

THOSE THAT HAD FAMILIAR SPIRITS AND THE WIZARDS

1 SAMUEL 27:1 – 28:25

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~ In Charles Dickens' wonderful story 'A Christmas Carol', Jacob Marley's ghost returned from the dead to warn the miserly Scrooge about his misdeeds and selfishly poor living. Well, that makes for a heart-warming tale. But in the real world, the dead are never heard from again after they pass through the one-way door of death. In this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, we are going to carefully and exhaustively consider whether or not the dead can communicate with the living. This report will take us with David on a desperate journey to the king of Gath; and an even more desperate visit by King Saul to the witch at Endor. Saul's life will end shortly after this report. For David, a brighter day is in his future; but, for Saul, he enters the realm of dark, evil spirits from which one can never return....

XXVII

1 And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.

~ David's is understandably frustrated at this point from having to continually run away from Saul and hiding in the wilderness. And this is where David displays an obvious departure from his high plane of faith that had manifest in his life heretofore. He is in a period of deep discouragement and defeat; and we saw the same thing happen to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua – and it seems to happen at some point to all of God's chosen men. It still happens today, and I know many of you dear readers are weary in this life. We're all faced with serious problems and some of us have been in a valley of darkness for a very long time. Many of you – and certainly me – have wondered if we will ever come through or not; and we sometimes wonder if there is a solution to our problems or an answer to our questions.

Some of us have despaired as deeply as David despaired in this passage. It should be a comfort to understand others have been down in the same valley of discontent, debt and despair. Most people have been on the same route of despondency that you – and I – have been on; or they will travel this road at some point in their life. This is a well-worn route today, by the way, but we see David paving the trail in this section of Scripture. This experience by David has been a tremendous help to me, personally; by knowing that he had experiences that are as bad or worse than I have ever had – and I have had some bad experiences, friends.

It's easy for me to sympathize with David because it looks as though he may spend the remainder of his life making narrow escapes, risking being slain at any time and living in total discomfort and dissatisfaction. I am absolutely sure David has some real questions for the Lord at this time in his life. I totally understand that there are many who feel like giving up today; because I have felt that way, too. Well, leaving the land, marrying two wives – who were actually wives number two and three – were both huge mistakes that left David living in a land amongst the enemies of God...

2 And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that were with him unto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath.

3 And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, even David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife.

4 And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath: and he sought no more again for him.

5 And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

6 Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

7 And the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was a full year and four months.

8 And David and his men went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.

9 And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.

10 And Achish said, Whither have ye made a road to day? And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites.

11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring tidings to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.

12 And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever.

XXVIII

1 And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.

2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

3 Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

4 And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa.

5 And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

6 And when Saul enquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

~ We must understand God is *NOT* speaking to Saul at this time in any way, shape or form. That is made clear in verse six. That is critical to note as a premise as we read this following account of witchcraft. Endor means “ventriloquist” and this witchy woman was a real actress. Ventriloquism is, ultimately, deception. She is partly a phony, partly a fraud - and totally given over to spiritism, against the express commandments of the Mosaic System of Levitical Law.

You and I live in a day of abject frill and thrill when it comes to religion, friends. One avenue contemporary thrill seekers embrace is modern age spiritism. Modern spiritism is ancient necromancy – it’s nothing new. It has been re-labeled myriad times throughout the ages, but it’s the same old thing. It is a form of rank apostasy - and this isolated incident in the Word of God is the only argument available that the dead are able to communicate with the living. The record *APPEARS* to say she brought Samuel up from the dead. So, the natural question is: did Samuel come up from the dead to communicate with Saul? If the answer is yes, then this is the *ONLY* account of such an event recorded in all of Scripture. So, let’s be careful in our dogmatism here. To correctly answer this question, we need to examine some background material first. The Word of God positively condemns the practice of necromancy.

Deuteronomy 18:9 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. 10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an

observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, 11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. 12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee. 13 Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God. 14 For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do ~

You and I can find any number of people who practice all of this non-sense in any town in any state and in any country of this world today. Some of these phonies are prominent people who make headlines and produce television shows tailor-made for the fraud they perpetrate. Most Hollywood-type “idols” and “stars” in America consult fortune tellers, palm readers and tarot card readers regularly. As far back as 1947, the Guardian, which was a publication of the church of England, ran an article that stated the following: *“...in spite of the large amount of fraud, fakeness and deceit of thought reading, conscious or not, that the investigator of psychic research is forced to contend with, there remains a nucleus of genuine matter that cannot be explained with our present knowledge except by accepting the hypothesis that some human personalities exist through death; and that certain persons have the power and gift of contacting them. Churches have nothing to fear from genuine psychic phenomenon...”* Well, I do not know about you, but to me, that is an AMAZING statement.

Ever since then, there has been nothing but growth in the realm of studying the stars, astrology and Extra Sensory Perception – and we’re not going into detail on these in our safari, but many “respectable” and “trusted” people – including prominent scientists – are dabbling in witchcraft. Some don’t even recognize it. It’s a multi-billion dollar-a-year industry right now as I type this report and you read it. I don’t know the exact number of those who engage in it, but I do know most of them are female. This is thoroughly dangerous and spiritually fatal to a Christian; and Scripture warns that there would be an epidemic of it that breaks out. In the account of Lazarus, the rich man was expressly forbidden from returning to warn his living brothers about the terrible condition of hell, you will recall. When Paul was called up to Heaven, he was never permitted to give any account or details of what he had seen there!

Matthew 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not ~

2 Thessalonians 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders ~

1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron ~

Well, make no mistake God condemns this, and He has judged many nations of long ago exclusively for this practice. The “church” of Satan is easily located in our contemporary society. They pray to and worship the devil in actuality. They are currently demanding equal time to teach Satanism in the places where the Word of God is allowed to be taught – mainly public schools – at least, here in Florida; that is what is happening today. God said this will increase in the last days; and increasing it is. So, with that, Saul heads down to see the witch....

7 Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and desperately enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor.

8 And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.

9 And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the

wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die ?

10 And Saul sware to her by the LORD, saying, As the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

11 Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel.

12 And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.

13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.

14 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.

15 And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do.

~ Friends, you can draw your own conclusions after asking the Spirit of God for discernment in prayer; but, to me, it is more than clear that God is not participating in this account. Even Satan transforms himself into an angel of light. God would never call Samuel up when He Himself isn't speaking to Saul. In Scripture, we need to understand that *ONLY* the Lord Jesus Christ ever communicated with the dead. Christ alone has the power, authority and ability to speak to the dead. Here, in this account, Saul has been completely abandoned by God. Heaven is deafeningly silent towards Saul. That makes him resort to turning to hell for his answer. Now, if that doesn't make your hair stand on edge, I don't know what would. But, since I am not

trying to make your hair stand on edge – because some of you don't even have hair – the question is: did Samuel somehow appear to Saul per verse twelve?

There have been several explanations by many great expositors of the Word of God regarding this account. I'm not going to recite their comments for you – look them up for yourself if you want to. Some simply dismiss it as a fraud; the account clearly says the only one who saw Samuel was the witch. Either way, I think she was as frightened as all the other people standing around who didn't see anything. I am absolutely sure she was a total fraud. Harry Houdini, that fantastic magician of yesteryear, said that he could duplicate ninety-five percent of all things spiritism claimed to produce. If you research his life – he did just that.

So, that leaves five percent unaccounted for. Well, I believe this was a supernatural event, but God had *NOTHING* to do with it. The overwhelming and consuming dire desire for loved ones to communicate with other loved ones who have passed on before them explains Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Conan Doyle succinctly. Both men had sons killed in war. I believe both were obsessed with an insatiable desire to have one final interaction with their children after death. Many are deceived and others are just wondering about their future today; because they don't really trust God like they say they do. When one deeply desires to see something at all costs, it's not very difficult for others to make them see it. That's why a psychic is so successful – and they are successful. Kipling wrote a poem I feel is the answer to this:

~ The road to Endor is easily tread,
For the mother and yearning wife ~
~ There it is sure we shall meet our dead,
As they were even in life ~
~ Earth has not dreamed of the blessings in store,
For desolate hearts on the road to Endor ~
~ Whispers shall comfort us out of the dark,
Hands of God that we knew ~
~ Visions and voices look and hark,
And shall prove that our tale is true ~

~ That those who have passed to a further shore,
May be hailed at a price on the road to Endor ~
~ Oh, that road to Endor is the oldest road,
And the craziest road of all ~
~ Straight it runs to the witches abode,
Just as it did in the days of Saul ~
~ Nothing has changed of the sorrows in store,
For those who go down the road to Endor ~

It means there is another explanation, friends. Some are going to insist the witch brought Samuel back from the dead. Our Spiritual Safari rejects that interpretation as untenable. It is simply inconsistent with every other facet, and all other portions of, Scripture concerning this topic. Saul wanted an answer, but he acknowledges that God was not answering him. This witch was controlled and mastered by a divining demon. Notice she didn't give Saul anything – *NOTHING* – new in the way of information. Saul's understanding of what he wanted to know was not advanced in any way at this time. Saul already knew God had rejected him and that the kingdom had been taken from his hand. Samuel had already said to Saul – while Samuel was alive – in chapter fifteen, "... for rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king." Make no mistake about it; God condemns this thing Saul did and cites it as aggravating in His explanation for destroying Saul. You may want to review that report again; or these from first Chronicles and Job:.

1 Chronicles 10:13 So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; 14 And enquired not of the LORD: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse ~

Job 4: 12 Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. 13 In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, 14 Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. 15 Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up: 16 It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image

was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying, 17 Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker? 18 Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly: 19 How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth? 20 They are destroyed from morning to evening: they perish for ever without any regarding it. 21 Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? they die, even without wisdom ~

Even the gyrations and spooky story old man Eliphaz told Job ended in pure unimpressive nothingness. Eliphaz couldn't come up with anything new, either. This crazy sensationalism from Eliphaz to Job didn't shed any insight at all for Job about his misery at the time. What happened in the account of Samuel and Saul we are studying, is that a false spirit appeared. Saul was not speaking to God, and God was not speaking to Saul! Friends, the dead **CANNOT** communicate with the living. Period. To dabble in that is pure, bone-sucking Satanism from its evil beginning to its disastrous end; and nothing new will be revealed. You can write that down. Let's be clear, however, that there is **ONE** exception of the dead communicating with the living.

John 11:25....I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die ~

*Revelation 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, **Fear not; I am the first and the last:** 18 **I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death ~***

See, there is a very definite reason God doesn't want us fooling around with necromancy and that reason is because it is Satanic to its rotten core. There is only **ONE** Who can speak to us from the dead, and that is the One Who is alive forevermore – the Living Lord Jesus Christ! Jesus said, ***“marvel not at this for the hour is coming in which ALL that are in the graves shall hear My voice and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life – and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of***

damnation!” There is no way Samuel was brought back from the dead, according to Scripture....

16 Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

17 And the LORD hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David:

18 Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day.

19 Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the LORD also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.

20 Then Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel: and there was no strength in him; for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.

21 And the woman came unto Saul, and saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold, thine handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.

22 Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee; and eat, that thou mayest have strength, when thou goest on thy way.

23 But he refused, and said, I will not eat. But his servants, together with the woman, compelled him; and he hearkened unto their voice. So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.

24 And the woman had a fat calf in the house; and she hasted, and killed it, and took flour, and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened bread thereof:

25 And she brought it before Saul, and before his servants; and they did eat. Then they rose up, and went away that night.

~ I have no doubt astrology is the work of the devil, friends; and its popularity continues to grow by leaps and bounds every day. God's Word is clear to our Spiritual Safari: avoid it like the plague. That's what we're going to do. Christ is the One Who we must listen to, trust and obey as He is the One Who holds the keys of hell and of death. The Lord Jesus Christ gives eternal life to all who believe in Him. But His wrath abides forever on those who continue to reject Him. If you have never accepted Christ as your Savior, I hope you'll do that today – before time runs out ~