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Saul's reign as King of Israel. 12:1-31:13

- David chosen and positioned to be the next king of Israel. 16:1-30:30
- Saul's tragic quest for guidance. 28:3-25
 - At some unknown time in his tenure Saul had given attention to expelling those who practiced forbidden spiritual practices from the land. (*Deuteronomy 18:10-12*)
 - For some undisclosed reason, the Philistines mounted an all-out offensive against Israel.
 - Saul, as many times before, was driven by his fear. (1 Samuel 15:24; 17:11; 18:12,15,29)

3

Saul's reign as King of Israel. 12:1-31:13

- David chosen and positioned to be the next king of Israel. 16:1-30:30
 - Saul's tragic quest for guidance. 28:3-25
 - Saul's continued disobedience had cut him off from hearing from God.
 - God ceases to provide counsel for those who consistently refuse his counsel. (see Isaiah 59:2; Jeremiah 7:16; 14:12; Ezekiel 8:18; Zechariah 7:13; Micah 3:4)

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Saul's reign as King of Israel. 12:1-31:13

- David chosen and positioned to be the next king of Israel. 16:1-30:30
 - Saul's tragic quest for guidance. 28:3-25
 - Saul reacted to the silence of God by seeking guidance from a source clearly forbidden in the Law.
 - *"There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord. And because of these abominations the Lord your God is driving them out before you."* (Deuteronomy 18:10-12, ESV) (See also Leviticus 19:31; 20:6, 27)

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 - The woman at Endor clearly knew she was engaged in forbidden practices.
 - She expressed concern that this was a ruse to expose her and have her executed according to the Law.
 - Saul swore by Yahweh that she would not be harmed.
 - Saul requested that she bring up Samuel.

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Saul's reign as King of Israel. 12:1-31:13

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 - Saul's tragic quest for guidance. 28:3-25
 - The woman's reaction reveals that she was shocked and surprised by the appearance of Samuel.
 - Those who practice these things, then as now, do them by all sorts of trickery.
 - They would use ventriloquism to make it appear that a voice was coming from an unseen place.
 - They make general statements about the "spirit" they are in contact with and then watch the reaction of person and refine as they go along.

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 - Saul's tragic quest for guidance. 28:3-25
 - The woman's reaction reveals that she was shocked and surprised by the appearance of Samuel.
 - Those who practiced these things, then as now, do them try all sorts of trickery.
 - They feed into the expectations of what the people seeking guidance want to hear.

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- David chosen and positioned to be the next king of Israel. 16:1-30:30
 - Saul's tragic quest for guidance. 28:3-25
 - Rather than a deceptive message through the normal tricks of the medium, God allowed a visit by the deceased Samuel to deliver a last message from God to Saul.
 - Samuel rebuked Saul for this action, restated the judgment of God that had already been revealed to him, and then revealed the defeat of the Israelites and the death of Saul by the Philistines the next day.

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- Saul's tragic quest for guidance. 28:3-25
 - Scripture gives this assessment of Saul's act of consulting the medium:
 - *"So Saul died for his breach of faith. He broke faith with the Lord in that he did not keep the command of the Lord, and also consulted a medium, seeking guidance. He did not seek guidance from the Lord. Therefore the Lord put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse." (1 Chronicles 10:13-14, ESV)*

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- Saul's tragic quest for guidance. 28:3-25
 - Saul's persistent sinful actions have now led to the sentence of death.
 - He is terrified at this word and the woman offers the comfort of providing a meal which is reluctantly accepted.

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Lessons

- Crisis events reveal what we really believe.
- Seeking spiritual guidance from any source other than the one true and living God, maker of heaven and earth, is dangerous and therefore forbidden.
- Instability is a result of the failure to consistently follow the instruction given in His Word.
- Occasional obedience to God does not excuse a lifestyle of disobedience.

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