



September 14, 2014

1 Samuel 28

“The Life and Legacy of Saul”

Pastor Gary Hamrick

The closing chapters of 1 Samuel complete the story of the tragic end of a man who started out well. It’s true that Saul was a man who was initially reluctant to be the king of Israel, who was filled with God’s Spirit, and even prophesied in God’s name, but he is also a man who allowed pride, arrogance, rebellion and jealousy to fill his heart, and these were the things that contributed to Saul’s epitaph, which Pastor Gary suggested might read like this:

Here lies the first king of Israel, named Saul
His body was hung on a wall
No longer a crown
Or ruling a town
Rebellion and sin brought him down

Saul’s life should cause us to ask ourselves serious questions about the legacy we will leave behind when this life is over. We should consider what others would write on our headstone, were they afforded the opportunity, because we are all living and leaving a legacy of some kind.

In this study we’ll discover what the five words are that describe the sad conclusion of Saul’s life: disobedient, desperate, distressed, distraught, and defeated.

Saul Was A Disobedient Man

1. Pastor Gary’s message from [1 Samuel 15](#)¹ revealed the ways the Bible describes Saul as being what some might call a “90% guy.”

¹ June 29, 2014 – http://cornerstonechapel.net/?page_id=21

- a. Saul was faithful to God about 90% of the time, but the other 10% of the time he did things his way, and that rebellious streak became worse over time, until it cost him the kingdom.
 - b. Examples of Saul's disobedience include:
 - i. He disobeyed God when he spared Agag, king of the Amalekites, and the best of their livestock.
 - ii. He disobeyed God when he became impatient, and assumed the role of a priest when he sacrificed offerings instead of waiting for Samuel.
 - iii. He disobeyed God when he had 85 priests of the Lord murdered, in addition to having the entire town of Nob wiped out because they had given shelter and food to David and his men.
 - iv. He disobeyed God when he tried to kill David on numerous occasions.
2. As if these things weren't bad enough, now we see Saul disobeying God by consulting a medium for advice, which was clearly forbidden in Scripture, because real mediums and spiritists tap into the demonic realm.
 3. **Deuteronomy 18:9-11** - *"When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. 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."*
 4. **Leviticus 19:31** - *"Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God."*
 5. We know that Saul knew what God said about mediums and spiritists because he had outlawed these practices in all of Israel.
 6. **1 Samuel 28:9** - *"But the woman said to him, 'Surely you know what Saul has done. He has cut off the mediums and spiritists from the land. Why have you set a trap for my life to bring about my death?'"*
 7. If Saul had any understanding of what was going on, the medium's comments should have caused him to hightail it out there, not just because she reminded him about the law, but also because she didn't recognize him!
 - a. It should be pointed out that this woman must not have been the best at her craft, because she didn't see through Saul's disguise!
 - b. This account should help illustrate the fact that being a medium does not depend on good intuition or common sense, but being a good medium depends on tapping into the demonic.

- c. Pastor Gary elaborated on this point when he said what's being described in the Bible is not card tricks and pulling a rabbit out of a hat; it's demonic power, Satanic rituals, and channeling forces of evil, all of which the Bible calls witchcraft, sorcery, and divination.
 - d. All of these things still exist today, it's just that we may be desensitized to them or we dismiss them as being harmless.
 - e. People should be warned not to have anything to do with Ouija boards, tarot cards, psychic readings, and the like.
 - f. We need to be careful that people like the "Long Island Medium" are not dismissed as being completely fraudulent, because if you've ever heard the details of some of their encounters or readings, you will see that they know things about people's deceased loved ones that only that person would know.
 - g. In these situations it's something or someone who is telling them those things, and that can only be described as being demonic, because demons are familiar with life on earth, and they can see into our world, even though we can't see into their world.
 - h. When a psychic or medium tells someone things about their deceased "Uncle Charlie" that they wouldn't normally know, what happens is the psychic or medium has tapped into the demonic, which is familiar with "Uncle Charlie's" life before he died.
8. When Saul asked his attendants where he could find a medium, they immediately came up with the Witch of Endor.
- a. **1 Samuel 28:7** - *"Saul then said to his attendants, 'Find me a woman who is a medium, so I may go and inquire of her.' 'There is one in Endor,' they said."*
 - b. Endor was in Philistine territory, about eight miles north of Saul's position at Mount Gilboa.

Saul Was A Desperate Man

9. It's not hard to recognize the fact that desperate people do desperate and foolish things, because they hit the panic button instead of crying out to God.
10. The best advice we can follow when we are in a desperate situation is to run to God, not away from him.
11. **Psalm 142:5-6a** - *"I cry to you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.' Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need..."*

12. What happened next, in [1 Samuel 28:12-20](#), was probably the most shocking event in the medium's life, because she expected the normal demonic spirit, but what she actually got was a real encounter with Samuel, who came back from the dead.
13. The great debate in this chapter centers on whether the medium actually saw Samuel or a demon, and Pastor Gary said he believed the reasons God allowed the appearance of Samuel to be a unique, onetime event, was for the following reasons:
 - a. The medium was shocked because the appearance of Samuel differed from anything she had experienced before.
 - b. Samuel invoked the name of the Lord seven times in what he said to Saul.
 - c. There is a prophetic element about what Samuel said to Saul, which is something demons can't do, i.e. Saul and his sons would die the next day and the army of Israel would be defeated by the Philistines.
 - d. This seems to be a unique allowance by God for the spirit of Samuel to speak like he did for the purpose of shaming the medium and warning Saul one final time.

Saul Was A Distressed Man

14. Panic, fear, and terror ruled Saul's life, and he didn't feel this way just because the Philistines were upon him.
 - a. [1 Samuel 28:5](#) - *"When Saul saw the Philistine army, he was afraid; terror filled his heart."*
15. The real distress in Saul's life was rooted in the fact that he had broken fellowship with God, who no longer answered him because of Saul's stubborn refusal to repent and humble himself.
16. "Look within and be depressed; look without and be distressed; look at Jesus and be at rest." - Corrie ten Boom ²
17. Saul had no rest because he no longer looked to the Lord, and when a person is out of fellowship with God, they will always find themselves the most distressed.
18. Samuel laid out the consequences for living a life of rebellion towards God, when he told Saul that he had made God his enemy, that he and his sons were going to die in battle the next day, and the army of Israel would fall to the Philistines.

² <http://www.corrietenboom.com/history.htm>

- a. [1 Samuel 28:16-20](#) - *“Samuel said, ‘Why do you consult me, now that the Lord has turned away from you and become your enemy? The Lord has done what he predicted through me. The Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hands and given it to one of your neighbors - to David. Because you did not obey the Lord or carry out his fierce wrath against the Amalekites, the Lord has done this to you today. The Lord will hand over both Israel and you to the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also hand over the army of Israel to the Philistines.’ Immediately Saul fell full length on the ground, filled with fear because of Samuel’s words. His strength was gone, for he had eaten nothing all that day and night.”*

Saul Was A Distraught Man

19. [1 Samuel 31:8-13](#) - *“The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. They cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and they sent messengers throughout the land of the Philistines to proclaim the news in the temple of their idols and among their people. They put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths and fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan. When the people of Jabesh Gilead heard of what the Philistines had done to Saul, all their valiant men journeyed through the night to Beth Shan. They took down the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beth Shan and went to Jabesh, where they burned them. Then they took their bones and buried them under a tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and they fasted seven days.”*

Saul Was A Defeated Man

20. Simply put, the life Saul lived was the legacy he left.

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [1 Samuel 28:1-11](#) to provide an overview for this study.

3. Read and talk about the memorable obituaries Pastor Gary shared in his message.
 - a. Here lies Butch
We planted him raw
He was quick on the trigger
But slow on the draw ³
 - b. Here lies the body of Margaret Bent
She kicked up her heels
And away she went ⁴
 - c. Sir John Strange
Here lies an honest lawyer
And that is Strange
 - d. Jedidiah Goodwin
Auctioneer
Born 1828
Going!
Going!!
Gone!!
1876
 - e. Here lies Lester Moore
Four slugs from a .44
No Les
No more ⁵
 - f. Here lies an Atheist
All dressed up
And no place to go ⁶
4. How would you define the word, legacy?
5. Do you think most people think about a legacy as being primarily about leaving wealth or possessions to loved ones?
6. How has the Lord worked in your life to help you change your legacy?
7. Read and discuss [Deuteronomy 18:9-11](#) and [Leviticus 19:31](#).
8. Have you ever consulted a psychic reader or spiritual medium, and if you have, please share more about your thought process and mindset, which led to you to come to the conclusion that you needed their consultation.

³ Boot Hill Cemetery, Tombstone, Arizona

⁴ Winterbourne Steepleton Cemetery, Dorsetshire, England

⁵ Boot Hill Cemetery, Tombstone, Arizona

⁶ Cemetery in Thurmont, Maryland

9. What are some of the reasons people have a fascination with TV shows that deal with the supernatural/occult, etc.?
10. To whom do you “run” when you are in trouble or a difficult situation?
11. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about times when they’ve either run to the Lord or to some one or some thing.
12. Read and discuss [Psalm 142:5-6a](#).
13. Spend time talking about the Corrie ten Boom quote Pastor Gary shared. (See #16 above)
14. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: to stop any and all involvement they may have with the occult, so they would eliminate the possibility of opening the door to demonic influence in their life; turn from a life of disobedience and turn to a life of holiness and godliness; come to the Lord in times of desperation and distress; seek the help of the Holy Spirit to make the necessary changes in their life so they will leave a godly legacy.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).