



5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Return From the Grave

¹⁰⁻¹¹Don't sacrifice your son or daughter. And don't try to use any kind of magic or witchcraft to tell fortunes or to cast spells or to talk with spirits of the dead.

¹²The Lord is disgusted with anyone who does these things..."
(Deuteronomy 18:10-12 Contemporary English Version)

(1 Samuel 28:1-3, 5-20 CEV)

¹⁻³Samuel (a prophet of God) had died some time earlier, and people from all over Israel had attended his funeral in his hometown of Ramah.

Meanwhile, Saul had been trying to get rid of everyone who spoke with the spirits of the dead. But one day the Philistines brought their soldiers together to attack Israel.

⁵Saul took one look at the Philistine army and started shaking with fear. ⁶So he asked the Lord what to do. But the Lord would not answer, either in a dream or by a priest or a prophet. ⁷Then Saul told his officers, 'Find me a woman who can talk to the spirits of the dead. I'll go to her and find out what's going to happen.'

His servants told him, 'There's a woman at Endor who can talk to spirits of the dead.'

⁸That night, Saul put on different clothing so nobody would recognize him. Then he and two of his men went to the woman, and asked, 'Will you bring up the ghost of someone for us?'

⁹The woman said, 'Why are you trying to trick me and get me killed? You know King Saul has gotten rid of everyone who talks to the spirits of the dead!'

¹⁰Saul replied, 'I swear by the living Lord that nothing will happen to you because of this.'

¹¹'Who do you want me to bring up?' she asked.

'Bring up the ghost of Samuel,' he answered.

¹²When the woman saw Samuel, she screamed. Then she turned to Saul and said, 'You've tricked me! You're the king!'

¹³'Don't be afraid,' Saul replied. 'Just tell me what you see.'

She answered, 'I see a spirit rising up out of the ground.'

¹⁴'What does it look like?'

'It looks like an old man wearing a robe.'

Saul knew it was Samuel, so he bowed down low.

¹⁵'Why are you bothering me by bringing me up like this?' Samuel asked.

'I'm terribly worried,' Saul answered. 'The Philistines are about to attack me. God has turned his back on me and won't answer any more by prophets or by dreams. What should I do?'

¹⁶Samuel said:

If the Lord has turned away from you and is now your enemy, don't ask me what to do. ¹⁷I've already told you: The Lord has sworn to take the kingdom from you and give it to David. And that's just what he's doing! ¹⁸When the Lord was angry with the Amalekites, he told you to destroy them, but you didn't do it. That's why the Lord is doing this to you. ¹⁹Tomorrow the Lord will let the Philistines defeat Israel's army, then you and your sons will join me down here in the world of the dead.

²⁰At once, Saul collapsed and lay stretched out on the floor, terrified at what Samuel had said..." (1 Samuel 28:1-3, 5-20 CEV)

Saul had sinned and turned away from the LORD. He had broken God's commands and had practiced necromancy (the consulting of the dead). The LORD our God is a jealous God and wants us to follow only Him (See Exodus 34:14 & 2 Corinthians 11:2).

Only the One who has returned permanently from the grave by God's will and design is worthy to be followed (Revelation 4:11; 5:9; 5:12). He is Jesus, God's anointed Messiah (Acts 2:36 NLT). As great as the prophet Samuel was, God has spoken his final word through His Son (Hebrews 2:2-3). Listen to Him! (Mark 9:7)

Questions

1 Why do you think God has told us to only listen to Jesus?

2 What did the spirit of Samuel say to Saul?

Answer Key

1 Why do you think God has told us to only listen to Jesus?

“Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)

2 What did the spirit of Samuel say to Saul?

“Samuel said:

If the Lord has turned away from you and is now your enemy, don’t ask me what to do.” (1 Samuel 28:16 CEV)

It was too late for Saul to change and turn to God, but it’s not too late for you!

We want to hear from you!

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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