

different counsel!

2) His explanation. vv. 17-18.

Back to the original sin of disobedience in 1 Sam. 15. This was the root of things. A wound may heal, but the scar remains. Saul had commenced a course from which he never turned back! The Hebrew had a play on words for the words "enemy" and "neighbor" are actually the same but for an inversion of the consonants.

3) His predictions. v. 19.

The death of Saul and the defeat of Israel by the Philistines is confidently told. That Saul would be where Samuel is gives no promise of felicity, but just that he would be in Sheol, the place of departed dead.

Conclusion

The end of the matter is not with Samuel, but with God. Three events follow: 1) Saul drops to the ground for he is utterly vanquished! 2) The medium tries to console him in his grief concerning death. 3) The servants of Saul try vainly to bring comfort and health in an hour of impending doom.

Sad words indeed at the end of the chapter: They rose up! They went away! That night! Dreadful night for a disobedient man! God have mercy upon anyone who hears these words today. May all heed the lesson that disobedience ultimately leads to estrangement from God.

NOTES:

THE BOOK OF FIRST SAMUEL

"The Endor Witch"

1 Samuel 28:3-25

Introduction

1. Sorcery is one of the most intriguing subjects of men. It delves into the underworld of spirits.

2. Due to the type of life which Saul lived, it is not surprising that it is recorded he also involved himself with such forces. It is the end of the long list of devices which Saul employed outside the will and purpose of God.

3. Indeed, the key word in Saul's life is disobedience. Ultimately, this sort of character brings one into utter estrangement with God and this chapter bears out this thought. Consider the following three facts to prove it:-

1. The SETTING.

a. Death of Samuel. v. 3.

Just the bald facts are related. Samuel died and was buried near Ramah, his home city. But it had a deep move upon the people of Israel. They lamented him. The Hebrew verb used here means to "smite the breast." It is also translated "wail." See its use in 1 Kings 14:13 and Gen. 23:2.

b. War of Philistines. v. 4.

The Philistines encamped to war with Israel. They set up at Shinem, near Mt. Carmel. Close by was Gilboa and that's where Saul assembled all of Israel's fighting men. Gilboa means "bubbling fountain," a rather strange name for Saul's base.

c. Fear of Saul. v. 5.

When Saul "saw" the enemy, he reacted violently. This always happens when people have their eyes on what is not of God! Not only did Saul just plain fear, he also was terrified (the Heb. for

"trembled"). Numbers 26:13-33 is so often repeated as evidenced here.

d. Silence of God. v. 6.

A man out of fellowship with God is no longer on talking terms with Him. Saul tried three common means of communication with God: dreams, the Urim, and the prophets. All failed! The Urim was a priestly function to exercise in the determining of God's will. Hence, by personal means, priestly means, and prophetic means Saul had no reply! He had withdrawn from God, now God had withdrawn from him (cf. "God gave them up" in Rom. 1).

2. The SEARCH.

With the situation for Saul all but closed with men and God, he could only turn in his rebellious heart to the underworld of Satan's schemes. This he proposed to do.

a. Its design. v. 7.

Saul commissioned his servants to locate what he had supposedly banned--a **sorcerer**. The fact that he made such a request and the ease with which a woman was located notes the fact that the action of Saul was not very effective (cf. v. 3). Saul reasoned--she would give him needed information about the Philistines!

b. Its detail. v. 8.

Tradition has it that Abner and Amasa were the night friends of Saul on his wild escapade. They all sought to hide themselves, for this is the meaning of the verb form used. It basically means to "dig." The time of day is consistent with sin--night!

c. Its desire. v. 8.

Having failed to communicate with God in the normal means, Saul felt that through **divination** he could get hold of Samuel! Why would he desire him

now, for he had rejected Samuel's counsel earlier (cf. Luke 16:29-31).

3. The SEANCE.

Two interviews are recorded in this section. They form the ground of the whole matter.

a. The medium. vv. 9-14.

1) Her concern. v. 9.

The unidentified woman states her desire not to come under the judgment of men. She gives no concern for the judgment of God!

2) Her promise. v. 10

How foolish of man to give promise to a woman that disobedience to God will be sustained by Him. The grass sin of Saul is marked by his calling upon God as a witness to his promise!

3) Her action. vv. 11-14.

The woman went through her own contortions, but God intervened. He actually brought Samuel from the dead. The woman was completely non-plused. This is supported by these facts:

a) She saw Samuel--and cried!

b) She knew Saul--and blamed!

c) She saw gods--and feared!

NOTE: What does the Bible say about these matters of the underworld? It is clear: God warns against them (Ex. 22:18; Lev. 20:27; Deut. 18:10-12). He tells of their deception (Jer. 27:9). God promises punishment (Micah 5:12; Mal. 3:5; Rev. 21:8). These are abiding principles of God's government. Let all take heed and obey His Word!

b. The spirit vv. 15-19.

1) His questions. vv. 15-16.

Through a "why" and a "wherefore" Samuel affirms that since God has turned Saul down, how can one of His servants provide any