

Sept 13th 2009: 1 Sam 28:3-25: "Saul's Tormented Soul"

The chapter of scripture.... looking at (1 Sam 28)...is a very interesting one... also very sad one
It holds no fairy tale ending.....just hopelessness and despair

It's about Saul.. who**because of his pride**...arrogance... refusal to listen and submit to God
...ended his life as a blubbering wreck of a man....with no hope

Saul had everything going for him as a young man....**He was** taller....Strong....handsome
When he was set apart as king.....he soon received the support of the people.
& He was assisted in his early years.....by one of the most capable prophets

But Saul found it hard to follow the Lord with all his heart

He liked to be the one in control....the one making decisions
Worship and spirituality were not his priority.....But things to be manipulated...own ends

- **From the beginning....it seems**.....he never had a strong, practical trust in God
Instead it was in himself....His own scheming
Following God's instructions only when they suited him.....and even then....half heartedly

He surrounded himself with those who supported

And hated with a murderous passion.....those like David.....whom he saw as threats
He disobeyed God's specific commands more than once
He lied to God
He disregarded God's Prophet
He slaughtered God's Priests
He attempted to murder God's anointed

- **Finally God sent Samuel to Saul.....**with the news that he was rejected as king
But Saul chose to disregard this completely
It is as though he didn't take it seriously—Samuel walked away.....and Saul let him

No thought of repentance.....No desire to be reconciled

So many like Saul in our world.....Living their own lives....according to their own rules
Refusing to believe that the day could ever come.....when God would reject them...a/c of sin

Then came the time for Saul....that chapter 28 speaks of.....when he hits rock bottom
The Philistine armies have come out in force against Israel....and Saul is afraid

28:5 says that terror filled his heart

So Saul....in desperation....inquires of the Lord

28:6 says

He inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him by dreams or Urim or prophets.

- **It may come as a surprise**.....that the Lord refused to answer him

We tend to think that if anyone approaches God.....God will hear Him.....**immense** degree...true

But there is one thing that God takes into consideration....before He answers
And that is what's happening in one's heart

Not whether there is sin.....**but** whether there is a seeking....comes out of brokenness

David knew that.....

Like Saul David also went through a period of arrogance....pride....disobedience

His sins also involved murder and hypocrisy::::**But** he knew the power of repentance

Psalm 66:17-20 ***I cried out to him with my mouth;
his praise was on my tongue. If I had cherished sin in my heart,
the Lord would not have listened; but God has surely listened
and heard my voice in prayer. Praise be to God,
who has not rejected my prayer
or withheld his love from me!***

Saul cherished sin.....

When he came to God.....he came as one who expected God to jump when he called

And when God didn't.....Saul already had a plan B in mind

A plan that he knew.....was as anti-God as any plan could be→entered domain of Satan

Twice we are reminded in this chapter..... that Saul had expelled the mediums and spiritists on the basis of God's commands found 3x's in Leviticus....once in Deut 18:10-13....which reads:

Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD, and because of these detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the LORD your God.

Leviticus 20:6 says:

'I will set my face against the person who turns to mediums and spiritists to prostitute himself by following them, and I will cut him off from his people.

Saul knew how wrong it was.....but rather than come in repentance before God
Rather than deal with the sin in his life.....he took a path that left him facing imminent death
...already judged and condemned... **terrified** yet still unrepentant

I've heard of Christians who have sought out Clairvoyants.....mediums.....horoscopes
And I've never been able to understand that.....when God's instructions are so clear

- **The last word we have about** Saul is contained in 1 Chronicles 10:13-14:-
Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance, and did not inquire of the LORD. So the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse.

Concerning this story....question asked about the medium.....**Did** she really have the power to call

From the account.....it seems she was alarmed when she saw the form appear
She talks about seeing a spirit....a god ..coming up out of.....**suggesting that more happened..**

And therefore most suggest that what happened here was **God allowed....or God's doing**

If ...God's doing.....then it was really Samuel....**but** somehow that doesn't ring true for me
Samuel comes out of the ground

He is grumpy

Saul never sees him but relies on the description.....**Not really Sam but an imposter**

I sense that God allowed this deception on the part of the evil spirits...for His own purposes
And to serve as a warning to us.....that there is an evil power behind these manifestations
.....and we should keep away from them... and encourage others to do so too

That's one lesson this story teaches.....and to gain that.....is to do well

- **Yet it also teaches us:.....**:and this is a much more import lesson.....that God is not in the business of jumping.....**just because** someone calls out to Him...**misconception**

He is holy....and if there is continued deliberate sin.....

If there is no appreciation of the need for repentance.....Then God may well choose not to answer

I was reading this week about 4 Passions.....that should be strong in every follower:

1. **The passion for Purity**.....God has already purified us through.....He looks upon us....Whatever sin we commit....as pure in Christ....

Yet He wants us to yearn to be pure in our living...our thinking.....our acting
That's why He has given us His Holy Spirit.....so that we live out purity...as Christ did

2. **The passion to Trust**.....To trust God first....in every situation we find ourselves
How ever bad...or scarey...or potentially life threatening that may be

3. **The Passion to Grow**.....To become every day more knowledgeable....**More aware**
More confident in His love.

4. **The Passion to obey**.....That obeying our Lordbecomes the chief end in our lives
The number one priority that comes before self seeking....self preservation.

These passions were so obviously lacking in Saul.....but thankfully.....they are in those who
In the knowledge of that....let us go into a new week.....determined to stir up those passions

So that God will promote in us.....His glory