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 rebellious 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.

“When Saul said to his servants, ‘Find me a woman who is a medium, 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), 1 Samuel 28:3-25. But Saul now had little regard for the 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 Saul said to his servants, ‘Find me a woman who is a medium, 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 up Samuel for me.” 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 after –

5. What happens at death?

Ecclesiastes 12:7 Then the righteous will return to the earth as it was, and the unrighteous will return to 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: “You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. You send forth Your Spirit [breath], they are created.”

6. Where do the dead go when they die?

Job 21:32 Yet he shall be brought to the pit, and the whirlwind shall carry him thither. John 5:28, 29 All who are buried in the grave. The dead will hear His voice and come. 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 speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both earthly and heavenly, and his tomb is with us to this day. Acts 2:34 For David did… into the heavens. NOTE: Note! 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 soul who sin … shall … die. Job 4:17 Can a mortal man be more righteous than God? 1 Timothy 6:15, 16 The King of kings and … lords, who … has 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 changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be incorruptible, … and this mortal must put on immortality.

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 The Lord said to him, “In what way?” So he said, “I will go out and be a man of counsel, and in the mouth of all his prophets.” Revelation 16:14 For they are ____________ of _________, performing signs.

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

Job 14:21 His sons come to honor, and he does ____________ it; They are brought low, and he does not perceive it. Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10 For the living know that they will die; but the dead ____________, and there is no work or device or ____________ or wisdom in the grave. Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10 For the living know that they will die; but the dead ____________, and there is no work or device or ____________ or wisdom in the grave. For the memory of them is forgotten. Also their ____________, their ____________, and they have no more reward, and their envy have now perished; nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun [in this life]. … For there is no work or device or ____________ or wisdom in the grave.

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

Revelation 1:18 I am ________ who ____________, and was ____________, and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades 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 being.

5. What happens at death?

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1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the first who will have died. 

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 died. Matthew 27:52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. 

2 Samuel 7:12 You shall every father. 

1 Thessalonians 4:14 Even so God will bring with Him those who are in Jesus. 

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 demons, performing miracles. 

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 (Revelations 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 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 false christs and false prophets will rise and show errors, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. 

Galatians 5:19-21 The works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. 

Revelation 21:8 Sorcerers, … you shall have their part in the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone, which is the second death. 

15. What glorious power does God offer His people?

Philippians 3:10 That I may know Him, and the power of His self](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%203:10&version=ESV) 

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). 

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

Revelation 18:23 By your sorcery the nations were deceived. 

Revelation 18:2 Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hateful creature. 

Revelation 12:9 That serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives 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 or a woman who is a sorceress, … shall surely be put to death. 

1 Timothy 4:1 Some will from the world, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons. 

Ephesians 5:11 Have no fellowship with the works of darkness, but rather reprove them. 

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.

**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:**