

## The Way to Endor

### 1 Samuel 28:3-8 (KJV)

**3** Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. **4** And the Philistines gathered themselves together, and came and pitched in Shunem: and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they pitched in Gilboa. **5** And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. **6** And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. **7** Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. **8** And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night: and he said, I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee.

In our text, a series of events occur which leaves Saul frightened to death.

He wanted to ask God what he should do to get himself out of the mess he was in, but despite his numerous attempts, God remained silent.

Saul is in big trouble and he couldn't obtain God's divine guidance to lead him out of his problems.

By far, these were the darkest days of Saul's life.

Saul's problems were staggering:

1. The Philistines are waging war against the Israelites, and this time they are very serious about it. The Philistines continually harassed the Israelites throughout the reign of Saul, but this time, it appears the Philistine Kings have determined to break the back of Israel's military might once and for all.

2. Saul may have heard that David is among the Philistines who have assembled to attack Israel. If Saul dreads facing off with this massive Philistine army, he may also be shaken to learn that David is among these Philistines. Our chapter begins with the account of the Philistine king, Achish, informing David that he and his men will go with him to fight against the Israelites.

You can imagine how Saul feels about going up against David, especially after he himself has said to David:

**1 Samuel 24:20 (KJV)** And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand.

3. Saul is aware of the danger he is in and is desperately afraid. You may will remember that Saul seems to have been a fearful person from the beginning. Just ask Goliath.

4. Although Saul now desperately seeks to “inquire of the Lord,” he is not able to get any response from God.

Saul is not accustomed to seeking divine guidance. It was not Saul’s idea to inquire of a ‘seer’ to learn where his father’s lost donkeys might be (1 Samuel 9:5-9). When lots were drawn to learn who God had chosen as Israel’s king, Saul was not a part of that process; he was hiding (10:22).

This also seems to be the conclusion of the author of 1 Chronicles.

### **1 Chronicles 10:13-14 (KJV)**

**13** So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it; **14** And enquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.

Saul, once 'above' the rest, the first King, with the potential to be the best, died in a backslidden state.

I want to preach to somebody.

The Road to Endor is a story about a man who showed us all that backsliding is a process.

Saul started out on the right foot, but Saul's last supper was at the feet of a witch.

You can be here and still be on the road to Endor; it's a process.

Saul cast out all the witches, mediums, and sorcerers that he once called an abomination, but just a few verses later, sought one out for council.

There are steps to backsliding:

1. 'Seek me out a familiar spirit.'

A lot of people search for substitutes in their walk with God. Whether it be changing God

Himself, their church, or what they believe in general. The flesh wants what's convenient and feels good; the spirit wants what's right and best for us.

You cannot just take what you want out of the word of God and forget about the rest. Being a Christian is about building a relationship with Jesus Christ and conforming to the entire word of God. When you pick a choose what you'll adhere to and not, you're putting yourself in God's shoes.

**Matthew 7:22-23 (KJV)**

**22** Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? **23** And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

This was the beginning of Jesus telling the parable of how to build your house. There is no substitute for the truth.

2. When you allow things to creep back into your life that you used to feel convicted about, you're on the road to Endor.

Saul cast out those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land. What he once deemed unrighteous, he now sought out.

3. For Saul to get to the witch of Endor, he traveled by night. He didn't want to be seen.

**1 Thessalonians 5:5 (KJV)** Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Want to know how to check if you are on the road to Endor? Examine your life. Are there things you do in the dark that you don't want anybody to find out about?

Saul tried to cover himself so he would be unrecognizable, but the witch recognized him.

4. Saul had to pass by the gravesite of Samuel on the road to Endor.

Samuel was buried just outside the city of Jerusalem, in Ramah, on the road to Endor.

Oh, let me preach to somebody!

You know you're backsliding when the preaching doesn't affect you anymore, when you don't feel challenged, when you remain unmoved.

**Amos 8:11 (KJV)** Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord:

You need to check yourself if you can sit through the preaching of God's word and not feel compelled to change, conform, or transform.

Saul found himself in that situation, because he failed to listen to his preacher.



Samuel warned him. Samuel told Saul that God said to destroy all the Amalekites, but Saul spared the Agag, the king of the Amalekites.

**1 Samuel 15:26 (KJV)** And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel.

5. He had to pass the altar he built in the beginning of His walk as King.

**1 Samuel 14:35 (KJV)** And Saul built an altar unto the Lord: the same was the first altar that he built unto the Lord.

He built the altar just outside of Jerusalem when the Philistines first attacked.

The same road that led to Samuel's grave was the same road that led past his first altar.

Many people who have backslidden from God admit that it all started when they stopped praying. When you stop praying, the things that didn't bother you before, now do.