

1 Samuel 28:3-25 – Seance In Endor

November 13, 2022

Background

*There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul...
1 Samuel 14:52 (ESV)*

What leads to a life filled with fear?

1. A life without God is filled with fear.

Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own city... 1 Samuel 28:3a (ESV)

*...And Saul had put the mediums and the necromancers out of the land.
1 Samuel 28:3b (ESV)*

If you will fear the LORD and serve him and obey his voice and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, and if both you and the king who reigns over you will follow the LORD your God, it will be well. 1 Samuel 12:14 (ESV)

Do not turn to mediums or necromancers; do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God. Leviticus 19:31 (ESV)

If a person turns to mediums and necromancers, whoring after them, I will set my face against that person and will cut him off from among his people. Leviticus 20:6 (ESV)

A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer shall surely be put to death. They shall be stoned with stones; their blood shall be upon them. Leviticus 20:27 (ESV)

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. And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you. Deuteronomy 18:10–12 (ESV)

- Demonic or occult activity should not be part of our life.
- Think carefully about the right way to celebrate Halloween in your family.

The Philistines assembled and came and encamped at Shunem. And Saul gathered all Israel, and they encamped at Gilboa. 1 Samuel 28:4 (ESV)

When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. 1 Samuel 28:5 (ESV)

And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD did not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets. 1 Samuel 28:6 (ESV)

And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved... Joel 2:32 (ESV)

- King Manasseh (2 Chronicles 33:12-13) and Ahab (1 Kings 21:29) were saved from their enemies when they called on God's name for rescue. Why wasn't Saul?
- Saul went through the mechanics of repenting without genuinely repenting. He wanted to be saved from destruction on the battlefield, but there was no change in the orientation of his heart.

2. Dabbling in the demonic leads to fear.

Then Saul said to his servants, "Seek out for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her."... 1 Samuel 28:7a (ESV)

And when they say to you, "Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter," should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living? Isaiah 8:19 (ESV)

...And his servants said to him, "Behold, there is a medium at En-dor." 1 Samuel 28:7b (ESV)

- Be careful about associating with people dabbling in the occult.

So Saul disguised himself and put on other garments and went, he and two men with him... 1 Samuel 28:8a (ESV)

...And they came to the woman by night and he said, "Divine for me by a spirit and bring up for me whomever I shall name to you." 1 Samuel 28:8b (ESV)

The woman said to him, "Surely you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the necromancers from the land. Why then are you laying a trap for my life to bring about my death?" 1 Samuel 28:9 (ESV)

But Saul swore to her by the LORD, "As the LORD lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing." 1 Samuel 28:10 (ESV)

- The farther people wander from God, the more illogical their views become about life and God.

Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?"... 1 Samuel 28:11a (ESV)

...He said, "Bring up Samuel for me." 1 Samuel 28:11b (ESV)

When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice... 1 Samuel 28:12a (ESV)

And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him.
Matthew 17:3 (ESV)

- Samuel, Moses, and Elijah are evidence of life after death!

...And the woman said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul."
1 Samuel 28:12b (ESV)

The king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What do you see?"... 1 Samuel 28:13a (ESV)

...And the woman said to Saul, "I see a god coming up out of the earth."
1 Samuel 28:13b (ESV)

He said to her, "What is his appearance?" And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped in a robe."... 1 Samuel 28:14a (ESV)

...And Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and paid homage. 1 Samuel 28:14b (ESV)

3. Sin leads to fear.

Then Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?"...
1 Samuel 28:15a (ESV)

...Saul answered, "I am in great distress, for the Philistines are warring against me, and God has turned away from me and answers me no more, either by prophets or by dreams. Therefore I have summoned you to tell me what I shall do."
1 Samuel 28:15b (ESV)

And Samuel said, "Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has turned from you and become your enemy?" 1 Samuel 28:16 (ESV)

The LORD has done to you as he spoke by me, for the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD and did not carry out his fierce wrath against Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. 1 Samuel 28:17–18 (ESV)

Moreover, the LORD will give Israel also with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons shall be with me. The LORD will give the army of Israel also into the hand of the Philistines. 1 Samuel 28:19 (ESV)

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;
Isaiah 55:6a (ESV)

...for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"
Hebrews 13:5b–6 (ESV)

Then Saul fell at once full length on the ground, filled with fear because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night. 1 Samuel 28:20 (ESV)

And the woman came to Saul, and when she saw that he was terrified, she said to him, "Behold, your servant has obeyed you. I have taken my life in my hand and have

listened to what you have said to me. Now therefore, you also obey your servant. Let me set a morsel of bread before you; and eat, that you may have strength when you go on your way." 1 Samuel 28:21–22 (ESV)

He refused and said, "I will not eat."... 1 Samuel 28:23a (ESV)

...But his servants, together with the woman, urged him, and he listened to their words. So he arose from the earth and sat on the bed. 1 Samuel 28:23b (ESV)

Now the woman had a fattened calf in the house, and she quickly killed it, and she took flour and kneaded it and baked unleavened bread of it, and she put it before Saul and his servants, and they ate.... 1 Samuel 28:24–25a (ESV)

...Then they rose and went away that night. 1 Samuel 28:25b (ESV)

Applications

1. Disobedience can cut off communication with God.

If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. Psalm 66:18 (ESV)

2. Little compromises often lead to bigger ones.

For rebellion is as the sin of divination,... Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king." 1 Samuel 15:23 (ESV)

3. When we turn to Jesus, we do not need to be afraid of the future!

In God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me? Psalm 56:11 (ESV)

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. 1 John 4:18 (ESV)

...for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. 2 Timothy 1:7 (ESV)

Life Group Questions

1. Read 1 Samuel 28. What did you learn in the message that was important to you?
2. Saul lived a life of fear, especially in this chapter. What led to Saul's life being controlled by fear? Why does fear not need to control our lives? See 1 John 4:18, 2 Timothy 1:7, and Hebrews 2:14-15.
3. Saul seems to have never experienced true repentance. Does it make sense that someone can be so close to God but not have experienced genuine repentance and a true relationship with God? Where have you seen that today? See 1 John 2:19.
4. In what ways do people turn to the occult for guidance today? Why does God forbid Christians to associate with the demonic? Where should we find guidance about the future? See 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 1:3.
5. At this point in Saul's life, his destiny was fixed. He appears to be beyond repentance. What does this tell us about windows of opportunity for repentance? See Isaiah 55:6-7, Hebrews 3:8, 15, and 1 Thessalonians 5:3.