

## Lesson 22: Facing the Final Battle (First Samuel 28, 30)

There is a battle shaping up in the Jezreel Valley, and we have been studying David's part in that. Chapter 28 introduced the battle and began with this conversation between Achish and David over David's men becoming Achish's bodyguards.

Now David's narrative breaks off abruptly after verse 2, and we get one of those "Meanwhile, back at the battlefield . . ." segues as the author switches to a scene wholly focused on Saul.

### 15 Saul and the Medium of En Dor (Chapter 28)

The narrative for Saul's scene is arranged in chiastic order (ABCBA):

- A Narrator Comment
- B Conversation 1: Saul addresses the Medium
- C Conversation 2: **Samuel addresses Saul**
- B Conversation 3: The Medium addresses Saul
- A Narrator Comment

#### Narrator Comment

**Read First Samuel 28:3-7.**

1. Why add the note about Samuel's death?
2. Why mention that Saul put the mediums and spiritists out of the land?
3. What do we know about the battle being staged?

**Shunem** means "a place of rest" but in the plural form. The Philistines didn't just sit down in the place. They sit-sit down. They establish themselves there.

**Gilboa** means "a swelling heap." You get a sense of something mounding up upon itself. Gilboa is a combination of two root words: **gal** and **ba'a**.

**Gal** means a "heap, spring (of water), a wave or billow." Hence the translation, fountain. But when you look at the contexts where this word is used in Scripture, it is associated with:

- Rolling a heap of stones together in a mound, either for making a covenant or covering a dead body, or reducing something to a mound of stones by bringing it to ruin.
- The rolling or churning of overflowing waters associated with the LORD rising up in strength or judgment against a people.

**Ba'a** means "to swell or gush over." Figuratively, it means to boil up inside – to desire something earnestly – and to rise up to seek it or inquire after it.

So the very name Gilboa has these dark undertones of judgment, death, ruin, and an upwelling of fear and desperation that causes a man to rise up and seek advice.

4. Of whom does Saul inquire first?
5. What do we know about the medium of En Dor?

### Conversation 1: Saul Addresses the Medium

**Read First Samuel 28:8-14.**

6. How does Saul approach the medium at En Dor?
7. Why would Saul ask for Samuel?
8. What is the medium's reaction when she sees Samuel?
9. How does Samuel feel about being called up?
10. What is Saul's excuse?
11. If the LORD wasn't speaking to Saul, why did Saul think Samuel would be able to tell him anything?

### Conversation 2: Samuel Rebukes Saul

**Read First Samuel 28:14-20.**

12. Why bring judgment on Israel for Saul's sin?
13. What is Saul's response?
14. How would it feel to know you were going to die tomorrow? How would you react?

### Application

- Is being strong-willed a bad thing?

## A Note about the Timeline

15. What is our timeline through all this?

### 17 David Returns to Ziklag (Chapter 30, pt 1)

Now, in Chapter 30, we are at the eve of battle. Saul is facing his battle in the Jezreel Valley and seeking Samuel for advice via a medium. David has now returned to Ziklag and is facing a crisis and battle of his own.

Chapter 30 is structured as follows:

- Narrator Comment
- David Inquires of God
- David's Conversation with the Egyptian Servant
- The Battle
- David Rebukes the Sons of Belial
- David Shares the Reward (Narrator Comment)

### Narrator Comment

16. What have David and his men lost?

### David Inquires of God

17. How did David respond?

18. When was the last time David called for the ephod?

19. What do we know about the Brook Besor?

**Besor** means "cheerful or joyful" in the sense of bringing good news or refreshment. It comes from the root word **basar**, meaning "to bear good news or glad tidings."

20. What kind of good news might come in this situation?