts 9:16 For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

Introduction: We continue our study on Samuel this week. In last week's lesson, we studied about David returning a second time to seek asylum in the land of the Philistines. He has more success this time and King Achish gives David and his men the city of Ziklag to live in.

They were able to stay there 18 months before having to leave. At the end of the chapter, we saw David telling Achish that he was attacking the southern tribes of Kenites and Jerahmeelites which were allies of Israel, when in fact he was attacking the allies of the Philistines to obtain the plunder he was sharing with the king. He and his men attacked and destroyed the tribes of the Geshurites, Gezrites, and Amalekites.

I. David Living among Israel's Enemy

1 Sam 28:1 And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

1 Sam 28:2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

The Philistines gathered their armies together to plan war against Israel. King Achish indicates to David that he expects him to go to war with them and to fight against his home nation of Israel. Just the thought of David going against his own people was a sad thing. He was to be Israel's next king, and he certainly should not go out and fight against the very people God had chosen him to be king over. David answers the king and says that he would surely know what David could do. Achish thought he already knew what David could do, and tells David that if he would do this, that he would make him keeper of his head for ever. In reality, this might be more factual that Achish realized.

David might own King Achish's head like he did Goliath, the great warrior of the Philistines. Achish of course meant that David would be his bodyguard. David most surely would not fight against his own people since he was doing all he could at this time to help the allies of Israel and fight against their enemies. Those tribes bordering Philistia that were allies to Israel had been protected by David, not attacked as he had indicated to King Achish.

1 Sam 28:3 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

1 Sam 28:4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.

1 Sam 28:5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

1 Sam 28:6 And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

Samuel, the great prophet of the Lord had died as we read in our earlier study. He was buried in Ramah, his home city. At this time, Saul had put away all that had familiar spirits and wizards from the land. God has an opinion about wizards and witches and those that deal with spirits.

Lev 19:31 Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.

Lev 20:6 And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.

Lev 20:7 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God.

Lev 20:27 A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.

In verse 4, it says the Philistines gathered in Shunem for war. This was the old battle field of the upper Kishon valley of northern Israel. They setup their camp on the east side of the valley while Israel pitched on Mount Gilboa overlooking the camp of the Philistines in the valley west of them. When Saul viewed the sheer number of the Philistines, he was terribly afraid and his heart trembled. Saul was at a point in his life when he desperately need the Lord, but could no longer reach him. His continual disobedience had long since cut him off from the Lord. We as Christians need to be tenderhearted and always let the Holy Spirit guide us in all matters. If we do that, we won't have our fellowship with God severed due to sin.

1 Cor 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

1 Cor 11:32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that

we should not be condemned with the world.

2 Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

2 Cor 13:6 But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

We are commanded to examine and judge ourselves. These last verses are in regards to proving that we are truly saved and know Christ as Lord and Savior.

Saul tried praying to the Lord, but without repentance, God did not hear him. Saul hoped for a dream that might reveal God's will but no dream came. He tried to inquire by the Urim of the priest and got no results. Those who were serving as priests had been slain at Saul's command, and Abiathar had carried the ephod down to David.

He also could not inquire by prophet, for Samuel had rejected him and was now dead. The only other prophet that he knew was Gad, and he had joined with David. It is a terrible thing to be so far from the Lord that you are rejected and can no longer reach God in prayer. It all starts with a little sin, and builds up from there. Continual rejection of God's designs and guidance will keep you out of God's perfect will for your life, and perhaps lead you to the point that it seems your prayers bounce back off the ceiling.

II. Saul and the Witch of En-Dor

1 Sam 28:7 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.

1 Sam 28:8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.

When a man gets desperate, he will do desperate things. Saul decides to seek for some cultist that might have escaped his slaughter of those who had familiar spirits. He turns to seek help from the powers of darkness. Saul had a servant who knew of a woman who had a familiar spirit that lived in Endor. This place was not far from Mt. Gilboa where Israel was camped.

Saul removed his royal garment and disguised himself to go to her by night. He requests that she divine for him and bring up whomever he asks. The witch states that Saul had put to death all those who had familiar spirits and for her to divine for him would cause her to endanger her life.

1 Sam 28:9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

1 Sam 28:10 And Saul sware to her by the LORD, saying, As the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

1 Sam 28:11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

Saul swears to the woman by the Lord that nothing bad would happen to her. After Saul swore this, the woman consents to help him and asks who she should bring up. Saul requests that she bring up Samuel.

III. Samuel is Brought Up to Saul

1 Sam 28:12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.

1 Sam 28:13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.

1 Sam 28:14 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.

When the witch saw Samuel, she became very afraid and somehow knew that it was Saul who was in her presence. Apparently the woman had ability to deal with the dead via demon spirits. I think we should never doubt that evil powers are present about us and those that deal with them or not to be ignored or considered of no consequence.

Paul warned the church at Ephesus to be aware of what they (and we) face each day.

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Eph 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

The witch appears to be surprised by what happened. Her cry may have been occasioned partly by the fear of Saul. What she saw was not an ordinary thing in

her experience, and it greatly alarmed her. While evil spirits have powers, none are as great as God. And in this case, no doubt God allowed something to shock this woman which He would use to get the message of doom over to Saul. When the woman questions Saul as to why he had deceived her, she was reassured by Saul that she had nothing to fear and should tell him what she had seen.

Her answer was that she saw gods ascending out of the earth. Saul questions the witch as to what form she had seen, and when she said she saw an old man covered with a mantle, he was sure it was Samuel. Saul did not see this form, so the witch might have lied about calling up Samuel. From the description making Saul sure it was Samuel, we can conclude that probably he dressed in this manner when he was alive.

1 Sam 28:15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

1 Sam 28:16 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

Because verse 15 says that “Samuel said to Saul”, I tend to believe that Samuel really was the one speaking at this time. Others do not all agree on whether it was him or some spirit that sounded like him. He says in verse 15 “Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?” Saul gives him several reasons:

1. Saul was sore distressed
2. The Philistines were making war against him.
3. God had departed from his life.
4. Saul could not get answers from God either by dream or by prophet.

Samuel tells Saul that the Lord had departed from him and was now his enemy.

Saul wanted instructions from Samuel as to what he should do. God wants man to walk humbly before God and to do right and love mercy.

Micah 6:7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

Micah 6:8 He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

1 Tim 2:2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

1 Tim 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

1 Tim 2:4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

God's desire is for all men to be saved.

Paul, back when his name was Saul, wanted to know what God would have him to do after he was saved.

Acts 9:6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

1 Sam 28:17 And the LORD hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David:

1 Sam 28:18 Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.

1 Sam 28:19 Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

Samuel tells Saul that the Lord had rent the kingdom out of his hand and given it to David. All of this happened because Saul did not obey the voice of the Lord. Because of this and Saul's failure to execute God's fierce wrath upon Amalek, God had taken the kingdom out of Saul's hands. Samuel goes on to tell him that God would deliver Israel and Saul into the hands of the Philistines. And that on the following day, both Saul and his sons would be killed.

IV. The Effect of the Message on Saul

1 Sam 28:20 Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

1 Sam 28:21 And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.

1 Sam 28:22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou

mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way.

Verse 20 says Saul fell straightway to the earth and was sore afraid. He stayed in that position for some time and became weak. Once God has pronounced judgment, it is going to happen and we can't stop that. The witch makes a request that because she had obeyed Saul's voice and done what he had asked, that she might give him a morsel of bread for him that he might eat and regain his strength and go his way.

1 Sam 28:23 But he refused, and said, I will not eat. But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.

1 Sam 28:24 And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hasted, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof:

1 Sam 28:25 And she brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

Saul refuses the witches offer, and his servants and the woman compelled him to listen to her voice. The witch kills a calf she has in the house and baked it for Saul, and he did rise up and eat the meal. After that, they rose up and went their way that night.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.