

The Desperate King

In 1 Samuel 28, we read about a disturbing episode in the life of King Saul. Saul started with a lot of potential and promise, but due to constant disobedience, he was fired by God as king.

Saul has reached the lowest point of his life. He is desperate, defies God, and seeks to know the future. His kingdom is crumbling, and he wants to know the outcome of their battle against the Philistines.

What is going on in the chapter?

- David finds himself in a sticky situation (1 Samuel 28:1-2). After sparing Saul's life on several occasions, David still doesn't trust Saul. He knows that Saul's "repentance" is usually short-lived. He takes his army and finds refuge in the land of the Philistines (1 Samuel 27).
 - The Philistines were the enemies of God's people! While David had killed thousands of Philistines, he gained the king's trust.
 - King Achish wants David to be his lifelong bodyguard and go out to battle against Israel.
- The Philistines are pushing Israel north (1 Samuel 28:4). Saul's bad leadership was a big reason for this! While Saul was busy trying to murder an innocent man, the Philistines were invading and experiencing victories over God's people.
- Saul is afraid (1 Samuel 28:5). He was also too afraid to meet Goliath on the battlefield (1 Samuel 17:11). He was a horrible leader and a coward!
- Saul seeks counsel from God (1 Samuel 28:6).
- God won't answer Saul (1 Samuel 28:6). God removed Himself from Saul's life.
- Saul seeks help from a medium (1 Samuel 28:7-11). This woman was a sorcerer who performed witchcraft. Saul had removed sorcerers from Israel, but now he is seeking their help (1 Samuel 28:3). He wants a witch in En-dor to give him access to the dead prophet Samuel.
- God gets involved (1 Samuel 28:12-14). This witch is a phony and a fraud. She has no real power. She is shocked when Samuel shows up and begins talking to Saul.
- Samuel has bad news (1 Samuel 28:15-19). God had taken Saul's kingdom, and tomorrow he and his sons would die in battle.
- Saul is broken (1 Samuel 28:20-25). He falls, becomes more afraid, and eats a meal prepared by the sorcerer.

What can we learn?

- Sin can take us places we never thought we would go. Saul has fallen hard. His life has spiraled out of control because of God. He has disobeyed God, failed to trust God, and has ended up in En-dor seeking help from an opponent of God.
- Repentance would have put Saul on the path back to God. Saul never truly repents. Instead of returning to God and reforming His life, he continues digging a bigger hole in sin.
- God abandoned Saul (1 Samuel 28:6, 16). If we are determined to reject God, there can come a time when He loses patience and gives up on us (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12). There can come a time when God will forsake those who forsake Him.

Conclusion:

Saul no longer has God in his life. Do you have God in your life?

- Shawn Jeffries