



Scriptures and Doctrine :: Saul and the medium...

Saul and the medium... - posted by C-ya, on: 2011/6/30 10:55

At our bible study last night, many questions popped up about Saul and the medium in 1 Sam. 28:7-20.

1. Since God tells us to not seek after mediums (Lev.19:31) or ones who calls up the dead (Deut.18:9-12) why would God allow Samuel to be called up this way?
2. Did the medium actually call Samuel up? In 1 Sam.28:11-14, you do not read of any action taken on her part to call Samuel up. She sees the spirit and cries out afraid, but never called the spirit up. So...was it God who allow Samuel to talk to Saul?
3. Was the spirit actually Samuel or an evil spirit?
4. In that time period, wouldn't people be in Abraham's bosom, and not up in heaven, because Christ had not died on the cross yet. So that could explain the spirit ascending out of the earth. (remember the rich man and Lazarus, they could see each other)

I would appreciate some input.
Thanks' C-ya

Re: Saul and the medium..., on: 2011/7/1 12:28

I believe Saul is among the redeemed, and I believe it was Samuel who appeared to King Saul. Are we to conclude the Bible is lying to us, and it doesn't really mean what it says in this passage.

Here is the best commentary on this on the internet IMHO:

<http://www.angelfire.com/ia/BereanInquirer/WasSaulSaved.html>

Matthew Henry commentary - Part 1: Vs. 7-14 - posted by Renoncer, on: 2011/7/1 14:58

Here is a commentary by Matthew Henry:

1Sa 28:7-14

Here, I. Saul seeks for a witch, 1Sa_28:7. When God answered him not, if he had humbled himself by repentance and persevered in seeking God, who knows but that at length he might have been entreated for him? but, since he can discern no comfort either from heaven or earth (Isa_8:21, Isa_8:22), he resolves to knock at the gates of hell, and to see if any there will befriend him and give him advice: Seek me a woman that has a familiar spirit, 1Sa_28:7. And his servants were too officious to serve him in this evil affair; they presently recommended one to him at Endor (a city not far off) who had escaped the execution of Saul's edict. To her he resolves to apply. Herein he is chargeable, 1. With contempt of the God of Israel; as if any creature could do him a kindness when God had left him and frowned upon him. 2. With contradiction to himself. He knew the heinousness of the sin of witchcraft, else he would not have cut off those that had familiar spirits; yet now he had recourse to that as an oracle which he had before condemned as an abomination. It is common for men to inveigh severely against those sins which they are in no temptation to, but afterwards to be themselves overcome by them. Had one told Saul, when he was destroying the witches, that he himself would, ere long, consult with one, he would have said, as Hazeel did, What? Is thy servant a dog? But who knows what mischiefs those will run into that forsake God and are forsaken of him?

II. Hearing of one he hastens to her, but goes by night, and in disguise, only with two servants, and probably on foot, 1Sa_28:8. See how those that are led captive by Satan are forced, 1. To disparage themselves. Never did Saul look so mean as when he went sneaking to a sorry witch to know his fortune. 2. To dissemble. Evil works are works of darkness, and they hate the light, neither care for coming to it. Saul went to the witch, not in his robes, but in the habit of a common soldier, not only lest the witch herself, if she had known him, should decline to serve him, either fearing he came to trepan her or resolving to be avenged on him for his edict against those of her profession, but lest his own people should know it and abhor him for it. Such is the power of natural conscience that even those who do evil blush and are ashamed to do it.

III. He tells her his errand and promises her impunity. 1. All he desires of her is to bring up one from the dead, whom he

had a mind to discourse with. It was necromancy or divination by the dead, that he hoped to serve his purpose by. This was expressly forbidden by the law (Deu_18:11), seeking for the living to the dead, Isa_8:19. Bring me up him whom I shall name, 1Sa_28:8. This supposes that it was generally taken for granted that souls exist after death, and that when men die there is not an end of them: it supposes too that great knowledge was attributed to separate souls. But to think that at any good souls would come up at the beck of an evil spirit, or that God, who had denied a man the benefit of his own institutions, would suffer him to reap any real advantage by a cursed diabolical invention, was very absurd. 2. She signifies her fear of the law, and her suspicion that this stranger came to draw her into a snare (1Sa_28:9): Thou knowest what Saul has done. Providence ordered it so that Saul should be told to his face of his edict against witches, at this very time when he was consulting one, for the greater aggravation of his sin. She insists upon the peril of the law, perhaps to raise her price; for, though no mention is made of her fee, no doubt she demanded and had a large one. Observe how sensible she is of danger from the edict of Saul, and what care she is in to guard against it; but not at all apprehensive of the obligations of God's law and the terrors of his wrath. She considered what Saul had done, not what God had done, against such practices, and feared a snare laid for her life more than a snare laid for her soul. It is common for sinners to be more afraid of punishment from men than of God's righteous judgment. But, 3. Saul promises with an oath not to betray her, 1Sa_28:10. It was his duty as a king to punish her and he knew it, yet he swears not to do it; as if he could by his own oath bind himself from doing that which, by the divine command, he was bound to do. But he promised more than he could perform when he said, There shall no punishment happen to thee; for he that could not secure himself could much less secure her from divine vengeance.

IV. Samuel, who was lately dead, is the person whom Saul desired to have some talk with; and the witch, with her enchantments, gratifies his desire, and brings them together. 1. As soon as Saul had given the witch the assurance she desired (that he would not discover her) she applied to her witchcrafts, and asked very confidently, Whom shall I bring up to thee? 1Sa_28:11. Note, Hopes of impunity embolden sinners in their evil ways and harden their hearts. 2. Saul desires to speak with Samuel: Bring me up Samuel. Samuel had anointed him to the kingdom and had formerly been his faithful friend and counsellor, and therefore with him he wished to advise. While Samuel was living at Ramah, not far from Gibeah of Saul, and presided there in the school of the prophets, we never read of Saul's going to him to consult him in any of the difficulties he was in (it would have been well for him if he had); then he slighted him, and perhaps hated him, looking upon him to be in David's interest. But now that he is dead, "O for Samuel again! By all means, bring me up Samuel." Note, Many that despise and persecute God's saints and ministers when they are living would be glad to have them again when they are gone. Send Lazarus to me, and send Lazarus to my father's house, Luk_16:24-27. The sepulchres of the righteous are garnished. 3. Here is a seeming defector chasm in the story. Saul said, Bring me up Samuel, and the very next words are, When the woman saw Samuel, (1Sa_28:12), whereas one would have expected to be told how she performed the operation, what spells and charms she used, or that some little intimation would be given of what she said or did; but the profound silence of the scripture concerning it forbids our coveting to know the depths of Satan (Rev_2:24) or to have our curiosity gratified with an account of the mysteries of iniquity. It has been said of the books of some of the popish confessors that, by their descriptions of sin, they have taught men to commit it; but the scripture conceals sinful art, that we may be simple concerning evil, Rom_16:19. 4. The witch, upon sight of the apparition, was aware that her client was Saul, her familiar spirit, it is likely, informing her of it (1Sa_28:12): "Why hast thou deceived me with a disguise; for thou art Saul, the very man that I am afraid of above any man?" Thus she gave Saul to understand the power of her art, in that she could discover him through his disguise; and yet she feared lest, hereafter, at least, he should take advantage against her for what she was now doing. Had she believed that it was really Samuel whom she saw, she would have had more reason to be afraid of him, who was a good prophet, than of Saul, who was a wicked king. But the wrath of earthly princes is feared by most more than the wrath of the King of kings. 5. Saul (who, we may suppose, was kept at a distance in the next room) bade her not to be afraid of him, but go on with the operation, and enquired what she saw? 1Sa_28:13. O, says the woman, I saw gods (that is, a spirit) ascending out of the earth; they called angels gods, because spiritual beings. Poor gods that ascend out of the earth! But she speaks the language of the heathen, who had their infernal deities and had them in veneration. If Saul had thought it necessary to his conversation with Samuel that the body of Samuel should be called out of the grave, he would have taken the witch with him to Ramah, where his sepulchre was; but the design was wholly upon his soul, which yet, if it became visible, was expected to appear in the usual resemblance of the body; and God permitted the devil, to answer the design, to put on Samuel's shape, that those who would not receive the love of the truth might be given up to strong delusions and believe a lie. That it could not be the soul of Samuel himself they might easily apprehend when it ascended out of the earth, for the spirit of a man, much more of a good man, goes upward, Ecc_3:21. But, if people will be deceived, it is just with God to say, "Let them be deceived." That the devil, by the divine permission, should be able to personate Samuel is not strange, since he can transform himself into an angel of light! nor is it strange that he should be permitted to do it upon this occasion, that Saul might be driven to despair, by enquiring of the devil, since he would not, in a right manner, enquire of the Lord, by which he might have had comfort. Saul, being told of gods ascending, was eager to know what was the form of this deity, and in what shape he appeared, so far was he from conceiving any horror at it, his heart being wretchedly hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Saul, it seems, was not permitted to see any manner of similitude himself, but he must take the woman's word for it, that she saw

an old man covered with a mantle, or robe, the habit of a judge, which Samuel had sometimes worn, and some think it was for the sake of that, and the majesty of its aspect, that she called this apparition Elohim, a god or gods; for so magistrates are styled, Psa_82:1. 6. Saul, perceiving, by the woman's description, that it was Samuel, stooped with his face to the ground, either, as it is generally taken, in reverence to Samuel, though he saw him not, or perhaps to listen to that soft and muttering voice which he now expected to hear (for those that had familiar spirits peeped and muttered, Isa_8:19); and it should seem Saul bowed himself (probably by the witch's direction) that he might hear what was whispered and listen carefully to it; for the voice of one that has a familiar spirit is said to come out of the ground, and whisper out of the dust, Isa_29:4. He would stoop to that who would not stoop to the word of God.

Matthew Henry commentary - Part 2: Vs. 15-19 - posted by Renoncer, on: 2011/7/1 14:59

Here is the second part of the commentary by Matthew Henry:

1Sa 28:15-19

We have here the conference between Saul and Satan. Saul came in disguise (1Sa_28:8), but Satan soon discovered him, 1Sa_28:12. Satan comes in disguise, in the disguise of Samuel's mantle, and Saul cannot discover him. Such is the disadvantage we labour under, in wrestling with the rulers of the darkness of this world, that they know us, while we are ignorant of their wiles and devices.

I. The spectre, or apparition, personating Samuel, asks why he is sent for (1Sa_28:15): Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up? To us this discovers that it was an evil spirit that personated Samuel; for (as bishop Patrick observes) it is not in the power of witches to disturb the rest of good men and to bring them back into the world when they please; nor would the true Samuel have acknowledged such a power in magical arts: but to Saul this was a proper device of Satan's, to draw veneration from him, to possess him with an opinion of the power of divination, and so to rivet him in the devil's interests.

II. Saul makes his complaint to this counterfeit Samuel, mistaking him for the true; and a most doleful complaint it is: "I am sorely distressed, and know not what to do, for the Philistines make war against me; yet I should do well enough with them if I had but the tokens of God's presence with me; but, alas! God has departed from me." He complained not of God's withdrawals till he fell into trouble, till the Philistines made war against him, and then he began to lament God's departure. He that in his prosperity enquired not after God in his adversity thought it hard that God answered him not, nor took any notice of his enquiries, either by dreams or prophets, neither gave answers immediately himself nor sent them by any of his messengers. He does not, like a penitent, own the righteousness of God in this; but, like a man enraged, flies out against God as unkind and flies off from him: Therefore I have called thee; as if Samuel, a servant of God, would favour those whom God frowned upon, or as if a dead prophet could do him more service than the living ones. One would think, from this, that he really desired to meet with the devil, and expected no other (though under the covert of Samuel's name), for he desires advice otherwise than from God, therefore from the devil, who is a rival with God. "God denies me, therefore I come to thee. Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo." - If I fail with heaven, I will move hell.

III. It is cold comfort which this evil spirit in Samuel's mantle gives to Saul, and is manifestly intended to drive him to despair and self-murder. Had it been the true Samuel, when Saul desired to be told what he should do he would have told him to repent and make his peace with God, and recall David from his banishment, and would then have told him that he might hope in this way to find mercy with God; but, instead of that, he represents his case as helpless and hopeless, serving him as he did Judas, to whom he was first a tempter and then a tormentor, persuading him first to sell his master and then to hang himself. 1. He upbraids him with his present distress (1Sa_28:16), tells him, not only that God had departed from him, but that he had become his enemy, and therefore he must expect no comfortable answer from him: "Wherefore dost thou ask me? How can I be thy friend when God is thy enemy, or thy counsellor when he has left thee?" 2. He upbraids him with the anointing of David to the kingdom, 1Sa_28:17. He could not have touched upon a string that sounded more unpleasant in the ear of Saul than this. Nothing is said to reconcile him to David, but all tends rather to exasperate him against David and widen the breach. Yet, to make him believe that he was Samuel, the apparition affirmed that it was God who spoke by him. The devil knows how to speak with an air of religion, and can teach false apostles to transform themselves into the apostles of Christ and imitate their language. Those who use spells and charms, and plead, in defence of them, that they find nothing in them but what is good, may remember what good words the devil here spoke, and yet with what a malicious design. 3. He upbraids him with his disobedience to the command of God in not destroying the Amalekites, 1Sa_28:18. Satan had helped him to palliate and excuse that sin when Samuel was dealing with him to bring him to repentance, but now he aggravates it, to make him despair of God's mercy. See what those get thatarken to Satan's temptations. He himself will be their accuser, and insult over them. And see whom those resemble that allure others to that which is evil and reproach them for it when they have done. 4. He foretells his approaching ruin, 1Sa_28:19. (1.) That his army should be routed by the Philistines. This is twice mentioned: The Lord shall deliver Israel into the hand of the Philistines. This he might foresee, by considering the superior strength and number of the Philistines, the weakness of the armies of Israel, Saul's terror, and especially God's departure from them. Yet, to personate a prophet, he v

ery gravely ascribes it once and again to God: The Lord shall do it. (2.) That he and his sons should be slain in the battle : Tomorrow, that is, in a little time (and, supposing that it was now after midnight, I see not but it may be taken strictly for the very next day after that which had now begun), thou and thy sons shall be with me, that is, in the state of the dead, s eparate from the body. Had this been the true Samuel, he could not have foretold the event unless God had revealed it t o him; and, though it were an evil spirit, God might by him foretel it; as we read of an evil spirit that foresaw Ahab's fall at Ramoth-Gilead and was instrumental in it (1Ki_22:20, etc.), as perhaps this evil spirit was, by the divine permission, in S aul's destruction. That evil spirit flattered Ahab, this frightened Saul, and both that they might fall; so miserable are those that are under the power of Satan; for, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest, Pro_29:9.

Re: Matthew Henry commentary - Part 2: Vs. 15-19, on: 2011/7/1 15:36

I think Matthew Henry is way too legalistic and judgmental. I also don't think he knows what he's talking about. No one can be an expert at every passage in the Bible. He's also almost way too intellectual to be any Earthly good.

God spoke through a donkey, but he can't speak through a witch?

This is a very interesting story in the OT. And I think King Saul is the most misunderstood figure in the OT.

I guess my point is this. I assume the Bible has no passages that are lies. If it really wasn't Samuel that appeared to Ki ng Saul, then wouldn't the Bible be worded something like, "And one like unto Samuel appeared to Saul"?

Re: - posted by savedtoserve, on: 2011/7/1 15:47

I agree, Endzone, Henry's commentary seems to be reading into the text instead of taking God for what he said. When God says "Then Samuel said," He means just that. SAMUEL talked to Saul. Likewise when Samuel said, "to morrow sha lt thou and thy sons be with me" that is what happened. They were WITH SAMUEL, not just "in the state of the dead."

Re: Saul and the medium... - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/7/1 18:06

I suggest you do something that may get you closer to an answer rather than relying on others to tell you.

Study carefully the life of Saul. Make lists, track his spiritual life as demonstrated by his obedience and attitudes towards God's commands and his servant Samuel and later David. Stand back and take a long look. At the same time you will want to study the law in regards to its commands about witchcraft in all of its forms. If there are any questions about what t hey entail, check it out. (I must warn you must be very careful here lest you come under their power.) After doing this, th e answer may not be as elusive as you think. But if it still is, just know that to determine ones eternal destiny rests with G od. Our opinions, understandings can never change that.

Sometimes questions arise for which there is no clear answer given. In those cases I then assume the answer is not im portant for us humans. If it were God would have been clear with it. And who knows? perhaps the answer would do mor e harm than good? Sometimes we just have to say we do not know and leave it at that.

My understanding and opinion, but hope it helps.

Re: Saul and the medium... - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2011/7/1 18:10

Quote:
-----1. Since God tells us to not seek after mediums (Lev.19:31) or ones who calls up the dead (Deut.18:9-12) why would God allow Sa
muel to be called up this way?

All throughout scripture, hundreds of times, God "allows" men to do things contrary to his commandments (think Balaam). I wonder if you mean something else by this question. Do you suspect that God was putting his seal of approval on th e use of the medium and the raising of Samuel? This obviously cannot be so since God made it clear not to consult me dium's. Just as He made it clear that his people were not to commit adultery, and yet David, the next king...did. God nev er forces anyone to keep his commands, although He certainly places buffers in place for those who break them.

If that is not what concerns you, I wonder if this is not what it is. Many people are disturbed when they read this passage, myself included, by the fact that it actually worked (by hook or by crook). I think most modern men come to a passage like this with a very rationalistic world view. We tend to see these kinds of occult activities as antiquated poppycock. What tends to disturb us, (I am speaking for myself here) is the notion that God does not somehow prevent this kind of activity from occurring on a "physic's" level. What I mean by that is, it just should not be possible for a man or woman to summon the dead from another realm. I take the passage at face value. It happened, no use in explaining it away.

Quote:
-----2. Did the medium actually call Samuel up? In 1 Sam.28:11-14, you do not read of any action taken on her part to call Samuel up. She sees the spirit and cries out afraid, but never called the spirit up. So...was it God who allowed Samuel to talk to Saul?

The Old Testament narrative commonly leaves out details. It would seem to me that the context would indicate that the necromancer actually did the raising of the medium. I think God would be guilty by proxy of sin had he been the one who raised the medium within this kind of context. (That may be a blanket statement, but I am not sure how He would not be guilty. I suppose if someone brought a reasonable enough argument to the contrary I would at least consider it.) It is not that God cannot raise the dead, it is that he probably needs to do it in His righteous way. We have to remember that the devil is a thief. God raises the dead (ala the transfiguration, Moses, Elijah), but the devil steals God's power and turns it into necromancy. Some things are to be only the realm of God alone. As he IS the resurrection, AND the life.

Quote:
-----3. Was the spirit actually Samuel or an evil spirit?

Unless otherwise stated, the passage leads us to believe it was, in fact Samuel. Here are some inductive reasons to believe it was him indeed: 1.) Verse 14, "And Saul knew it was Samuel." 2.) Samuel interacts with Saul on behalf of the Lord, he obviously is on the Lord's side (the devil may not have been), I believe this because Samuel just reiterates what he had told Saul before he died. (Look up chapter 15:28. 3.) As others already pointed out, what Samuel prophesies to Saul, comes true. This has never been something the devil and his evil spirits have been very good at. At best for the devil, predicting the future is a highly educated guessing game. Whereas God and His prophets are always dead on (no pun intended.) (We may not always understand the prophecies, but when they come true they are fulfilled in the sense that God spoke them through the prophets.) 4.) Verse 20, in a narrative sense, says that it was the voice of Samuel. 5.) Since the passage never says Samuel was an evil spirit, to think otherwise is to read that into the text. (If there is another passage anywhere in scripture that says it was an evil spirit, please correct me.)

Quote:
-----4. In that time period, wouldn't people be in Abraham's bosom, and not up in heaven, because Christ had not died on the cross yet. So that could explain the spirit ascending out of the earth. (remember the rich man and Lazarus, they could see each other)

My inclination is to agree with this. Good questions C-ya.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/7/1 18:20

A broader application of this question can be: how about all those people who claim to have had visions of hell, of heaven? Are they authentic? how do you explain the pagan's visions? Those that seem to inform him that all is well with him?

When one wants to fully understand this issue, it can lead to more troubling questions, so you better be prepared to deal with it.

I am not saying this to trouble you, it just is troubling!

Re: , on: 2011/7/1 23:39

areadymind, I liked your analysis of the passage--especially for somebody that lives in the liberal NW--just kidding.

There isn't any verse in the Bible that says it was an evil spirit that appeared to the witch and to Saul because if there were, you can be sure those who try to claim this can't really be Samuel would pound us over the head with it.

Re: , on: 2011/7/2 0:14

1 Sam 28:10 And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing.

Ex 22:18 Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.

1 Sam 28:3 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.

Saul knew he was to put away those with familiar spirits but valued his hide and the information he desired for it above the commandment of the Lord.

1 Sam 28:14 And Saul perceived that it was Samuel

The Bible doesn't state that it was Samuel, but only that Saul perceived this. Saul's perception was blinded by his sin as we see later.

1 Sam 28:15 God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams:

2 Chron 35:18 ...from the days of Samuel the prophet...

Samuel was a prophet, God answered Saul no more by prophets.

1 Sam 28:16 Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?

No child of God is ever referred to in scripture as the Lord's enemy, and the Lord having departed from Saul, all that Saul has left is the dark side.

1 Sam 28:19 ...to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me....

One does not go from being the enemy of God one day, to being with God the next without a change of heart. No such change of heart is recorded, therefore the next day Saul was not with Samuel, but with someone who is not with God, that only leaves one other place.

Saul was damned.

OJ

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2011/7/2 1:29

In lieu of Joe's post, I realized I was a bit off in my first post. When I said he was in Abraham's bosom, I meant the realm of the dead. I just double checked the passage in Luke, and it does not say that the portion where the rich man was was called Abraham's bosom, but Hades. That was my mistake. I was thinking about how the rich man could talk to Lazarus across the divide. My earlier post was not intended in any way to say what his eternal fate was. In my mind I equated Abraham's bosom just as the realm of the dead. Please forgive me.

Re: , on: 2011/7/3 8:01

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog.

Re: - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2011/7/3 8:25

That was pretty unwarranted. You have now 2 times in this thread stained peoples reputations with your accusing words . I ask that you please refrain from doing that. The forum rules state that you are to "play the ball" and "not the man."

Re: , on: 2011/7/3 10:52

I've never been on a Christian forum that didn't have a few whack jobs on it. In fact the reason a lot of people are on here is that they have some major issues in their own life. A lot of folks have been hurt in church and they hang out on this board thinking they can live a Christian life on an island. I would not exclude myself from being in the "messed up" category.

So I think for that reason I am going to refrain from posting on Christian forums anymore. What is needed is accountability by going to church or even home church. It is getting involved in people's lives. There are just way too many wounded people on these forums, and people get their feelings hurt too easy.

I actually prefer the college sports forums because you can actually tell somebody to kiss your *** and still be friends with them. I mean they will forgive you. No so with these easily wounded, touchy feely Christians on Christian forums. But there are some really wonderful and sweet people on these forums too. So that's my opinion. Thanks.

Re: - posted by ceedub, on: 2011/7/5 17:45

I've never been told to kiss someone's asteriks before, but I forgive you nonetheless.

Was just having a conversation about this a couple weeks ago with a christian brother. I don't think either of us are cemented into our views, but here's mine...

I don't think it was Samuel as it seems very out of character and pattern here for God to not answer Saul, then reverse and send Samuel to answer for Him, in the presence of a witch nonetheless.

Second, in Acts 16:16 you have a demon possessed girl urging others to follow Paul to learn the way of salvation...

Quote:
-----And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

and we read elsewhere of Paul...

Quote:
----- (2 Cor 11:13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.)

Therefore, we cannot, imho, allow the fact that 'Samuel' was telling proper things to Saul be a proof that it was Samuel.

And third, (here's where it gets a little iffy), it's been told me by one very close to me that when using a uija board at a young age, one asked the spirit its name to which it replied 'Sam'. A distant relative had a business in a Canadian city as a

Spiritist of which one of the spirits he called upon was named 'Sam'. If you've noticed, in a great many Hollywood movie s that deal in occult, the name 'Sam' is used ('Sam I am' etc). Even the eccentric Dr. Seuss's 'Green eggs and ham, Sa m I am' is cause for a possible second look.

Is it possible that many spirits use the name 'Sam' in reference to one of their favorite deceptions?

If we were to say that God did send spirits back to talk to those requesting an audience, it would seem to contradict a fe w passages...

Quote:

-----1Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus

Quote:

-----30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they h ear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

EDIT: (I realize those last 2 verses are fairly weak to make my point as context is not exactly the same, but they might s peak partially to this topic.)

I'm not fully persuaded either way myself, but I'd lean safely to question the claim that God sent Samuel back from the d ead as an angel of light. Good topic.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/7/5 19:15

ceedub,

You presented some very interesting observations about "sam".

From the references quoted in Acts we also read where Paul commanded the evil spirits to come out of the girl, rendering her useless to her masters. Acts 16:18-19.

From other references we do see where evil spirits apparently can tell the truth, they dogged Jesus during his ministry...

Quote:

-----Therefore, we cannot, imho, allow the fact that 'Samuel' was telling proper things to Saul be a proof that it was Samuel.

It sure sounds like Samuel, rebuking Saul, but this does not mean it really was...maybe this is a profound lesson on how truthful a demon can be and how well he can imitate God's message? Just wondering because Saul did inquire of the L ORD through accepted methods but God was silent. So, why then would God use a witch to speak to his message?

BTW, have you ever heard the devil suggest to you that when God seems to be silent that perhaps you need to check o ut a horoscope? or something similar?

Re: - posted by Friedrich (), on: 2011/7/5 22:57

I wonder why many people, and my own initial instinct is to say that the spirit called by the medium for Saul was Sammu el...

I believe it is because at even a subconscious level most of us expect God to answer and guide us, even when we are blatantly disobedient to his initial word for us.

Re: - posted by ceedub, on: 2011/7/6 0:41

Just another thought when considering God's dealing with Saul, and that's found in 2 Sam 7, where God tells David that He will not remove mercy from David's offspring as He did with Saul.

I think that fits with Friedrich's statement about what we expect (and I think somewhat rightfully so for those of us that are hidden in Christ) compared to what Saul received.

The story of Saul should make us all the more grateful for the cleft in the Rock that God has placed us in, Jesus Christ.

Re: Saul and the medium... - posted by Lysa (), on: 2011/7/6 8:27

I am ok in what I believe the word of God says in certain passages and God knows I have to be on here sometimes!! ha ha (that was a tad bit of GOOD HEARTED sarcasm for those who didn't get it!) so the following is just my view but I believe the witch called up Samuel.

Now, why do I believe that? Well, the power of calling up the dead is real no matter how a Christian tries to explain that it isn't. And the witch of endor KNEW her power, she was not playing around (like the lady in the movie Ghost was), she knew what she could do... 2 Samuel 28:11: Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?"

I like the NASB version of this a bit better, it's more clearer in the meaning...

And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me." When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul." The king said to her, "Do not be afraid; but what do you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I see a divine being coming up out of the earth." He said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "An old man is coming up, and he is wrapped with a robe." And Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and did homage.

The word doesn't say Samuel was in hell or heaven but in the earth (in this version), so if the earth means hell, then so be it because Matt 27:52-53 NASB says: 'The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.' And I only know of two people who left this world upwards that lived in the O.T., Enoch and Elijah. (edit: all the rest were guilty of not keeping the Law. unedit)

I seriously believe that we (Christian human beings) have TAINTED the word of God with what each of us wants to believe WHAT the Word of God says. We have tainted the meaning of God's word with what we have been taught by what our church believes about something (and we cling to it for dear life) OR what a wordy commentary says instead of what the Word of our blessed God actually does say and we just explain it away and I'm not just talking about Saul and the witch. God help us all.

In the NASB, the translated Hebrew is "Saul KNEW it was Samuel" and not something else the witch conjured up instead, but actually Samuel the prophet. The KJV doesn't always get the translating correct. Search out other versions and see what you consensus you get, don't just believe me.

God bless you all!!! To God be all the Glory!

Lisa

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2011/7/6 9:31

Lysa,

Well said. Good post. Keep the faith sister!

Solomon101

Re: , on: 2011/7/7 22:47

I agree with you Lisa. The Bible plainly tells us that it was Samuel. If it wasn't then God is a chain-yanker. By that I mean we can't really take God at his word, and we never really know when He is serious or He isn't serious. But some believers just can't get past the idea that since Samuel appeared to the witch, that God can't possibly work through a witch. He can turn stones into Jews and speak through a donkey, but he can't speak through a witch. I disagree with that logic.

Saul is a mysterious OT character, and I am fascinated by his life I guess because I see a lot of parallels in my own life to his. Is there a more misunderstood character in the OT than Saul?

Re: - posted by savedtoserve, on: 2011/7/8 8:48

Quote:

----- A lot of folks have been hurt in church and they hang out on this board thinking they can live a Christian life on an island... What is needed is accountability by going to church or even home church. It is getting involved in people's lives.

Yes, this is usually true with forums like this. It's terrible when a Christian tries to go it alone like that, because that's never what God meant. I've seen them myself, trying to turn forums such as these into their own "online church" and it's just a disaster from start to end.

Quote:

-----Saul is a mysterious OT character, and I am fascinated by his life

He started out well --so humble-- but his end is tragic.

Re: , on: 2011/7/8 20:55

savedtoserve, thank you for your encouraging words. I agree with your analysis.

Re: , on: 2011/7/9 11:14

Savedtoserve have a look at this will you?

I Samuel 15:35

And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD repented that he had made Saul king over Israel.

Who is "his" in this passage? Saul's death or Samuel's? There doesn't seem to be anything in the I Samuel that indicates that Samuel visited Saul on the day of Samuel's death. In fact between I Samuel 15 and I Samuel 25, King Saul and Samuel seem to meet only one more time and it was Saul seeking out Samuel and David. Between I Samuel 19 and I S

Samuel 25 (Samuel's death), Samuel and Saul never see each other again. I can't find anything in I Samuel where Samuel comes to see Saul on the day of Samuel's death. Although this is just pure speculation on my part, since Samuel was an old man, chances are good that Samuel was weak and sickly and in no condition to go visit anyone on the day of Samuel's death.

So couldn't this passage be a reference of Samuel coming to see Saul on the day of SAUL'S death? Samuel died weeks/months/years before Saul did. Do you think I Samuel 15:35 is speaking of when Samuel would visit Saul on the day of SAUL's death during the visit to the witch at Endor?

Please comment if you have time--or anyone else. Thanks.

Re: - posted by carters (), on: 2011/7/14 2:49

Quote:

-----thinking they can live a Christian life on an island...

LOL that is exactly what we are doing. We are living on an island...literally...only 8,000 people...

Just to let you know that we have only one other couple on the island that are like minded - not any others that are of like mind and safe doctrines :)

BUT you can make it work being a Christian on an island. I take encouragement from my foundation only in the Lord and His word. You can make it work with just the Lord and yourself. Ask any Christian stuck in jail for their faith, or John when we get to Heaven about his life on Patmos.

:) Sometimes life works out that you do not have a church or many in your home church, but GOD makes it work because He is always there for us as our Rock.

As we don't have like minded fellowship I relish the chance to hear debates like this and be around Christian brothers and sisters who are passionate for Jesus and wanting to have real genuine revival in their hearts and lives.

Praise God for sermon index for those of us stuck on an island.....

PS - I would highly recommend an island experience to anyone...it is a real test to see who you really are serving & what your foundation is really on....

Through Him only
Sherid

Re: - posted by savedtoserve, on: 2011/7/14 6:34

You have simplified it down very well, Endzone. Scripture plainly states when Samuel died, and then there's a reason just why it later said that Samuel said to Saul, Tomorrow you will be with me. (1 Samuel 28:15-19) When you read the Bible, it's about taking God at His word, you know? That takes the complication out of it so many times.

Re: - posted by savedtoserve, on: 2011/7/14 6:58

Quote:

-----LOL that is exactly what we are doing. We are living on an island...literally...only 8,000 people...

Hi Sherid,

I'd like to clarify what I was getting at. I know you can make an island work; I was talking about what God shows in His word as what He wants for us. My main idea was not literally living on an island, but more just being out of church and out of fellowship with other Christians. One of the purposes of the church is to build each other up into strong edifices for Christ (that's the meaning of edification). It's one of God's means for our spiritual growth.

I want to be careful here, though, and make sure that you know I'm not trying to run your life. In my situation even, there are few in our church and we're looking to the Lord to bring more for His glory. But there's something about a Christian being under the authority of a pastor, about being held accountable for how you live and choose, and about not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, that is part of God's integral design for His people and we can't get away from it.

Concerning Christians in jail and being exiled, I think the important distinction there is that they were in that situation because they were being persecuted for their faith. (Acts 8.1)

It's also interesting to note that Paul dealt with churches, not individuals.

I agree with the premise behind what you're saying; that is, it's time to follow Christ and His word only and to stop following men. It's time to stand on our own two feet even in the midst of a crowd that's against us and to say, "This is where I stand, and I'm not budging!" You have a very relevant point, there. But I don't see how that cannot be practiced even while one is in church; I've certainly had to do so numerous times. It's part of everyday life as a Christian in this "wicked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

God be with you as you seek HIM!

savedtoserve

Re: - posted by carters (), on: 2011/7/15 0:10

Quote:

-----But there's something about a Christian being under the authority of a pastor, about being held accountable for how you live and choose, and about not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, that is part of God's integral design for His people and we can't get away from it.

Hi savedtoserve,

I completely understand what you are saying...but soon we will live in a world where for those of us that pursue the truth of God will no longer have a church building to meet in. The churches out there are getting worse and worse. You may not notice in the country you are living currently, but where we live it is impossible to find a church without seriously dangerous teaching.

Put it this way,

If I had to ask you whether you lived on an island and the only church available for you to attend and come under authority in was a church run by Harold Camping...would you attend and submit under his authority and leadership?

In Him only

Sherid

Re: - posted by savedtoserve, on: 2011/7/15 7:34

Quote:
-----If I had to ask you whether you lived on an island and the only church available for you to attend and come under authority in was a church run by Harold Camping...would you attend and submit under his authority and leadership?

Absolutely not. I get your point there... But here's what I would do instead, I would plan on moving somewhere else where there was a good, solid, Biblical church. Or if there were some other believers, we might try to call in a pastor to start a work there. You see, being in a church is so important to me, that I would move half-way around the globe if need be to get in a good one.

I'm not at all saying this is the case with you, Sherid, but I want to say that Paul talks about those who despise the church of God, about those who esteem it lightly. And a good question for all of us is, How important is the Church of Jesus Christ to me? It is that for which Christ died for -- how do I esteem His church today? What measure would we take to be part of a church?

It's not an issue of a church building so much, as a church body can meet almost anywhere. I realize that the freedom we enjoy may be taken away soon. But we are held accountable for the present, not what we believe will come. Do you get my point?

I do feel for your situation, Sherid, and not in a demeaning way, either. I know what it's like to not have other believers around -- I know it's difficult. Please realize that I'm not trying to coerce you into doing something. Whatever you do or don't do about your situation needs to be because you think it's right, not because someone else does.

Praying for you as you seek His will,
savedtoserve

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/7/15 11:07

I know there is disagreement on whether Saul actually saw Samuel or was it a demon impersonating Samuel...yes, I know the witch seemed to think it was Samuel as well....but this is not the point of this post - just wanted to let you know I am aware of the difficulty in understanding this incident in light of God's prohibition in pursuing anything like this.

I wonder if we really understand the stress Saul was under? He really wanted to know the future, wanted direction on what he should do, or so it seems. And never mind that he has a history of doing the opposite of God's revealed will.

The drive to speak with a deceased person can become very strong, so strong that the devil will come and suggest that indeed you can! This happened to me after our daughter died. I so desperately missed her company! She would call me many times and say "Mom, how do you....?" I missed those calls..even now as I write, it grips my emotions... Now the devil comes along and informs me that I could speak with Regina. After considering the source of this "thought" I outright rejected it: NO! It did not make me feel better, but I knew this was the right thing...

A week or so later, was Regina's birthday and I got a floral arrangement from the florist. The wording was as though it was from Regina! I was really upset, really upset. After doing some intense investigating I found out who did it and they were informed this message was not appreciated, even if it was given with good intentions. (My negative reactions would not have existed had it not been for the struggle I had a few days before.)

I know one should not interpret scriptures through personal experiences and some will discard what I said because of this very point. This is OK, I take no offense, but just do not forget that the devil will mimic God in many areas of life, and this is my point. Frankly, this type of thing scares me - the devil who mimics God's miraculous works. We must be ever so alert how the devil will say that God will make exceptions in your case and will even end up doing miracles, even in the name of God/Jesus!

Matthew 7:21-23 NASB:

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.

22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'

23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

This is sobering.

Re: , on: 2011/7/15 12:11

ginnyrose I'm glad you resisted the temptation to try and communicate with your daughter after her death. I have heard the stories though from people who say their loved one came by to visit them to tell them everything was alright, etc. And these folks that have had visions of going to heaven or being in heaven have told similar stories about meeting their family members. I don't know what to think of it all except to say I don't think it's a practice that Christians should pursue by going to fortune tellers. If the Lord does it supernaturally, who are we to argue? I think the story of King Saul visiting the witch at Endor is a very rare and unique case. I agree with you that going to these fortune teller types is the wrong decision. Christian people sometimes do that when they are desperate, but I believe it is still the wrong decision. I still believe that in the case of King Saul, it was in fact Samuel that appeared to him. At the very least I believe the Lord was in it, and that it was the Lord that conveyed the message and not a demonic spirit. But this is a rare exception of what you would expect to hear from a fortune teller. Satan and his demonic spirits will only tell you enough truth to pull the rug out from under you.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/7/15 20:44

Quote:
-----I have heard the stories though from people who say their loved one came by to visit them to tell them everything was alright, etc.

I have heard of it as well. What raises red flags is when you read how this deceased person was not a Believer...

Quote:
-----And these folks that have had visions of going to heaven or being in heaven have told similar stories about meeting their family members.

I know some visions are legitimate, genuine. However, too many appear to be counterfeits. As I wrestled with this issue, I came to a few conclusions how one can determine whether it is genuine.

1. Did this person return with a burden for lost souls?
2. How do they regard the Savior? Did they see Him?
3. Does this person have a reputation of being a saint? - one who is walking with the LORD.
4. Do they teach an all-inclusive doctrine - that all men will go to heaven?

There may be others, but this is what I generally look for whenever I read these stories.

I am also told that even Hindus have visions similar to Christians. It is also well known that the LORD Jesus is appearing super-naturally to Muslims today which results in conversions to Him.

Yes, one needs to be doubly careful in giving credibility to visions that are counterfeit.

Endzone, you have any more insight to this issue?

- posted by carters (), on: 2011/7/16 3:16

Re: - posted by savedtoserve, on: 2011/7/16 8:00

God be with you Sherid.

Perhaps the Lord wants to use you all to be the beginning of a Biblical church! Lord bless!

Re: , on: 2011/7/16 10:46

ginnyrose I think you are very level headed about this matter of Christians having a glimpse into life after death. I think some of them have in fact had revelations from the Lord God Himself. And others I am skeptical of for the same reason that you are. Their walk with the Lord was not that close, and their loved one was not one who openly professed faith in Jesus Christ.

Sorry, but I don't have any insight. I'm 54, and I've never been married, and I don't have any kids. I think you might be encouraged to read the first chapter of Don Piper's "90 Minutes in Heaven". Maybe you have read it already. This fellow was a Baptist minister who was in a really bad car wreck. Anyway, he said the first people you see in heaven are those who had an influence on your life for Christ. Then he says that a lot of people he thought were going to be there weren't there and a lot of people he didn't think would be there who were there. I know in my own life I've had 2 visions from the Lord. They both happened about 30 years ago. The Lord has also spoken things to me by His Spirit, and when He does it can be a lot louder than a spoken voice.

They say it is one of the hardest things for a parent to lose a child. I can't empathise because I've never had any children. I think you just need to ask the Lord to give you peace about your daughter.

I'll tell you this for the sake of honesty though. My dad is not saved. But, he is a good guy and very generous. I have prayed for him over the past 20 years that he would be saved. For a while he even started going to church. A few years ago I really believe the Lord told me to stop praying for him. Maybe I am wrong it was really the voice of the enemy. I still believe it was the Lord. My dad's attitude now is that I should just respect his opinion about life after death and he will respect mine. This is what he says about it when I talk to him about it. So, only God can deal with him now. I still occasionally pray that he will be saved, but the Lord will have to do something supernatural for that to happen.

Re: , on: 2011/7/16 10:49

Bless you brother Sherid. I think you are talking about something that many missionaries encounter in the field. They say that the people are religious or they are stuck in catholicism. I especially hear this about Central and South American countries. You can bet though that there are many believers on Cook Island that have a closer walk with the Lord Jesus Christ and want to know Him more. I hope that you will have fellowship with those people and be encouraged.

- posted by carters (), on: 2011/7/16 18:51

Re: , on: 2011/7/16 20:00

Quote:

-----I still occasionally pray that he will be saved, but the Lord will have to do something supernatural for that to happen.

As is the case with any and every salvation, if that gives you any hope.

Re: , on: 2011/7/17 0:13

Sherid, I think you are right to keep yourself from any association with things like that that are probably demonic. I tend to be very skeptical of people who say their loved one came and visited them after they died. I do find Don Piper to be credible. But that's just my opinion. I have also been skeptical of "Lord of the Rings" stuff, and I certainly hate the Harry Potter stuff. I just don't allow myself to get involved with anything I think could possibly have a demonic attachment. However, I think there are some really good deliverance ministries, and there are some that aren't so good. I just can't put everything in 2 separate boxes. Life isn't that simple. In the case of King Saul I do believe it was a very rare exception of the Lord working through a witch. Otherwise, 1 Samuel 15:35 is a lie. But, are you the type that takes the Bible literally or believe it is open to interpretation? Tonight I was listening to a sermon where the fellow said Jesus didn't really mean it when He said to pluck out your eye if it offends you because it's better to enter heaven with one eye than to go to hell with both eyes. Is it possible that Jesus really did mean it though? I mean was Jesus one given to exaggeration? I don't think so. It's just that few of us have the guts to pluck out an eye or cut off a hand. But maybe I am wrong.

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2011/7/17 7:28

Hi All,
Just catching up on this post.
Saul believed that Samuel could be called up, The witch believed she could call him up. They could have had wrong beliefs of course. Also Abraham's Bosom although being the good half of captivity was still not under full control of God. It was still in captivity.
I've leaned to the simple reading of the verses, that it happened the way it happened but I couldn't be sure to be honest, Yours Staff

Re: - posted by staff, on: 2011/7/17 7:32

Hi Sorry one other thing,
Why didn't the Spirit give deceptive advice if it were false? Thanks Staff