

STORACLES OF PROPHECY

The Witch of Endor

1 Samuel 28:3-25

The Story . . .

King Saul was at his wit's end and trembling with fear. The entire Philistine army had gathered to attack Israel's smaller and weaker troops. Saul moaned, "If only Samuel were here, he would tell me what to do." But the great prophet of Israel had died a few years earlier.

The aged monarch tried desperately to find some advice or guidance from other prophets or priests, but the Lord would not speak to him. As a young man, Saul had been close to God.

But after ascending the throne, he became cruel and rebelled against God's Word. Once he even had a whole village of priests murdered. King Saul had persistently refused to listen to the Lord, and now in his distress, God would not answer him.

"Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her." 1 Samuel 28:7. God had clearly commanded His people never to consult a witch or medium (Leviticus 19:31; 20:27), but Saul now had little regard for God's implicit instruction.

Upon finding a woman in Endor who claimed to consult with the dead, the king disguised himself and went to

see her. He said to the medium, "Bring me up Samuel." The witch went through her spells and enchantments until an apparition claiming to be Samuel the prophet appeared and gave the king an utterly hopeless message. It predicted that Saul and his three sons would die in battle the next day.

The following day Saul's sons were slain by the Philistines, and afterward the wounded and discouraged king fell on his sword and took his own life (1 Samuel 31:2-4). Who spoke to Saul through the witch—a resurrected prophet of God, or a devil in disguise?



AMAZING FACTS

The Study

Fill in the blanks after reading each Bible text.

1. Was the form that Saul saw actually Samuel the prophet?

1 Kings 22:22 And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a _____ in the mouth of all his prophets.

Revelation 16:14 For they are the _____ of _____, working miracles.

2. Do the dead come back to converse with or to haunt the living?

Job 14:21 His sons come to honour, and he _____ it _____; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.

Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10 The dead _____ any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their _____, and their _____, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun [in this life]. ... For there is no work, nor device, nor _____, nor wisdom, in the grave.

NOTE: No! The Bible is clear. A dead person does nothing and knows nothing about what is happening on earth.

Psalm 115:17 The dead praise not the Lord.

Psalm 6:5 In death there is no remembrance of thee.

Job 7:10 He shall return no more to his house.

Isaiah 38:18 Death can not celebrate thee.

Psalm 146:4 His thoughts perish.

3. According to the book of Revelation, who has the keys of death?

Revelation 1:18 I am _____ that _____, and was _____; and, behold, I am alive for evermore ...; and have the keys of hell and of death.

NOTE: The Bible is clear. Only Jesus has the keys of death. We should go to His Word for answers to our questions about death.

4. How did God make man in the beginning?

Genesis 2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the _____ of the ground, and _____ into his nostrils the breath of _____; and man became a living soul.

NOTE: Two things happened at Creation: (1) God formed man from the dust, or earth, and (2) He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Thus man became a living soul.

5. What happens at death?

Ecclesiastes 12:7 Then shall the _____ return to the earth as it was: and the _____ shall return unto God who gave it.

NOTE: What takes place at death is the opposite from what happened during Creation. The body returns to dust and the spirit, or breath, returns to God who gave it. The Bible clearly teaches that the "spirit" that returns to God is simply the breath of life, which God breathed into man in the beginning (James 2:26, margin; Job 27:3, margin; Job 33:4). Psalm 104:29, 30 states: "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit [breath], they are created."

6. Where do the dead go when they die?

Job 21:32 Yet shall he be brought to the _____, and shall remain in the tomb.

John 5:28, 29 All that are _____ the _____ shall hear his voice, And shall come forth.

NOTE: The dead, both righteous and unrighteous, are in their graves and will hear Jesus' voice calling them forth from the grave to reward or punishment.

7. The Bible makes it plain that King David is saved. Is he in heaven now?

Acts 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both _____ and _____, and his sepulchre [tomb] is with us unto this day.

Acts 2:34 For David is _____ into the heavens.

NOTE: No! The apostle Peter plainly stated that David is dead and buried—not alive in heaven. Furthermore, Hebrews 11:32-40 makes it clear that all the faithful of the ages have not yet been rewarded, but rather, will all be rewarded together (verses 39, 40).

8. But isn't it true that the soul is immortal and that only the body dies?

Ezekiel 18:4 The _____ that sinneth, it shall _____.

Job 4:17 Shall _____ man be more just than God?

1 Timothy 6:15, 16 The King of kings, and _____ of lords; Who _____ hath immortality.

NOTE: We are souls, and souls do die. Man is mortal. Only God is immortal. The widely believed teaching of the undying, immortal soul is not found in the Bible. The teaching is man-made.

9. When will the righteous be given immortality?

1 Corinthians 15:51-53 We shall all be _____, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last _____: for

the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be _____
incorruptible, ... and this mortal must put on immortality.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the _____ in Christ shall _____ first.

NOTE: Yes, the righteous will be given immortality at the resurrection. The wicked never receive it.

10. How does the Bible repeatedly refer to death?

John 11:11, 14 Our friend Lazarus _____; ... Lazarus is dead.

Matthew 27:52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which _____ arose.

2 Samuel 7:12 Thou shalt _____ with thy fathers.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 Them also which _____ in Jesus will God bring with him.

NOTE: The Bible often refers to death as sleep. Death is a state of total unconsciousness, during which 15 minutes or a thousand years seem the same. The dead simply “sleep” in their graves until the resurrection, when all will be raised by Jesus. The teaching that the spirits of the dead are heavenly angels, or some righteous ghostlike entity that can be contacted, is without scriptural foundation.

11. Since wizards, witches, and psychics cannot contact the dead, whom are they contacting?

Revelation 16:14 They are the spirits of devils, working _____.

NOTE: Heaven’s angels are called “ministering spirits” (Hebrews 1:14) who help people on earth. The angels who were cast out of heaven with Satan (Revelation 12:7-9) are also spirits—evil spirits who deceive people by working miracles (Revelation 16:13, 14). They use “all power and signs and lying wonders” (2 Thessalonians 2:9), and can even make “fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men” (Revelation 13:13). When psychics claim to be contacting spirits of the dead, they are really in touch with Satan’s fallen angels (Isaiah 8:19, 20).

12. Why does Satan want us to believe that the spirits of the dead are really alive?

Matthew 24:24, 25 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew _____ and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall _____ the very _____. Behold, I have told you before.

NOTE: Satan’s first lie to mankind was “Ye shall not surely die.” Genesis 3:4. He wants people to believe that the spirits of the dead are alive so his angels can pose as saints, prophets, and righteous leaders who have died and so that he can pose as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Thus, he can deceive people by the millions. Utilizing these evil spirits is called “spiritism.” It is based on a two-part belief: (1) the dead are alive, and (2) they can contact you, or you can

contact them. This is one of Satan’s most damaging teachings. Yet almost the whole world believes it today. The witch of Endor did not call up Samuel. Rather, she saw an evil angel who posed as Samuel.

13. How effective will Satan’s use of these evil spirits be in the last days?

Revelation 18:23 By thy sorceries were _____ nations _____.

Revelation 18:2 Babylon the great is fallen, ... and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of _____ foul _____.

Revelation 12:9 That old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the _____ world.

NOTE: By Satan’s miracles (sorceries) through his evil angels, he will deceive virtually the entire world.

14. How does God regard these miracles by evil angels?

Leviticus 20:27 A man also or woman ... that is a _____, shall surely be put to _____.

1 Timothy 4:1 Some shall _____ from the _____, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

Ephesians 5:11 Have no fellowship with the _____ works of _____.

Galatians 5:19-21 The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolotry, _____, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyng, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.

Revelation 21:8 Sorcerers ... shall have their part in the _____ which burneth with _____ and brimstone: which is the second death.

NOTE: In Moses’ day, God commanded that all psychics be put to death. Today He insists that sorcery is a work of the flesh, for which people will be destroyed. He warns that when you dabble with psychics you leave the faith, and He tells us that all sorcerers will die the second death in the lake of fire.

15. What glorious power does God offer His people?

Philippians 3:10 That I may know him, and the power of his _____.

NOTE: Jesus offers us the same power to live right that raised Him from the dead. Fantastic! How can we fail with such incredible power given us—and that with no cost to us? Jesus, because He loves us, solemnly warns us away from the power and miracles of evil angels and offers to work the divine miracles needed to prepare us for His kingdom (Philippians 1:6).

Your Response

Recognizing that God is in full control of earthly events, are you willing to let Him have full control of your life?

ANSWER: _____

Supplement

This section provides additional information for further study.

The Thief on the Cross

Did Jesus promise the thief on the cross immediate access to heaven when He said, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise”? The meaning of Christ’s statement in Luke 23:43 is determined by a scriptural answer to one very important question: Did Jesus Himself go to heaven on that day?

Not according to Scripture. On the day of the resurrection, when He met Mary at the garden tomb, His words were: “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father.” John 20:17. Jesus could not have gone to paradise on Friday if He hadn’t yet ascended to the Father by Sunday!

Why then did Jesus say, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise”? The apparent problem vanishes when you consider that the original Greek manuscripts had no punctuation. The commas and periods were introduced into the text of Scripture by translators, who inserted them where they thought they should be. And believe it or not, a single comma can change the meaning of an entire sentence! The Lord’s statement in Luke 23:43 should read: “Verily I say unto thee today, Thou shalt be with me in paradise.” This is what Jesus was really saying. Today, when all seems lost; today, when I do not look like a Lord or King, and after even My disciples have fled; today, although My hands are nailed to a cross, I can still save you!

Someday that thief, along with all others who have accepted Christ, will claim the promise of the resurrection and be with Jesus in paradise.

What Do the Words “Spirit” and “Breath” Mean in the Bible?

Job 27:3 points out that a person’s “spirit” and “breath” are the same. Job further states that this spirit, or breath, is in his nostrils. Please remember that God placed the “breath” in Adam’s nostrils at Creation (Genesis 2:7). So the spirit that returns to God when a person dies is the breath of life—not a disembodied soul. Never in the Bible is a disembodied soul said to return to God at death.

Where Does the “Soul” Go When a Person Dies?

At Creation, two things combine to make a soul—body and breath. Until these two things combine, a soul does not exist. At death, these two components separate. The body returns to dust, and the breath returns to God. The soul goes nowhere; it simply ceases to exist.