

God Not Answering Saul

by Chuck Smith

Saul's story serves as a warning to us about the importance of obedience and the consequences of disobedience.

Duration: 25:04

Scripture: 1 Samuel 28:3, Psalm 51:1-4, Proverbs 3:5-6, Matthew 6:33, John 10:10, Romans 8:29, Philippians 2:5

Topics: "Saul"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the story of Saul in 1 Samuel chapter 28. Saul is facing a daunting battle against the Philistines, but he is filled with fear and his heart trembles. He seeks guidance from the Lord, but God does not answer him. This is because Saul had rebelled against God and refused to obey His commands. Despite Saul's desperate attempts to seek guidance, he is left without any divine intervention.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
Welcome to The Word for Today, the broadcast ministry of Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California. Pastor Chuck is currently leading us on a verse-by-verse venture through the entire Bible. And on today's edition of The Word for Today, we find God not answering Saul as we pick up in 1 Samuel 28, verse 3. And now with today's message, here is Pastor Chuck Smith.

Now Samuel the prophet was dead, and all of Israel had lamented him and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away all of those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards out of the land. That is, people who were dabbling in spiritism.

The mediums, or the witches, who would contact the dead and be channelers. People whose bodies became possessed by the demons who spoke declaring to be Ramtha or some other spirit. The Philistines gathered themselves together and came and pitched in Shunem.

And Saul gathered all of Israel together and they pitched in Gelboz, so they're getting ready to face off in this gigantic battle. And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by the Urim, nor by the prophets.

So Saul was seeking guidance from the Lord, but God was no longer speaking to Saul. Saul had rebelled against God. Saul refused to obey the command of God.

He had been rejected by God because he had rejected God. And so here he is seeking, and it is interesting, these are the three of the ways by which they sought guidance from God, through dreams, or through the Urim, which was going to the priest and him having this little Urim that he wore on the ephod, on his chest, and they believed that it was probably two stones, a white stone and a black stone. You ask a question and pull out a stone.

If it's the white stone, the answer is yes. If it's the black stone, the answer is no. Thus they inquired of the Lord, or oftentimes God would speak to them through prophets.

Now with Saul, God wasn't speaking. No prophets. He wouldn't respond through the Urim, nor was there any dreams.

And thus Saul said to his servant, seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, or a demon spirit, that I may go to her and inquire of her. And his servant said to him, behold, there is a woman that has a demon spirit or familiar spirit at Endor, which was not that far from Gilboa, where Saul was camped with his men. And so 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 your familiar spirit, and bring me up the one that I shall name unto thee. And the woman said unto him, behold, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off all of those that have the familiar spirits and the wizards out of the land. Wherefore then are you trying to trap me for my life to cause me to die? And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, as the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to you for this thing.

Then the woman said unto him, whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, bring up Samuel. Now, there are those today who purportedly contact the spirits of the dead. And there are people who go to them in order to contact some dead relative.

And these people gain credence by oftentimes when in this trance and supposedly the voice of your dead relative begins to speak to you, they will talk to you about incidences of the past of which only you and this person were familiar with. This is done quite often by demonic spirits. And oftentimes these people who are the mediums are really demon possessed.

They are able to reveal startling and interesting facts of the past. And because of this, people are deceived into believing that they are actually contacting the spirits of their dead relatives. There's nothing new about this.

It's been around since the beginning almost. There are laws against this in the book of Deuteronomy. And so it's existed from way back when.

This witch of Endor was such a medium. She was possessed by a demon spirit and did have powers, demonic powers. Now, when Saul came to her, he requested that she bring back the spirit of the man that he would name.

And she said, well, you know that King Saul has ordered all of the witches put to death. And he swore unto her, and interesting, in this interesting, he swore unto her by the Lord that she wouldn't be put to death.

Now, an interesting thing also.

You remember when Saul came back from the destruction of the Amalekites where God said, utterly destroy them. Don't leave anyone alive. The Amalekites were still alive.

David was making raids against the Amalekites. And we're going to find where the Amalekites made a raid against David. They were left alive.

Saul did not obey the voice of God. In fact, interestingly enough, Saul was killed by an Amalekite. Now, Amalek was a type of the flesh.

He was told to utterly destroy them, utterly destroy the flesh. In failing to do so, he was destroyed by an Amalekite. Interesting.

If you don't bring the flesh to the cross, the flesh can destroy you. The flesh life can destroy your spiritual walk. So how important.

Now, remember though, when he disobeyed, he didn't obey the command of God, and Samuel came out to meet him. And he said, as the Lord liveth, I've done everything the Lord commanded me. And he said, if you've done everything the Lord commanded, then how come I hear the sheep and the cattle? And he said, oh, I brought these back to sacrifice them to God.

And he said, to obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. Already he had been guilty of a similar type of sin.

Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. And here he is now consulting the witch, entering into witchcraft. So she said, who do you want me to bring up for you? And he said, Samuel.

So she went into her trance. And as she did, she saw Samuel. And when she saw Samuel, she screamed with a loud voice.

She was probably shocked herself that it worked. And the woman spoke to Saul. And she said, why have you deceived me? You're Saul.

And the king said unto her, cool it, lady. What did you see? Don't be afraid. And the woman said unto Saul, I saw God's ascending out of the earth.

He said unto her, what form was he? And she said, he was an old man who was coming up. He's covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel.

And he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed himself. Now, it doesn't say that Saul saw him. Her description, he perceived that it was Samuel.

I find something interesting here. And I question that he would still look like an old man in the spirit state. I don't think that you're going to ever be in eternity in the state in which you die.

Otherwise, it would be better for all of us to kick off at about 25 or so, you know. You know, it couldn't have been his body. That was already decayed in some sarcophagus someplace.

She sees this old man with a mantle. Interesting. And you can do with it whatever you want.

But he began to speak to Saul. And Samuel said to Saul, why have you disturbed me to bring me up? Now, prior, of course, to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, everyone who died went into Sheol, into Hades. Why have you disquieted me or disturbed me to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am distressed.

For the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me. Oh, what a tragedy. How sad and tragic the life when God is departed from a person.

He doesn't answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. You know, he had killed 85 of the priests of God. He had wiped out these men of God.

So there's really no men of God around to speak to him. And he has not spoken to me by dreams or by prophets. Therefore, I've called thee that you might make known to me what I shall do.

And then Samuel said, why do you ask this of me, seeing that the Lord is departed from you and has become your enemy? The Lord has done unto you even as he spoke to you by me, for the Lord has rent the kingdom or torn the kingdom out of your hand and has given it unto your neighbor, even unto David. Because, and this is the reason why God took the kingdom from him, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord, nor did you execute his fierce judgment or wrath upon Amalek. Therefore hath the Lord done this unto thee this day.

Moreover, the Lord will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. Saul, you've had it, man. And the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hands of the Philistines.

And so, what news could be worse? It was so awesome that Saul just fainted. He just fell on the ground, the full length of his body along the earth. And he was sore afraid because of the words of Samuel.

There was no strength in him, for he had not eaten any bread all that day or all that night. And the woman came unto Saul, and she saw that he was sore troubled, and she said unto him, behold, your handmaid has obeyed your voice, and I've put my life in my hand, and I have hearkened unto your words which you spoke to me. Now therefore I pray thee, hearken thou to the voice of your handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before you, and eat that you may have strength that you might go on your way.

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

And the woman had a fat calf in the house, and she hurried and killed it, and took the flour, and kneaded it, and baked some unleavened bread. Didn't have time for the bread to rise. And she brought it before Saul and before his servants, and they did eat.

And he rose up and went away that night. And so things are closing in on Saul, but meantime we go back to David. Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek.

And the Israelites pitched by the fountain which is in Jezreel. They're up in the middle part of the kingdom in the valley of Armageddon, Ezra, Jezreel, in the area of Mount Gilboa. And the lords of the Philistines passed on by the hundreds and by the thousands.

But David and his men passed in the rearward with Achish. So David was bringing up the rear with Achish. And the princes of the Philistines said, What are these Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul, the king of Israel, which hath been with me for these years? And I have found no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day.

Of course he had been deceived by David, but he said, Hey, this is David who came to live with me, you know, and he's a good man. The princes of the Philistines were angry with Achish. And the princes of the Philistines said unto him, Get rid of this guy, that he may go again to the place which you have appointed him, and let him not go with us into battle, lest in the battle he turn against us and be our adversary.

For why should he not reconcile unto his master? Should it not be with the heads of these men? In other words, what better way could he make up with Saul than in the midst of battle turn and cut our heads off? You know, and so no way will we allow him to go into battle with us. Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in their dances, saying, Saul has killed his thousands, and David his tens of thousands? Then Achish called David and said to him, Surely, as the Lord liveth, you have been upright. You're going out and you're coming in with me, and the host is good in my sight.

For I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming unto me, unto this day. Nevertheless, the lords do not favor you. Wherefore, now return and go in peace, that you not displease the Lord of the Philistines.

And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? And what have you found in your servants so long as I have been with you unto this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my Lord the King? And here we find David at the lowest. You see, ultimately, he went to fight against God with the enemies of God. He had sunk so low, and we watched his progress downward, that now he calls God's people his enemies, or the enemies of my King, and I'm ready to go and fight against the enemies of my Lord the King, and announces that Achish is his Lord, his King, and he's ready to fight against the enemies of Achish.

The sad, tragic thing is that many times when a person turns away from the path of God, he never intended to go as far as he does. He didn't intend to get this involved. He didn't intend to get so far enmeshed in that sin, that one day he would turn his back upon God and become an enemy to God, or to the people of God.

Finding himself now in that position of fighting against the people of God, he has come to rock bottom. This is as low as David could sink. But Achish answered and said to David, I know that you are good in my sight, as an angel of God.

Oh man, how David had him fooled. I mean, you know, people like to put on this kind of a holy aura, though, you know, I'm like an angel of God, I'm so holy and so good, and here he's lying through his teeth to the guy, and deceiving him, and doing all these dastardly things, and yet, you know, his appearance before Achish is just, you know, like this noble man who's out ripping off all the Israelites and bringing me the loot, you know. Notwithstanding, the princes of the Philistines have said he will not go with us into battle.

Therefore, rise up early in the morning with your servants that have come with you, and as soon as it is light, depart. So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines, and the Philistines went up to Jezreel. So David parted from their company, went on back, and

we see him at the bottom, at the bottom of his career.

And next we see where God restores David. And this is the beautiful thing. You see, if the Bible didn't give us this insight of David, if the Bible only gave us the victories, only gave us his strong faith in God and trust in God, if we only had the Psalms, you know, and didn't know all of these other things about David's life, we think, wow, wouldn't it be great to be like David, so God could use me.

But I know God can't use me because, man, you know, I've told lies, and I've failed. You know, my faith was weak, and God can't use me. Oh, if my faith were only strong like David's, always strong, then God could use me.

But you see, God points out that David had his flaws. In fact, some of them much worse than yours. And yet God used David.

We'll return with more of our verse-by-verse study of 1 Samuel in our next lesson, as we follow the restoring of David. We do hope you'll make plans to join us. But right now, I'd like to remind you that if you missed any part of today's message, or perhaps you'd like to order a copy for that special friend or loved one, you can do so by simply contacting one of our customer service representatives, and they'd be more than happy to assist you with the ordering details.

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And be sure to join us again next time as Pastor Chuck Smith continues his verse-by-verse study through the book of 1 Samuel. That's right here on the next edition of The Word for Today. And now, once again, here's Pastor Chuck Smith with today's closing comments.

Being weak, failing, does not disqualify me. If I will yield my life to God, if I will just repent of my sin and ask God's forgiveness, God will use me as His instrument to do His work. And God can still use you.

God is forgiving, and God is merciful. And may God help us to guard against despair, discouragement, fear, that lack of faith and trust in the promises of God that would drive me to try to do things on my own because that is the beginning of the path that if I follow it will lead me to the bottom. As we look around at Christian women today, we see many who know nothing about the abundant life that Jesus came to bring them.

Their lives are less satisfying, less fulfilling, less joyful, and less God-honoring than it could be, than it should be. For this reason, Kay Smith has written a new book for women entitled *Reflecting God*. In it, she shares about the godly attributes necessary to reflect God Applying Kay's teaching on God's attributes, women will begin to have the mind of Christ.

And as this starts to happen in you, from the inside out, you will become a reflection of God to a world that desperately needs Him. For more information on how to order your copy, visit us online at thewordfortoday.org or call toll-free at 1-800-272-WORD. That's 1-800-272-9673.

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