

A Dark Night In The Kingdom

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[0 : 00] Our sermon passage for today is the entire chapter 1st Samuel chapter 28.! I encourage you to follow along now and then also keep this open in front of you as we work our way through this passage.

! We do so trusting that it's God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, sufficient, powerful word for you and me, his people. 1st Samuel 28.

Now it happened in those days that the Philistines gathered their armies together for war to fight with Israel. And Achish said to David, you assuredly know that you will go out with me to battle you and your men.

David said to Achish, surely you know what your servant can do. And Achish said to David, therefore I will make you one of my chief guardians forever.

Now Samuel had died, and all Israel lamented for him and buried him in Ramah, in his own city. And Saul had put the mediums and the spiritists out of the land.

[1 : 08] Then the Philistines gathered together and came and encamped at Shunam. So Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped at Gilboa. When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly.

And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, neither by dreams nor by Urim or by the prophets. Then Saul said to his servants, find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her.

And his servants said to him, in fact, there is a woman who is a medium at Endor. So Saul disguised himself and put on other clothes, and he went, and two men with him.

And they came to the woman by night and said, please conduct a seance for me and bring up for me the one I shall name to you.

Then the woman said to him, look, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the spiritists from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life to cause me to die?

[2 : 22] And Saul swore to her by the Lord, saying, as the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing. Then the woman said, whom shall I bring up for you?

And he said, bring up Samuel for me. When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out with a loud voice.

And the woman spoke to Saul, saying, why have you deceived me? For you are Saul. And the king said to her, do not be afraid. What did you see? And the woman said to Saul, I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth.

So he said to her, what is his form? And she said, an old man is coming up and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel.

And he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down. Now Samuel said to Saul, why have you disturbed me by bringing me up? And Saul answered, I am deeply distressed for the Philistines make war against me.

[3 : 29] And God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore, I have called you that you may reveal to me what I should do.

Then Samuel said, so why do you ask me, seeing the Lord has departed from you and has become your enemy? And the Lord has done for himself as he spoke by me.

For the Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord, nor execute his fierce wrath upon Amalek.

Therefore, the Lord has done these things to you this day. Moreover, the Lord will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines.

And tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The Lord will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines. Immediately, Saul fell to the full length on the ground and was dreadfully afraid because of the words of Samuel.

[4 : 40] And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day or all night. And the woman came to Saul and saw that he was severely troubled and said to him, look, your maidservant has obeyed your voice and I have put my life in my hands and he did the words which you spoke to me.

Now, therefore, please heed also the voice of your maidservant and let me set a piece of bread before you and eat that you may have strength when you go on your way.

But he refused and said, I will not eat. So his servants together with the woman urged him and he heeded their voice. Then he arose from the ground and sat on the bed and the woman had a fattened calf in the house and she hastened to kill it.

She took flour and kneaded it and baked unleavened bread from it. So he brought it before Saul and his servants and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God. Please have a seat. The grass withers, the flower fades, the word of the Lord stands forever.

[5 : 53] Let's pray. Oh, Lord, we pray, Lord, that you will speak through your word as you're so faithful to do.

We thank you for each precious soul, Lord, that you have brought here today. We pray, Lord, even for those that might hear this message later, that you will use your word, your action, your power in history to redeem a people for yourself and to preserve this in the scriptures.

And that you'll use this, Lord, in our lives to show us who you are, to reveal your might, to show us, Lord, the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

We pray. Amen. Well, there are some chapters in life that are very dark, very hard.

Some of us are in those these months. Just as we can't skip over or fast forward those hard moments in our lives as Christians.

[7 : 05] Instead, we walk through them trusting God. We do the same as we read his word. We walk through every page of the Bible, even the difficult ones like this passage today.

The title of today's sermon, it's simply the setting of the story. Thinking of it on the large scale picture, what this represents for the nation.

The title is a dark night in the kingdom. We have in this scene a spiritually dark moment in the darkest part of the day.

And this is a wonderful reflection. It makes us just startled at how lost the kingdom has become. A dark night in the kingdom.

I'd like to walk through this passage with about six different movements as we shift perspectives and do our best to handle everything in this chapter without skipping over the hard parts.

[8 : 06] But also being content, leaving what God has kept veiled for God's own purposes and trusting him with that. Well, the first perspective we see is from Saul's perspective.

What's coming at him? And it's the Philistines along with David. So we can call this first movement a double terror, a double terror. Look again at verse one.

Now it happened in those days that the Philistines gathered their armies together for war to fight with Israel. Looking at the map and the description that's given us here is the Philistines on the offensive, invading Israelite land.

The king of Gath, one of those five powerful cities of the Philistines, says to David, who's been working like a mercenary, like a vassal servant, bringing back tribute and loot to King Achish.

He says, you know that you will go with me to battle you and your men. He's not calling for volunteers that would want to enlist themselves. If you notice in verse two, David's stance is vague, probably on purpose.

[9 : 16] David says, surely, you know what your servant can do. My reputation has gone before me. First time David showed up to King Achish, it was the rumor among all the soldiers.

This is that same one with Goliath's sword now strapped onto him. And it's the one who they said, you know, Saul killed his thousands, but David is tens of thousands. All the Philistines know what David can do, but he doesn't take a side yet.

Then Achish says, yes, you could paraphrase. I know you've made me rich and you never lose.

That's been the pattern up to now. So he says in verse two again, for this reason, I will make you

one of my chief guardians forever.

Literally in the Hebrew, Achish says to David, I will make you the one in charge of my head. Isn't that interesting how after the Lord delivered Goliath to David, we got that wonderful description that David went and everywhere he went, he had the head of Goliath with him like a trophy of war. Now the king of the same city, Goliath, almost foreshadows. This is the this is the anointed one that the Lord will bless, that will give dominion over even the Philistines.

[10 : 32] God will eventually give David Goliath. We read of that in First Chronicles 18 one. But right now we have a much darker setting. It's a true dilemma for David.

Think of it from his perspective. If David fights Saul. All of the nation of Israel, the whole army will watch David and these men do that.

It'll be civil war. It'll be them fighting their own brothers in battle. But on the other hand, David doesn't have a safe place to be within the land of Israel. If he doesn't fight Saul, his deception that Achish has been believing all along will be discovered.

And they will likely lose their homes and everything that God's given them in their outpost now in the city of Ziklag. Isn't it interesting how David, a man upon whom God had graciously set his heart, had stopped trusting God's promises and protection.

He started relying on his own deception and cunning. And now he's entangled in a web of lies by his own spinning. Well, that's from David's perspective.

[11 : 45] But from Saul's perspective, as we saw last time, some of the best soldiers from the tribe of Benjamin, Saul's own tribe, have now fled to Ziklag.

Oh, the soldiers have to be talking about this. We know that it's been reported to Saul that David is among the troops at Gath. And now all these soldiers from Israel are going there to fight with him. From Saul's perspective, that's not only the terror of the massive Philistine army that Saul's already been unsuccessful in fighting. It's now David, along with all these mighty warriors, doubling up. They both have a common enemy, or at least that's what Saul believes. That's a double terror. To make things worse, to make Saul's setting even darker.

When Saul wants guidance from the Lord, he has to endure an unbearable silence. That's our second movement, an unbearable silence.

[12 : 46] Look at verse four. Then the Philistines gathered together and came and encamped at Shuman. So Saul gathered all Israel together and they encamped at Gilboa.

When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart trembled greatly. Saul is trapped by ruling by what he can see.

He seized the Philistine army living by sight. He was afraid and it gets a double emphasis. His heart, the inner man, trembled greatly.

This is a dark time in the kingdom. Look at verse six. When Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him.

Either by dreams or Urim or by the prophets. Remember, there were schools of prophets that Samuel had disciplined and set up. Remember what happened when Saul approached one of the schools of the prophets?

[13 : 55] He got put down, prostrate before the Lord. And even he started to speak God's truth. The prophets were a powerful mouthpiece of God.

But they were silent now for him. The Lord would at times speak by dreams. They knew very well the story of Joseph and their roots as a nation and how God can give encouragement in that way. Saul had nothing like that. Morning after morning, waking up. Divine silence. And then the Urim is that black or white rock, most likely, that was held in a pouch on the ephod, which is the breastplate that the priests would wear.

But you remember what happened in chapter 22. Saul gave the orders to massacre 85 priests and then decimate their entire city.

Saul destroyed for himself any legitimate line of communication from God through the priests that he had set up to provide that guidance.

[15 : 00] The one that survived, you remember, he ran away. The Lord did provide him for David. And the Lord used him to guide David. Notice in verse 6 those terrifying words.

The Lord did not answer him. This is an unbearable silence for Saul. Saul rejected God as the true Lord and King over Israel.

He clung to this throne for himself. And he got exactly what he wanted. He got to be the king. And had to live with that horrible reality.

There is no God over you, Saul. There is no God to guide you, to speak to you. In verse 7, Saul said to his servants, Find me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her. And his servants said, There is a woman who is a medium at an door. Children, a medium, you hear this word. It's someone who acts in the middle or as an intermediary to consult, to ask questions of the spirit world, particularly of the dead.

[16 : 23] Those who go and try to talk to someone who's going to try to pull up the spirit of a dead person will defile you.

Have nothing to do with that, God told his people. And you heard that word in there, the familiar spirit. It's a person who has an ability somehow to make a connection with someone who has died. And it's like the spirit of that dead person now coming to talk. The Hebrew implies the medium is a master or a mistress of this spirit and that they can use that spirit as a conduit to pull information from the spiritual realm or the other side.

Saul knew that this was wrong. And yet he goes and does it still. You know why Saul knew this was wrong. Look back at verse 3. Saul had put the mediums and the spirits out of the land.

They are not to be in Israel. Isn't it interesting how even though he knows this is wrong, his men can very quickly go tell him where there still is one.

[17 : 45] And the law commands that a person who practices these things is to be killed. It's capital, capital punishment. And yet Saul's closest circle of men and he himself knows he can still go find one.

Saul rejected God's term. And now he wants to force God to speak on his own terms. Unrepentant sin makes us prefer a lie from a demon over the silence of God.

What a dark place for Saul. Remember this principle that's set up for us. As goes the king, so goes the kingdom. What a dark night it is in the kingdom of Israel.

And God is silent. The third observation is what is Saul actually pursuing here? What is he really being part of?

He's dabbling with demons. That's what Saul is doing. It's nothing short of that. It's playing around with or thinking it's okay to meddle with and experiment with the demonic.

[18 : 59] So we have to ask this question. He's going to talk to a medium. The Lord had said, get these necromancers and mediums out of the land. This is something that was commonly practiced.

So what was going on? Does it really work? This might sound like an ancient pagan thing, but it's all around us today. I've asked several here, you know, we have connections with and many of you are nodding your heads right now.

There are Facebook groups for witches in these towns where we live. And there are groups across Colorado and there are places where they meet up. And there are there are people going to the cemetery right here down the road and trying to do these seances and pull up a spirit of a dead person.

Does witchcraft have real power? Well, I believe there are two forms that would deceive people. Both are deceptive, but they're both very different in what's actually happening.

The first one we could call trickery. Most magic tricks use trickery. Listen carefully to how it can be defined. You're using the rules of nature to create an illusion or to deceive people.

[20 : 15] But it's it's using and are being under the rules of nature. So this tricking people. Nothing supernatural is going on. Most likely this was at least the part of the problem.

It's a lot of copycats, you know, trying to make money, trying to find a market by providing a service. And it's the Hebrew word for hollow. So is is used to describe that type of sorcery where it would make the echoing sound of a voice as if it were muffled speaking through a leather water skin.

So like ventriloquism or using other natural elements to make it sound like a voice from the dead. But brothers and sisters and children and teenagers, we need to listen very carefully.

What goes by the name of witchcraft or sorcery. It's not all trickery. There is also a real supernatural spiritual power that's that God is permitting to interact with the realm of our bodies and our world and our senses that we can see.

And that's bartering with demons. It's making a transaction with the fallen angel that's cursed, that hates the Lord, hates his kingdom and has no mission other than to destroy.

[21 : 30] It involves giving a fallen angel what that demon wants. In exchange for them doing something supernatural with God's permission, again, that you want.

This actually happens. Second Corinthians 11:14 tells us that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it could be a demon that's familiar with how a person behaved and spoke and the types of words they would say.

And a demon now mimicking that to give the illusion that the soul of this dead person is actually the one doing it. Second Thessalonians 2:11 describes the work of Satan as powerful, even capable of signs and lying wonders.

They'll make you marvel, but it's a lie. It's a great deception. I need to warn us with God's love. Don't dabble with these things. All kinds of different names. You can go buy it probably at big stores. Don't dabble with the demons.

[22 : 58] You belong to Jesus, the kingdom of light. We have no part in that. Well, back to our passage. Saul in verse eight does exactly what I've warned us sternly not to do.

And he disguises himself and he puts on these other clothes and he goes with two servants, not taking very many, but enough. Remember, two or three witnesses is all you need to testify of what happened.

And they come to this witch by night. And he said, please conduct a seance for me and bring up for me the one I shall name to you.

It's a transaction with the dark. Most likely he has already paid her for the service. And in exchange, she's going to provide the seance.

What's that? A seance is a meeting in which people attempt to make contact with the dead through this other person, a medium.

[24 : 02] Verse nine, the woman said to him, look, you know that Saul has done. He's cut off all the mediums and the spirit is from the land. Why then do you lay a snare for my life and cause me to die?

Said you're trying to trap me. You're a cop. I'm not going to fall for that one. It's also interesting in another deep, sad irony, how the witch cares more about God's law than the king.

God strictly forbids this. It's an abomination. Deuteronomy 18, 10 and 11 commands. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through the fire or one who practices witchcraft or a soothsayer or one who interprets omens or a sorcerer or one who conjures a spell or a medium or a spiritist or a necromancer.

The word necromancer, that last one is from the ancient Greek. It's our English translation of it. Necros means corpse, a corpse, a dead corpse.

And necromancer, it's divination or the practice of seeking a revelation from the dead, the corpse of the spirit of this dead person. Remember Leviticus, if you do these things, it will defile your soul.

[25 : 24] You will be filthy before God. This is bad for God's people. Verse 10, Saul swore to her. Look how far he goes.

Swore by the Lord, saying, as the Lord lives, no punishment shall come upon you for this thing. Who is Saul putting himself in the place of with that decree?

He's saying, as the Lord lives, well, ironically, he is alive right now, but not for much longer. And he's acting as if he's the lawmaker. And instead, he's supposed to be the steward.

God's the lawmaker. He carries out God's law. And he didn't do this well. We don't have any evidence if Saul had ever done this before. But we know that his driving out the sorcerers and the mediums and the witchcraft was hypocritical.

He's still harboring in his heart a desire for that. And he knows that's where he will turn right away. The moment God is silent and makes him wait.

[26 : 34] Without our Lord Jesus Christ, our hearts are just as corrupted as Saul's, aren't they? And 2 Peter 2, 22 writes to the church. The dog returns to its own vomit.

And the sow, a female pig, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire. Without a new heart, like Saul, we are chained to that old master.

We're slaves. Can't you almost feel the spiritual darkness in the kingdom? No hope. Verse 11. Then the woman said, whom shall I bring up for you?

And he said, bring up Samuel for me. Then the woman saw Samuel. She cried out with a loud voice. The woman is clearly terrified.

We don't know if, why she's the only one left, you know? Does that mean she just is the one willing to take on the risk of being in a black market and charging a lot more money?

[27 : 36] Was it because she just knew the trickery and had never interacted with demons? Or is it because she was a slave of Satan and she's used to dealing with hell and the demons?

But this was so different than that. She cried out with a loud voice. Whatever she had done before now, those details don't matter because in this moment, something far more powerful, more supernatural, apparently out of her control, maybe even before she had begun her ritual, it already happened.

And somehow what happened made her know that her disguised client was the king. She says, why have you deceived me?

For you are Saul. He's dabbling with demons. Dabbling with it and seems like she has more more of a real picture of the danger at stake here than he does.

Well, the final observation here in this part is. What God does in response to Saul's wicked disobedience, and it's surprising.

[28 : 55] It's very surprising how the Lord handles Saul in this moment. I've titled this movement, Thy Will Be Done. Thy Will Be Done.

In verse 13, the king said to her, do not be afraid. What did you see? The woman said to Saul, I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth. She's reporting some recognizable and then audible manifestation from the spiritual dimension, appearing as if it were rising up from the underworld.

Verse 14. So he said to her, what is his form? And she said, an old man is coming up and he is covered with a robe. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel.

She's reporting the robe. And he stooped with his face to the ground and bowed down. Before we focus again on what the Lord's revealing and what this means for Saul, let's wrestle with who is this that the witch is seeing and reporting to Saul?

Who is this? Could a witch, someone working for Satan, call up the dead? Taking the whole counsel of scripture, we have to say no.

[30 : 21] Our confession of faith summarizes what the Bible teaches, that the souls of men and women, all those who live, the souls have an immortal substance. And when the body dies and the body is buried and decays, all of the souls of people who ever lived go immediately to one of two places, either to God or to hell.

Our confession summarizes besides these two places, the scripture knoweth none. There's no purgatory. There's no soul sleep.

There's no like Greek mythological underworld. There are no other places for the soul. That's why the urgency of the gospel in this life, why you can believe.

And since it appears like the real Samuel is who the Lord caused to be here. It communicates that God is doing something beyond the witch's power.

This is God acting in his own way, by his power, for his purposes, contrary to his natural order that he has set up. Our confession of faith also summarizes this in chapter five on God's providence.

[31 : 34] In his ordinary providence, God makes use of means, natural means and orders of cause and effect, the rules of physics of this world. Though God is free to work apart from them, beyond them, and contrary to them, according to his pleasure.

I believe that's what's happening here, is the Lord is working contrary to the natural order. Yes, even though it's in the setting of the witch's home, and with her doing a seance to a lost king, and while God had been silent in all the other ways he has ordained, God is doing something that he is free to do because he is God.

And now they communicate with one another. In verse 15, Samuel said to Saul, Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up? I don't want to be back here in this realm.

I don't want this. And Saul answered, I am deeply distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me, and does not answer me anymore in any of the ways that I know to go to him.

Therefore I have called for you, that you may reveal to me what I should do. Samuel appears to speak for God.

[32 : 54] He seems to confirm this is not a demon, although Jesus can make the demons declare the truth. You know, this is the Son of God. Away from us, they're terrified of Jesus.

Because of Saul's past disobedience, the Lord is bringing the punishment God had promised all along. He reminds Saul that that time when Saul tore the corner of Samuel's robe off, and here's Samuel wearing the robe again, how the Lord promised he would tear the kingdom from Saul's hand and give it to his neighbor, David, and that the Lord will now deliver Saul and the nation, all Israel, to death at the hands of the Philistines.

And Samuel, speaking as one on the other side of this life, whose body is buried, tells Saul, verse 19, tomorrow you and your sons will be with me.

You're going to die. This is a dark time in the land. Saul was unwilling to tell God, Lord, not my will, but your will be done.

And I love how C.S. Lewis pointed out that there are two kinds of people in the end. Those who say to God, thy will be done, and those to whom God says, in the end, thy will be done.

[34 : 22] All that are in hell, choose it. The final scene, though, is also a bit surprising to me.

A lot of verses, a lot of words about a meal. Why does the story end that way? The doomed king's last supper. Look at verse 20.

Immediately saw, he wasn't just face down on the ground, now he fell full length on the ground, dreadfully afraid because of Samuel's words, with no strength in him, because he has not eaten all day or all night.

Remember how he made everyone fast before going to war, and that was foolish. Jonathan, take the honey. Saul seems to be trying whatever he can to get a little bit of help.

In verses 21 and 23, the witch sees Saul's profound terror. However, she urges him to eat, to get some strength in him. Someone pointed, I think Ryan pointed out in Sunday school, maybe she's just trying to get him out of her house now.

[35 : 30] He needs to be strong enough to walk out of here and leave. I don't want King Saul dying in my house. That'd be bad for business. Well, she persuades him with the help of these two servants on how she had risked her life to fulfill his request.

She's having to persuade him and use a personal appeal. Verse 23, so he arose from the ground and sat on the bed. Okay, we're making progress. Verse 24, so she killed a fattened calf quickly. Professor John pointed out how a calf isn't as big as a full-grown cow, but you can give it a little extra of the corn or the stuff you have to fatten it up. And then because we don't have refrigeration, you can't pull out a big package of hamburger from the freezer.

That's how you preserve it. You keep a small fattened calf ready to go for a special occasion. She also took flour, made fresh bread to go with it. Verse 25, she brought it to Saul and his servants and they ate.

See all these details about the meal. Why is this? Then they arose and went away that night. First Chronicles 10, 13 records, so Saul died.

[36 : 41] He will die in the battle as God prophesied through the vision of Samuel. He died for his unfaithfulness, which he had committed against the Lord because he did not keep the word of the Lord, meaning killing the king of the Amalekites and everything else, including fattened calves.

He didn't kill those. Instead, he's feasting on it now. And also because he consulted a medium for guidance. See, God was displeased with what Saul did.

He's not rewarding Saul for going to this witch. He's speaking powerfully and preserving it in scripture despite the way that Saul went about it. James 1, 14 and 15 says, each one is tempted, lured and enticed by our own desire.

Again, writing to us, the church, be careful. Then desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin and sin, when it is fully grown, brings death.

Isn't that the exact trajectory of Saul? A doomed king feasting now on a fattened calf fed to him by a witch. And in the end, it leads to death.

[37 : 59] The final movement, even though in this chapter we're left in the darkness of the night, I can't leave you here without encouraging you of a greater king than Saul and a greater king than David.

The title of this last movement is One Path Flourishes, the other perishes. Would you look back at verse 3? Second half of verse 3, I didn't emphasize much until now.

It repeats what we've already seen. Samuel had died and all Israel had lamented for him and buried him in Ramah in his own city.

Where did we hear that last? Word for word. Well, just flip back so you can see it with your own eyes to chapter 25. So, doesn't that make you wonder, okay, why are we told of Samuel's death twice?

Well, obviously, that's who Saul is going to want to speak with. We have to be reminded, but word for word, it's setting up a parallel between chapter 25 and chapter 28.

[39 : 07] In chapter 28 that we're in today, we have this woman is featured very prominently. She happens to be a witch who makes a practice of speaking with Satan and the demons.

In chapter 25, we have another very prominent woman and that's Abigail. Remember how Abigail told David, let the iniquity, let the sin be on me.

Let me die. Notice the contrast with this chapter. The witch says, don't put iniquity on me, Saul. Let me live. Abigail is wise.

Her mediation brings life. The witch is a picture of foolishness, unwise, rebelling against God's law. Her mediation pronounces Saul's death. You remember how chapter 25 ends with a great celebration and Abigail prepares a meal for David.

[40 : 07] David enjoys a feast with her. This one who loves and trusts the Lord of hosts. While Saul eats his last meal in the dark of the night with this slave of Satan.

One king marries wisdom. The other perishes. Psalm 1 describes the blessed man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly nor stands in the path of sinners nor sits in the seat of the scornful.

But in chapter 28, that blessed man does not describe David or Saul. David's stuck in a web of his own doing. And Saul is on the threshold into hell.

Therefore, neither David nor Saul is like that tree planted by rivers of water. Neither one of these two kings is able by their own strength to bring forth good fruit when it's in season.

We need a better king, don't we? Israel needed a better king whose delight is in the law of the Lord and in his law he meditates day and night.

[41 : 25] His leaf shall not wither and whatever he does shall prosper. Hebrews 7 26 tells us that our Lord Jesus Christ the King of kings is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

1 John 3 8 tells us that the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. And Jesus commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him.

There's never more demonic activity than when God himself the Lord of hosts takes on flesh and enters the world. Hebrews 2 14 tells us by the death of Jesus he rendered powerless him who had the power of death that is the devil.

The devil has no more power because Christ has rendered him powerless over his kingdom. This is our great king. Colossians 2 15 tells us Jesus Christ disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame triumphing over them in Christ.

And James 4 7 tells us now Christians submit yourselves therefore to God resist the devil and he will flee from you. King Saul went to a witch because God was silent but Jesus Christ is the word of God.

[42 : 55] God is not silent. In him God has spoken clearly loudly for all to hear. King Saul disturbed a dead prophet so to speak and the prophet then judged Saul declaring his doom.

Our Lord Jesus Christ one day will summon all who have ever lived. He will come back and he will be the one to judge the living and the dead.

All those who reject Jesus as king he will condemn to everlasting torment in hell to be tortured by these very demons that they preferred over him and those who trust in Christ he will welcome into his eternal kingdom the new heavens the new earth forevermore.

king Saul ate his last meal on that dark night in the kingdom but our Lord Jesus Christ invites us who trust in him to his banqueting table in his spiritual kingdom and revelation 22 5 tells us there will be no more night we will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun for the Lord God will give them light the lamb will be our light and we will reign with him forever and ever amen please pray with me father we praise you you're so mighty you are the king the only king Lord you're the commander of the armies of heaven we long for this day Lord where you'll usher in your great kingdom and power oh Lord we pray that we won't put our hope on any kingdom of man David or Saul anything else of this world but we will put our hope in Jesus Christ alone we pray Lord that you will preserve us continue to fight for us lead us Lord and prepare us to rule with you one day in your glory amen well dear friends brothers and sisters it's been my prayer that God would show you how lovely he is in the person of Jesus Christ as his mouthpiece to you I want to call you

to respond to him respond to this gospel that you have heard today and we respond with grateful obedience to Jesus don't put it off is Jesus calling you to truly believe in him and repent of your sin maybe for the first time is he calling you to have your profession of faith in Jesus confirmed through baptism into his church called out of the world is he telling you to encourage this body give this body your testimony of his faithfulness in your life formally join scripture teaches us that believers should joyfully commit themselves to participate fully in the life of a local church where they will worship grow and be cared for according to

[46 : 07] God's word Christ entrusts his disciples to the spiritual care of the elders and local churches charging them to shepherd each one toward full maturity in Christ so we call all believers in love for Christ to joyfully pursue this I trust that God has brought each one of you here by his providence he's put you here at this time of your life to hear these teachings I encourage you to ponder what you've heard and respond to the grace of God to us in Christ it's the Holy Spirit that causes us to trust love and follow Jesus and we will trust him to direct our steps individually and also as a church