

Life Lesson 69
Saul and Witch of Endor
Text: I Samuel 27 and 28

Introduction

David was hiding again, this time in the land of the Philistines. Saul said he wouldn't harm David, but David knew better than to trust him.

The Story

While in the land of the Philistines, David decided to do a job Saul had failed to do – to drive the Amalakites and other wicked tribes out of the land. He took his men down into the land of Israel and attacked the cities ruled by those evil people.

“What have you been doing, David?” King Achish asked him. “I hear that you and your men have been out to battle.”

David knew that King Achish would turn against him if he found out that David had been fighting with friends of the Philistines. He decided not to tell the whole truth.

“I've been down to the south of Judah,” David said. He had been to the south of Judah – far to the south in the land where the wicked tribes lived. He implied he had been fighting with the Israelites, though.

“That's wonderful,” King Achish said to himself. “David has attacked his own people. Now he will be my servant forever because his own people will hate him for turning against them.”

“We're going to attack the Israelites,” King Achish told him some time later. “We want you to go with us.”

“Sure, we'll help you,” David replied. But David knew he couldn't fight against his own people. He knew that there would be some way to keep from fighting on the Philistine side.

Meanwhile, Saul had discovered that the Philistines were planning to attack. He was worried. Would the Israelites be able to win the battle? The number of Philistine troops made his heart tremble with fear.

Saul tried to find direction from the Lord and asked the Lord for some assurance of victory. God heard Saul, but wouldn't answer him. For too long Saul had ignored and disobeyed God. He refused to repent and turn to God when God called him. Now it was too late for Saul. God wouldn't answer him.

Perhaps if Saul had come to God with a repentant heart, God would have answered him even still. Saul only wanted something from God. He didn't want to be ruled by Him.

When Saul received no answer from God, he became desperate. He tried to find assurance from some other source.

"Find a witch who can tell the future," Saul told his servants.

That was a terrible decision. Saul knew how displeased God is with those who are involved with the occult. Saul, himself, had ordered all those who practiced witchcraft to be thrown out of the kingdom.

"There is a woman who can tell the future in Endor," one of his men told Saul.

Saul disguised himself and went to the town of Endor to see the witch. He came with two of his men by night.

"I want you to call up the spirit of a dead person to talk to me," Saul told the woman.

"The king has thrown all the people who can tell the future and who are witches out of the land. Do you want to get me killed by asking me to do this thing?" she asked.

"I'll see that you aren't punished," Saul promised.

"What dead person would you like to talk to?" she asked.

"Bring Samuel up to talk to me," he replied.

We don't know whether the woman really could talk to people who have already died. Most people who claim to be able to do this and to tell the future are just fakes. Perhaps she was

planning to pretend to see something just to get some money from this strange new customer of hers. At any rate, she was surprised to see a figure coming up before her.

“You’ve tricked me!” she cried. “I know now who you are. You are King Saul.”

“Don’t be afraid,” he replied. “Tell me – what did you see?”

“I saw an old man covered with a mantle.”

Saul knew it must be Samuel. He bowed down on the ground to show respect for him.

“Why have you bothered me?” Samuel asked him.

“I am worried because the Philistines are getting ready to attack. God won’t answer my prayers and He won’t give me any direction. Tell me what I should do.”

“If God won’t tell you and He’s become your enemy, why bother to ask me? I don’t have more power than God. I’ll tell you this. The Lord will do what He has said He will do. Because you didn’t obey Him, He will take your kingdom away from you and give it to someone else. Tomorrow the Israelites will fall to the Philistines. You and your sons will be killed.

When Saul heard that, he fell down on the floor in a dead faint. He was in despair because he at last acknowledged there was no hope. God would do as He had promised.

The Life Lesson

How foolish Saul was to look for direction to a fortune-teller. It was stupid to think that he could get around God and change God’s plan.

People today are just that silly! God has said that it is an abomination to Him to have people read horoscopes. Horoscopes are attempts to direct lives apart from God. Instead of seeking God’s direction, people read their horoscopes to decide what they should do each day.

It’s just the same with fortune-tellers, witches, and others who practice the occult. They think they can have power and accomplish; things apart from God. They think they can over-rule God and get their own way.

I know all of you have more sense than to get involved with the occult. Instead of getting power, people who dabble in those things find themselves powerless in the hands of the devil.

Do you remember, though, what Samuel said to Saul when he was still alive on the earth?

He said, "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft."

When you rebel against your parents, your teachers or others God has placed as your authority, you are rebelling against God. When you rebel against God, you are doing just what those who practice witchcraft are doing. You are trying to direct your life without God. You are trying to over-rule God.

What do you think God feels about that? Rebellion and witchcraft are both an abomination to God. Both will place you in the dangerous position of being controlled by Satan.

Learn a lesson from the foolish King Saul. Surrender to God in obedience when He deals with your heart. You can't fight against God and win.

Review Questions

Who did David and his men attack while living among the Philistines?

The Amalekites

Did David tell King Achish the whole truth?

No. He said he had been fighting in the south of Judah.

Who did Saul ask for advice about the attack of the Philistines?

A witch

Who did Saul ask to see?

Samuel

What did Samuel tell him?

God already told you what will happen. You will lose your kingdom.

What is rebellion like?

The sin of witchcraft