

# ***“Lessons from the Life of David” – Pastor Jim Ruddy***

## **Study # 13 – Saul and the Witch of En Dor 1 Samuel 28:3-25**

### **I. PROPERLY OBSERVING THE TEXT 28:3-25**

#### **A. THE REQUEST OF SAUL v3-11**

##### **1. HIS REASONS v3-6**

- a) Fear - Saul's fears grew as the battle lines were drawn.
- b) Failure - Saul's refusal to listen to God had closed the heavens over his life! cf. 1 Sam. 14:37; Is. 59:2
  - While God no longer answered Saul's inquiries, David gained ready answers. cf. 1 Sam. 23:2, 4; 30:8

##### **2. HIS REACTION v7**

- Consistent with the way he has lived, Saul seeks out a woman who practices that which he has forbidden. v3 cf. Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:9-12

##### **3. HIS REQUEST v8-11**

- Saul disguises himself and, under the cover of night, appeals to a medium to conduct a séance.
- When the woman objects, hypocritically, and true to his nature, Saul swears by the LORD that she will not be harmed.
- Once she is assured that no harm will come to her, she concedes and receives Saul's request: *“Bring up Samuel!”*

#### **B. THE REACTION OF THE WOMAN v12-14**

- The woman is startled by the appearance of the spirit and immediately sees through Saul's disguise.
- After pressing her for an answer, the woman informs Saul that she has seen “spirits” or “gods” coming up from the underworld! *“Then Saul perceived that it was Samuel!”*

#### **C. THE REBUKE OF “SAMUEL” v15-19**

- Saul dialogs with the spirit, who reminds Saul of his continuous rejection of God and of God's rejection of him.
- The death of Saul and his sons is then predicted.

#### **D. THE REMORSE OF SAUL v20-25**

- Out of fear, Saul falls prostrate, and must be persuaded to rise and eat to regain his strength for the journey home.

### **II. CAREFULLY INTERPRETING THE CONTEXT 28:3-25**

#### **A. THE QUESTION WE MUST RAISE**

##### **1. How should this passage be interpreted?**

- a) Was this a definite appearance of the Prophet Samuel?
- b) Was this a deceptive appearance of a demonic spirit?

## **B. THE ANSWERS WE MUST RECEIVE**

### **1. Would God employ the pagan practices He'd condemned as a legitimate way of communicating His will?**

- If God desired to speak to Saul He would have chosen a way that was consistent with His nature. cf. v6, 15

### **2. Would God permit an individual who was in violation of His principles to have authority over a Prophet of God?**

- How could it be possible that a prophet of such magnitude as Samuel would be subject to a measly fortuneteller?

### **3. Would God be part of an activity outside of His will, and then judge the individuals who participated in it?**

- 1 Chronicles 10:13 points to this event as one of the reasons why Saul died. cf. 1 Sam. 31:1-6; James 1:13-15

## **C. THE DETAILS WE MUST REGARD**

- Saul told the women who he wanted to see. v11
- The woman herself was shocked that something appeared. v12
- Saul saw nothing, but “perceived” that it was Samuel. v13,14
- Saul tells the spirit what he wants to hear. v15
- The spirit tells Saul things he already knew. v16-18
  - cf. 1 Sam. 15:20-23, 28; 18:12; 24:21
- The only new details are concerning Saul's pending death! v19
  - To amplify “the fear of death” against Saul is consistent with Satan's nature and work. cf. Jn. 10:10; Heb. 2:14-15

## **III. FAITHFULLY APPLYING THE TRUTH**

### **A. GUARD YOUR HEART**

- There is no way that anyone can use this passage to justify participating in that which God has unconditionally prohibited!
- Satan's power stands behind the various occult activities.
  - cf. 2 Thess. 2:8-12; Matt. 24:24; Acts 8:9-11; 2 Cor. 11:13-15
- Opening yourself to this area can result in irreparable damage and even eternal loss. cf. 1 Tim. 4:1; Eph. 4:27; 2 Cor. 2:11

### **B. GUARD YOUR HOUSE**

- Purge your home of any evil influences or associations, and teach your children to desist from opening any door to evil.
  - cf. Rom. 13:12; 2 Cor. 6:14-16; Eph. 5:11; Deut. 6
- Deliverance is possible through the total renunciation of evil and a full consecration to Christ as Lord. cf. Acts 19:18-20