

After God's Own Heart: The Life of David

Lesson 7: The End of Saul's Life

Saul's Desperation (28:1-10)

- At the time when David is with the Philistines, they gather around the Israelites. Remember, Saul had stopped chasing David once he found out David was in Gath (27:4). Once again, he was afraid of the Philistines.
- David had relied on Samuel – so did Saul. David was desperate to hear confirmation of God's promises, and God spoke to him through Abigail. Saul is also desperate, so he does something unthinkable for a king.
- Notice what Saul is doing – he does not look like a King of Israel. He is sneaking out at night, disguised, visiting someone who practices witchcraft (who would likely have already been thrown out of Israel by Saul himself), and seeking to do something he knew was against God's will. His transformation from confident king to paranoid leader is almost complete.
- Saul even invokes God's name to tell her that she would not be punished for witchcraft. He would have known God's law (Deuteronomy 18:9-14).
- What are some things we turn to when we feel desperate?

Samuel's Appearance (28:11-25)

- As we consider this episode, we ask the question, did this woman have powers? Here are two things to consider – 1. She seemed just as surprised as anyone else, letting out a cry when she saw Samuel, 2. Samuel's message sounds a lot like a prophecy from God (for instance, in verse 18 Samuel refers to what God has done to him "in that day").
- Based on those details, it seems reasonable to believe that this woman did not "bring up" Samuel, but that God allowed Samuel to be used one more time to deliver a message to Saul.
- In verse 17, Samuel confirmed Saul's worst fears – the Israelites had been given over to David. God had already ordained it, and there was nothing Saul was going to be able to do about it.
- After hearing this prophecy, the strength goes out of Saul. He had not eaten, and was severely fatigued. Can you think of a time in your life when you felt like Saul? When you something happened that just caused the strength to go out of you? What should we do in those kinds of situations?

Saul's Death (31)

- Saul knew this would happen, and you can imagine what he thought as the battle with the Philistines begins to go against him.
- Even in his death, Saul was afraid of the embarrassment that might come. He wanted to be killed first so that they would not make sport of him.
- Did it have to end this way for Saul? What could he have done in reaction to everything that happened to him?