

There are **Bibles** in front of you

And we're looking at **1 Samuel chapter 28** - and we'll also be referring to Hebrews 1:1-4.

You've got the usual **outline** for you to **take notes** - if that helps you **concentrate**.

Let me ask **God** for His **help** and **guidance** first - let's **pray**...

Intro

*There's the story of a **20-year-old man** who **consulted** a **clairvoyant** [a clairvoyant is a person who claims to have a supernatural ability to perceive events in the future] - the clairvoyant **told** the 20-year old he would **die at age 35** - so the man **lived his life accordingly** and made decisions based on this prediction. He chose **not to marry his childhood sweetheart** and **not to have children** - and **not to have a serious relationship** - because he knew he would die young.*

When he turned 35 - guess what - he didn't die!

What a waste?

If these **clairvoyants** are so **sure of the future** - then they'd **know the winner** of the **Melbourne Cup** - next Tuesday - and become very rich

They work on **guess work** and **assumptions** and **percentages**.

For example - *they might tell a young woman she will meet a **tall handsome man from the North** - well generally **men are taller than women** - and anyone coming to Australia - must be coming from the **North** - the only thing south of us are*

penguins - so as soon as the girl meets anyone from overseas - they say - it's true - here's the tall handsome guy from the north

(pause)

[PowerPoint 1a-Does God want?]

Does God want us to be consulting **psychics** [*who claim to know things that are hidden from most other people*], or consult **mediums** [*who claim to communicate between the living and the dead*], or consult **clairvoyants or fortune tellers** [*who claim to predict a person's future by reading their palms, or gazing into a crystal ball or examining tea leaves etc.*], or to consult **Spiritists** (necromancers) [*who claim to communicate with dead spirits*] or to consult **horoscopes** [*which forecast a person's life based on the positions of the stars and planets at the time a person was born*]?

Is it God speaking through these people?

(pause)

What does God's word say?

[PowerPoint 1b-Lev 19:31]

Leviticus 19:31

³¹ *"Do not turn to mediums or seek out Spiritists, for you will be defiled [made impure] by them. I am the LORD your God.*

Why is **God against** mediums and psychics and so on? Firstly because - it makes us **impure** - which is the opposite of being holy - like God. And secondly, because it leads people to **trust in mediums, psychics and so on - rather than trusting in God alone** - as God says - I - am the Lord your God.

(pause)

So, as we look at our Bible passages this morning

We'll look at 2 things:

1. First - How God *speaks* and *doesn't speak* in the OT (1 Samuel 28:3-25)
2. And Second - How *God speaks* to us *today* (from Hebrews 1:1-4)

How God speaks and doesn't speak in the OT (1 Samuel 28:3-25)

[PowerPoint 2-Heading]

So first then, *how God speaks and doesn't speak* in the OT

Let's look at chapter 28 of 1 Samuel - starting at verse 3

- And we are *reminded* that the *prophet, Samuel, has died*
- This is the *2nd time* Samuel's *death is mentioned* (also in chapter 25)
- And that's because the *death of the prophet Samuel leaves a huge spiritual void*
- We're also told that *Saul had previously expelled all mediums and Spiritists* from the land - this was the *right thing to do* - according to OT law

[PowerPoint 2a-Lev 20:6]

- Here's what God had said to Moses in Leviticus 20:6 - *“I will set my face against anyone who turns to mediums and Spiritists to prostitute themselves by following them, and I will cut them off from their people.*
- And we see in v4 - the *Philistines* and *Israelites* are preparing for *war* - and *Saul is afraid* of the huge Philistine army - in fact v5 - *terror filled his heart*
- So v6 - *Saul inquires of the Lord* - but...

[PowerPoint 2b-Normal means]

- The **normal means of God speaking** to His people in the OT are **not working** for Saul - God is not speaking through **dreams and visions** (like he did to say to Joseph and Daniel) - nor is God speaking through **Urim & Thummim** and the priest's **ephod** (they're not available because Saul killed most of the priests - and the surviving priest, Abiathar, with the ephod, is with David) - nor is God speaking through **prophets** (like Samuel)
- Why isn't God answering Saul?
- Well - because **Saul hadn't previously obeyed God** - so God is not going to give any further instructions
- **AND** - **Saul hasn't ever properly repented** - he knows **he isn't supposed to be chasing David to kill him** - but Saul has made killing David his obsession
- Saul wants God on **Saul's terms** - not on **God's terms**.
- Saul just wanted to use **God** as a **genie in the bottle** - Saul is a picture of what James says in James 4:2-3 -² *You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.* ³ *When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives...*
- It's a bit like us **treating someone badly** all the time - and **then expecting** them to do us a **favour**?
- Yes - **God shows grace and mercy** - however if He has given **clear instructions to Saul** and they haven't been followed - what more instruction can He give - there's **nothing else to say**
- So - sometimes - as in this case with Saul - God answers with **silence**

Application - perhaps sometimes *we might be guilty of the same thing as Saul - not following God's commands - yet still expecting God's favour?*

(pause)

Or perhaps *we haven't fully repented of some sin in our life - so God is silent?*

(pause)

Because the *Lord did not answer Saul - in the normal ways that God speaks* Saul looks for an answer through *other means...*

- He's so *desperate* - v7 - that he orders his servants to *find a medium*
- But hasn't Saul just expelled them all?
- It gives us an idea of *Saul's state of mind*
- He's acting like a *hypocrite* - he rightly got rid of the mediums from the land - and then goes to consult one!
- Now remember mediums - *claim to call up dead* people - the modern-day term for this is *channeling*
- What's so wrong with channeling - or calling up the dead?
- Well - the great passage in *Luke 16* - says there are only *2 places* for the dead - either *Heaven* or *Hell* - and Luke 16:24 says that *a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from Heaven to Hell and vice versa cannot*
- So, there's *no spirits* of dead people roaming around - waiting to be called up by mediums
- As Christians, we ought to *seek God's answers only* - to our questions. Praying to or "*channeling*" any *other being* is *idolatry*. Praying to - or consulting - any *dead person*, including the *apostles, Mary*, and so forth,

is not so very different from holding a *séance* and asking a *dead relative* to help us.

- Most so-called mediums are actually *frauds who use memory tricks, planted accomplices, and special effects to fool people*. Those that are not frauds are cooperating with *dangerous demonic spiritual beings* from *Satan*. *Satan's spirits* are *skillful* at *appearing* as *helpful* spirits - as 2 Corinthians 11:4 says: *Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light*. Which makes it easy for *Satan's spirits* to *confuse* and *corrupt* people-who open themselves up through such things as 'channeling'
- Nevertheless, *Saul* goes against *God* and *disguises* himself to *consult* a *medium*
- The *medium* is *suspicious* - v9 - since *Saul has banned mediums* - but they're still *operating in secret* - like many things that are illegal today
- Even though the Lord is not with Saul - he *swears by the Lord* - v10 -that the medium woman will not be harmed
- Saul wants to talk to a *dead man* - the *prophet Samuel*
- So, the *medium calls up Samuel* - v12
- Is it *really Samuel*?
- There's been *lots of debate* as to whether this *really is Samuel or not?*
 - It could be *fraud* - the medium would recognize Saul - she would know what a prophet like Samuel dresses like - she may even have been told by someone else why *God* is not with Saul?
 - Or it could be the *work of Satan and his demons* - who give the woman the details she needs
- But I reckon it might *actually be Samuel*

- And that **God allowed Samuel to appear** (much like he allowed Elijah and Moses to appear at the transfiguration of Jesus)
- God **allowed** it for **2 reasons**
 - First - God allowed it - to **teach the medium a lesson** - see v12 she cried out at the top of her voice - she was expecting a familiar spirit - but instead got more than she bargained for - and got Samuel and the revelation that it was King Saul, in disguise, consulting her
 - Second - God allowed it - to **confirm Saul's fate** - see what Samuel says to Saul in v17-18 - **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 neighbours - to David. Because you did not obey the Lord and carry out His fierce wrath against the Amalekites.**
- God allowed Samuel to be called up
- But that **doesn't mean it was right for Saul to consult a medium**

Application - And it's **not right for us to ever consult mediums either**. We are opening ourselves up to a dark demonic spiritual world - that can bring us much harm - a no good whatsoever. And we're **putting our trust in them instead** of fully **relying on God**.

Samuel also **predicts Saul's death** - v19

Which causes great distress for Saul - he is full of fear - his strength has gone - and he can't eat. See v20

The medium of Endor - shows **compassion** to Saul

And Saul eats his **last supper**

What a **contrast** to the **Last Supper** of Jesus

Jesus faced His death - **always** doing the will of the Father

Saul faces His death - having **failed** to do the will of the Lord

Which brings us to our **second point**

How **God speaks** to **us today**

How God Speaks to us Today (Hebrews 1:1-4)

[PowerPoint 3-Heading]

If you'd like to turn to Hebrews 1 - from v1

[PowerPoint 3a-v1-2]

In the past God spoke to our ancestors **through** the **prophets** at many times and in various ways, ² but in these **last days** he has **spoken** to us by **his Son**,

You see - in the past - in the OT - the **prophets** were **preparing** people **for Jesus** coming

They were like **signposts** - saying - Jesus is coming - **Jesus is coming**

But in these **last days** - the days between Jesus first coming and His return

These last days - include **our time now**

In these last days - we have Jesus

Now that Jesus has come - **God** has **revealed** fully His **plan** to **save** humankind

from sin - and it revolves fully around **Jesus** - His coming - His **dying** for our sin

- His **rising** to life - **fixing** our **sins** - and giving us **eternal life**

He's able to do that because as the rest of the verses in Hebrews 1 say

Jesus - is *heir* of all things - *creator* of all things - the *radiance* of *God's glory* - the *exact representation* of God. Therefore - He is God - He is *perfect* and *SINLESS*

Jesus is *not dead* - He's *alive* - and He *sits* at the *right hand* of the Majesty in Heaven

You might say that's great - *but I can't see Jesus* - how do I know if He's speaking to me?

Well - remember - *Jesus* is described as the Word of God (John 1:1)

And as the *WORD made FLESH* (John 1:14)

So, the way God speaks is

Through His Word - which is also Jesus

And the Apostle Paul describes God's Word like this in 2 Tim 3:16-17

[PowerPoint 3b-Scripture]

¹⁶ All Scripture is *God-breathed* and is useful for *teaching, rebuking, correcting* and *training* in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the *servant* of God may be thoroughly *equipped for every good work*.

So, as we read God's word -

It *teaches* us - right and wrong - and teaches us how we can be forgiven and receive eternal life

It *Rebukes* us - on our wrong behaviour

It **Corrects** us - when we're going away from God's way

It **Trains** us - to be right with God and more like Jesus

And - It **Equips** us to be God's servants and do good work for God

Not only do we have God's Word - Jesus

But Jesus promised to send His **Holy Spirit** - which lives inside each Christian.

Jesus describes the Holy Spirit in John 14:26

[PowerPoint 3c-Spirit]

The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will **teach you all things** and will **remind you** of everything I have said to you

So, as we read God's Word - Jesus - the Holy Spirit continues to **teach us** - and **reminds us** of what Jesus taught

Application - Therefore it's **best** for us to let **Jesus - speak to us - through Scripture** and through the **Holy Spirit** - and not get involved in:

- Mediums
- Spiritists
- Clairvoyants
- Tea leaves
- Fortune tellers
- Horoscopes
- Witches
- Mediums
- Ouija boards
- Watching movies with demons and exorcists - and so on...

We shouldn't be getting involved in these things - or letting our children get into this stuff either

On Thursday just gone - we had *Halloween*

I was sick most of this week - so I didn't get to my Scripture classes on Thursday.

But one of my Scripture teacher friends called me - and said at the school he was teaching at - *all the teachers were dressed as witches*. What are we teaching our children? And why are we *perpetuating this nonsense*? Not to mention how *dangerous it is*? Remember *Satan* is the *master of trickery* - he tricks us into thinking - "*well trick or treat - it's just a bit of fun - and kids get lollies*"

But - is it the *best thing* for us to be *teaching* our young *children*? To *dress up* as *witches*, or *devils* or *dead people* and roam the streets asking for lollies - are they the *seeds we want to sow in young hearts*?

When we could be sharing the *love of God* - shown in *Jesus* - and teach His grace and love and mercy from the *Bible*?

Galatians 6:7 - says:

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A *man reaps what he sows*

Conclusion

To finish up them

[PowerPoint 4-Heading]

Friends - I encourage you - please **stick with Jesus only** - He is alive - He is **sinless** - He is **perfect** and good in every way - and **don't get involved in evil** or dangerous stuff masquerading as fun.

That's why the Apostle Paul tells us to put on the full **armour of God** - to protect us from this stuff.

So, let me finish with his advice from Ephesians 6:10-13

[PowerPoint 4a-Eph 6:10-13]

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your **stand against the devil's schemes**. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of **this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly realms.

¹³ Therefore **put on the full armor of God**, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **stand your ground**, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Let's pray...