

1 Samuel 28

1 Samuel 28:1–24

Saul Consults a Medium

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Doctrines Covered		Doctrines Alluded To	
		Urim and Thummim	Sheol
		Amalekites	

Introduction: History is a very difficult subject because nothing occurs in a vacuum. You cannot simply look at what is happening in this city or that; in this country or that country, and really get a full picture of what is really going on. 1Sam. 28 pulls things together. We have Saul, still not mentally sound, running the country of Israel. We have the natural animosity between the Israelites and the Philistines. We have David estranged from Israel and living in Philistia, 15 miles outside of Gath. We have an allied relationship between David and

Achish, king of Gath, occurring. We have the natural suspicions of Philistine soldiers who have fought against David, or at least know of his reputation. We have David outside of Israel, outside of God's geographical will, marking time while out of fellowship. We might entitle this rest of this book, *When Worlds Collide*. We simply have a lot of different factors which will come into play and affect everything else.

I would like to issue you a personal challenge at this point: read through this chapter and see what you can pick up on your own. This is a fairly entertaining chapter and one which is fairly easy to understand; so, pick up your favorite translation of this chapter and read away. See what you can get from this chapter. Decide how this chapter can be applied to your life. Decide on what theological points are being made. Determine what God is communicating to you through this chapter. I came up with about 150 pages of exegesis on this chapter, which a buttload of personal application and doctrine. The Hebrew exegesis takes up, perhaps 100 pages of this examination; however, that means that I have an additional 50 pages (or so) or explanatory material, personal application and doctrine. Could you, after reading this chapter, type out 50 pages of notes and application based upon what you read? Could you grasp the theological significance of what is happening in this chapter? Do you grasp even the most basic importance of Samuel being brought back from the dead to speak to Saul? Do you understand the importance of Saul's final meal? Could you even write 5 pages of explanation, application and theology? God has provided this for you. If your forte is not going to the Word of God and extracting out all that God has for you there, don't worry. That is not necessarily your job anyway. There are so many churches and pastors who tell their congregation to read their Bibles or to form personal study groups where a dozen or so people get together somewhere and discuss what they think is occurring. Do you know that there is no Biblical authorization to do this? None whatsoever. Now, don't misunderstand me, the Bible does not list each and every spiritual gift, because, as time goes by, there is a call for additional gifts (some of which are quite the opposite of being spectacular).

Now let me get personal for a moment: I do not have the gift of evangelism; I do not have the gift of witnessing; I do not have the gift of prayer. I have witnessed to others, I do pray, but, I can guarantee you, these gifts are not my forte. This is not a problem for me. I don't agonize day after day wondering if God will let me witness to more and more people each day—that is simply not my gift. I know the gospel inside and out; I can present the gospel in the most clear and concise way. However, I still do not have the gift of witnessing or evangelism. I know others who know the gospel, can talk to just any person off the street, tell them who Jesus Christ is, and other people will respond to them. I don't have the gift of being a missionary; even though I love visiting foreign countries, there is nothing in me which would take me to another country, learn their language and customs, and then present the gospel to them in their own language, without imposing the customs I have grown accustomed to. However, what I am good at and what I enjoy doing is carefully Exegeting the Word of God. I enjoy using the many tools at my disposal (which came as a result of hundreds, if not thousands, of men who had diverse gifts) and not only translating the Word of God, but then plumbing the depths of each passage, wringing from it every bit of meaning that I can. God has given me everything that I need in order to do this. I am free of monetary concerns, I am free of logistical concerns; I can simply study and exegete the Word of God and I, quite frankly, enjoy doing it. You may or may not have this gift. However, you have another gift or gifts which is absolutely necessary to the plan of God. Not everyone on a football team is a pulling guard, a blocker, a quarterback, or whatever. If a football team came on the field with 12 place kickers, that coach would be fired so quickly, his head would spin. We all have different positions to play, and figuring out your spiritual gift (if you do not know it) is simply a matter of being filled with God the Holy Spirit and then advancing spiritually.

In mentioning all of that, I have left out the primary story line of this chapter: Saul goes to the witch of Endor for guidance. Even though he has been at odds with Samuel and even though he has been completely outside of God's will for sometime, he is in a crisis situation and he recognizes just how much of a crisis this situation is. Samuel dies in this chapter, and Saul wants to consult with Samuel. This sets off a series of events along with divine intervention which is both tragic and humorous.

Keil and Delitzsch aptly summarize 1Sam. 28: *The invasion of Israel by the Philistines, which brought David into so difficult a situation, drove king Saul to despair, so that in utter helplessness he had*

*recourse to ungodly means of inquiring into the future, which he himself had formerly prohibited, and to his horror had to hear the sentence of his own death.*¹

In the first two verses of this chapter, Achish makes David aware that he must join him war against Israel. The Latin Vulgate, by the way, places these two verses at the end of 1Sam. 27 instead, which is very prudent (however, their division of the rest of this book is a mess).

V. 3 sets us up for this chapter, telling us that Samuel has died and that Saul removed all of the mediums and spiritists from the land. In vv. 4–5, the Philistines gather their army against Israel and Saul is extremely afraid at this point. He tries to contact God, but God will not communicate with Saul (v. 6). Then Saul behaves **like a dog returning to his vomit** and asks his servants to find him a medium (v. 7).

Saul is apparently recognizable by the garb that he wears, so he slips into a disguise and goes with two men to Endor, where they know of a witch (v. 8). The woman is suspicious and worried for her own safety, but Saul assures her that nothing bad will happen to her for disobeying his law (vv. 9–10). As soon as Saul asks the woman to bring up Samuel, the woman sees Samuel and she screams—also, in a moment of clarity, she recognizes Saul (vv. 11–12). Saul tries to calm her, assuming that she brings dead people back all of the time, while she is scream that she sees God coming out of the earth (v. 13). Saul asks for a description of this one coming out of the earth, and she describes an old man which Saul recognizes as Samuel (v. 14). Then Samuel speaks to Saul, and reiterates what he has told Saul in the past: that God has taken the kingdom from him and given it to David (vv. 15–18). Then he adds, **“And you and your sons will be with me tomorrow,”** telling Saul that Israel will also be defeated by the Philistines in battle (v. 19). At this point, Saul becomes very despondent, falling on the ground from fear, which apparently also seized his strength (v. 20). The woman first tries to insure her own safety and then she and Saul’s men revive Saul (vv. 21–25).

I should mention that the chapters of 1Sam. 27–31 are not exactly in chronological order. They are presented more as vignettes all from a very short period of time (maybe a week). These chapters overlap in time, as well as being out of order. Therefore, in 1Sam. 31, I will lay out a time line; however, you will appreciate the time line more if you know all the events which have occurred and the various characters who played parts in those events.

I will want you to notice what will happen in this chapter: this is a simply narrative, and, if you read through the Bible in a year, you may have read thorough this chapter a dozen times with 2 minutes for each read. I have nothing against you reading the Bible or memorizing Scripture (or particularly Scriptural principles). However, what you will find in this chapter is a number of applications; a number of times when we can stop and look at what is happening and draw conclusions which relate directly to our lives here and now. You will never find that on a simple read-through. Only a pastor or an exegete can unearth this information and present it all to you.

Another fact of importance when it comes to exegesis: sometimes, the word-by-word, verse-by-verse study of a book may seem tedious. It takes you 5 one-hour classes to get through this chapter or that, when you can read that same chapter in 3 minutes. When it comes to learning the Word of God, it is not a race. You are not looking to be the first person who has learned every doctrine there is to learn. A pastor can dig and dig and dig into almost every chapter of Scripture and come up with great truths from God. When your pastor does so, just go with him, and enjoy the view. Don’t worry that it might take you 3 years to plow through the book of 1Samuel; just enjoy the experience and learn from it.

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Achish Expects David to Assist him in a War Against Israel

These first two verses are really a part of 1Sam. 29, which actually precedes 1Sam. 28:3–25 in time.

¹ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:3–25.

Slavishly literal:

Moderately literal:

And so he is in the days the those and so gathers Philistines their camps to the war to engage in war in Israel. And so says Achish unto David, “Understanding you understand that with me you go out in the camps—you and your men.”

1Samuel
28:1

And it happened [or, and it came to pass; lit., and it was] in those days the Philistines congregated their camps for war to fight against Israel. Furthermore [lit., and], Achish said to David, “You fully understand that you will go out with me in the camps—you and your soldiers.”

And it came to pass in those days that the Philistines congregated their forces to go to war against Israel. Furthermore, Achish said to David, “Please understand that you and your soldiers will go out with me to where my army is.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so he is in the days the those and so gathers Philistines their camps to the war to engage in war in Israel. And so says Achish unto David, “Understanding you understand that with me you go out in the camps—you and your men.”

Septuagint

And it came to pass in those days that the Philistines gathered themselves together with their armies to go out to fight with Israel. And Anchus said to David, “Know surely that you will go forth to battle with me; and your men.”

Significant differences:

No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Samuel had died some time earlier, and people from all over Israel had attended his funeral in his hometown of Ramah. Meanwhile, Saul had been trying to get rid of everyone who spoke with the spirits of the dead. But one day the Philistines brought their soldiers together to attack Israel. Achish told David, “Of course, you know that you and your men must fight as part of our Philistine army.” David answered, “That will give you a chance to see for yourself just how well we can fight!” “In that case,” Achish said, “you and your men will always be my bodyguards.” [vv. 1–3].

The Message

During this time the Philistines mustered their troops to make war on Israel. Achish said to David, “You can count on this: You’re marching with my troops, you and your men.”

NLT

About that time the Philistines mustered their armies for another war with Israel. King Achish told David, “You and your men will be expected to join me in battle.”

TEV

Some time later the Philistines gathered their troops to fight Israel, and Achish said to David, “Of course you understand that you and your men are to fight on my side.”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™

At that time the Philistines had gathered their army to fight against Israel. Then Achish said to David, “You need to know that you and your men will be going with me into battle.”

JPS (Tanakh)

At that time the Philistines mustered their forces for war, to take the field against Israel. Achish said to David, “You know, of course, that you and your men must march out with my forces.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV In those days the Philistines gathered their forces for war, to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, "Understand that you and your men are to go out with me in the army."

HCSB At that time, the Philistines brought their military units together into one army to fight against Israel. So Achish said to David, "You know, of course, that you and your men must march out in the army with me."

WEB It happened in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. Achish said to David, Know assuredly that you shall go out with me in the army, you and your men.

Young's Updated LT And it comes to pass in those days, that the Philistines gather their camps for the war, to fight against Israel, and Achish says unto David, "You do certainly know that with me you do go out into the camp, you and your men."

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines decided to make another move against Israel. Achish tells David that he is expected to be allied with the Philistine army.

These first couple verses seem oddly out of place in this chapter. These are the only two verses which will deal with David and Achish; the rest of this chapter is all about Saul and the witch of Endor. The Latin Bible places these two verses with the previous chapter (which is reasonable and logical—however the Latin Bible then makes a mess out of the chapter divisions which follow).

1Samuel 28:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa or va (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָאֵה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâmîym (יָמַיִם) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
hëmmâh (הֵמָּה) [pronounced haym-mawh]	<i>they, those; themselves; these [with the definite article]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural personal pronoun	Strong's #1992 BDB #241

Translation: **And it happened** [or, *and it came to pass*; lit., *and it was*] **in those days...** The author of this book is making certain that it is clear that the events of this chapter fall during the same time period that David is living with his men in Philistia. In fact, we may, simply because of these words (and also because of some other things which will be stated in the next chapter), that this falls within the time frame of the year and four months that David

is living in Philistia (1Sam. 27:7). David has made raids on Gentile encampments in that general area, but he has told Achish that he is raiding Israel and Israel's allies.

This phrase is often used to begin a series of events, related in time to what has just occurred. This helps to explain why we have a chapter division at this point in the Masoretic text.

1Samuel 28:1b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâbats (קָבַצְוּ) [pronounced <i>kaw-BATS</i>]	<i>to take, to grasp with the hand; to collect; to congregate</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
machăneh (מַחֲנֵה) [pronounced <i>mah-khuh- NEH</i>]	<i>camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4264 BDB #334
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
tsâbâ' (צָבָא) [pronounced <i>tsaw^b-VAW</i>]	<i>army, war, or warfare</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #6635 DB #838
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced <i>law- KHAHM</i>]	<i>engage in battle, engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	Niphal infinitive construct	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Yis ^e râ`êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw- ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: ...the Philistines congregated their camps for war to fight against Israel.... The fact that we have a congregation of Philistines means that the five main cities of the Philistines had gathered together to fight against Israel. This suggests that there will be a commanding general from each city (like Achish of Gath) and under them

would be additional commanders. This helps to explain what otherwise might appear to be a breakdown in the command structure in 1Sam. 29.²

The Philistines were always looking to break out of their area and to claim more territory for themselves. They continually moved against Israel, to take away land for themselves. This was a typical time when the Philistine armies were gathered to attack Israel. What we don't find in Scripture is whether there was much of an exchange of land in these wars. Israel did not seem to take Philistine territory; that is, Israel rarely is the aggressor in these skirmishes. However, we have seen many times when Philistia moves against Israel.

I have mentioned just how messy the border between Israel and Philistia was. The Philistines apparently had owned Beth shan for much of its history, even though that is right in the midst of Manasseh. We have a hard time grasping that, as our borders tend to be quite clear, well-marked, and contiguous. However, what we find here is not unlike Israel in modern history. There are a few streets which are considered Palestinian, a few which are considered Israeli; and there are people of the wrong type living in each. The borders of Israel at the time of this writing are relatively fluid, and so it was in the days of Saul and before. In fact, there were apparently whole cities within Israel's borders which were essentially controlled by heathen (Judges 1:27, for instance).

Philistia's attacks against Israel appear to be almost an ongoing process without but a few breathing places in the Old Testament. It is very similar to the situation between the Israelis and the Palestinians today. In fact, the word *Palestine* is derived from the ancient name *Philistia*.

Now might be a good time to summarize the wars between Israel and Philistia. Bear in mind, these are wars and skirmishes which are recorded in Scripture; there is no reason to assume this is a comprehensive historical list.

The Wars Between Israel and Philistia up to the Death of Saul			
Scripture	Time Period	Incident	Outcome
Ex. 13:17	1440 B.C.	This is actually a non-aggression. God specifically led Israel so that they would not come in contact with the Philistines.	God did not want Israel to go to war against the Philistines and become discouraged. The implication is, they were the toughest and meanest peoples in the land.
Judges 3:31	1250 B.C.	We know very little about the first battle between the Jews and the Philistines, except that it seems to be a relatively small skirmish.	Shamgar ben Anath strikes down 600 Philistines with an ox-goad, delivering Israel.
Judges 10:6–7, 13:1 14:1–20	1108–1076 B.C.	There appears to be some intermingling between Israel and the Philistines; the Israelites began to worship the gods of the Philistines. God allows Israel to fall into the hands of the Philistines for 40 years.	God raised up Samson, who was an irritant to the Philistines. Woman easily swayed him (he becomes involved with the Philistine woman early on—Judges 14). These skirmishes escalated until Samson killed 1000 Philistine with the jawbone of an ass (Judges 15:15–16). As a result, Samson functions as a judge in Israel during the time of Philistine rule.

² Some generals will complain to Achish about David's presence and demand that he return home. If these generals were *under* the command of Achish, then their words would seem mutinous; however, if the demands come from the equals of Achish, then we no breakdown in the command structure.

The Wars Between Israel and Philistia up to the Death of Saul			
Scripture	Time Period	Incident	Outcome
Judges 16	1076–1074 B.C.	What occurred at this time tended to be more of a war between Samson and the Philistines. Delilah coaxed the secret of Sampson's strength from him, cut his hair, bound him, and took him to Gaza.	At Gaza, Samson's hair grew back, God the Holy Spirit again empowered him, and he killed thousands of Philistines. This apparently ended Philistine rule (although that is not made clear to us—1Sam. 4:9).
1Sam. 4	1050 B.C.	The Philistines appear to be the aggressors, as their troops are parked in Ephraim near the Manasseh border.	The Israelites go and fetch the Ark as a last ditch effort—sort of as a good luck charm, and the Philistines take this from them.
1Sam. 5–6	1050 B.C.	God makes war against the Philistines.	The Philistines return the Ark to Israel. God also kills some Israelites who treat the Ark in a trivial manner.
1Sam. 7	1048 B.C.	The Israelites gather in Mizpah against the Philistines.	God routes the Philistines and Israel takes back all of the cities which the Philistines had previously captured.
1Sam. 13:3–7	1045 B.C.	Jonathan strikes a Philistine outpost in Geba.	This act of aggression sets up a war between Israel and the Philistines. Many of the Jews hid themselves because of this.
1Sam. 13:11–14	1045 B.C.	Saul acts foolishly in response to the Philistine troops.	Saul loses his kingdom positionally.
1Sam. 13:15–23	1045-1040 B.C.	The Philistines set up outposts in Israel and strike Israel at will with raiding parties.	Like Jonathan's strike, these seem to be minor skirmishes, as opposed to an all-out war. They are living on Israel's land, and taking what they need to live. Israel's army does not possess weapons with which they can really fight with the Philistines.
1Sam. 14:1–23	1040 B.C.	Jonathan and a young man strike the Philistine camp in Michmash on their own.	Jonathan and this young man miraculously defeat an entire Philistine outpost. God also brought a great earthquake to this area, sending them on the run. Israel's army then pursued them to the border.
1Sam. 14:47–52	1050–1010 B.C.	During Saul's era, there apparently were many skirmishes with the Philistines.	It is not clear who was victorious overall. I suspect that this was a give and take situation throughout Saul's reign.

The Wars Between Israel and Philistia up to the Death of Saul			
Scripture	Time Period	Incident	Outcome
1Sam. 17	1030 B.C.	The Philistines gather in Socoh of Judah; Goliath, a huge man, challenges any Israelite to fight him—winner take all.	While Saul and all of his men are in a panic, David offers to fight this “uncircumcised Philistine who defies the armies of the living God.” David kills him and the army of Israel is pumped, and they chase the Philistines back to Gath and Ekron.
1Sam. 23:1–13	1025 B.C.	The Philistines besiege the city of Keilah. David takes his refugees down there in response to God’s urging.	David and his men, in their first military endeavor, defeat the Philistines, and deliver Keilah. However, Saul brings his army down, not to assist, but to get David and David flees (finding out that the people of Keilah will turn him in to Saul).
1Sam. 23:15–29	1020 B.C.	Saul is pursuing David in the wilderness of Maon. When he is just about to catch up to him, he hears that the Philistines have made a raid against Israel.	Saul takes his army to deal with this raid. We are not told the outcome of Saul versus the Philistines here; however, it is obvious that it was resolved and Saul was still alive.
1Sam. 28, 31	1005 B.C.	The Philistines gathered in Shunem to fight Israel. Saul is in a panic and he goes to a medium and Saul asks to talk to Samuel. Samuel tells Saul that he will join him the next day.	We pick this battle up in 1Sam. 31 and the Philistines have the army of Israel on the run. They killed Saul and his sons. Israel fled the cities in that area and the Philistines moved into them. The Philistines also hung the bodies of Saul and his sons and the walls of Beth shan (some valiant Jews did take the bodies and burned them).

These dates are given only by way of approximation. Just to get a rough idea when these battles took place. There are many opinions as to the actual time periods here.

Although this may seem like a lot of wars, remember that we are dealing with God’s people and those who are absolutely negative towards the gospel. Therefore, we would expect as many fights between the Philistines and the Jews as we have between the Palestinians and the Jews today. I suspect there were several wars left out of this history.

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1Samuel 28:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾākīysh (אֲכִישׁ) [pronounced <i>aw-KEESH</i>]	transliterated <i>Achish</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #397 BDB #37
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e]</i>	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dāvid (דָּוִד); also Dāvīyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
yādaʿ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHĠ</i>]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
yādaʿ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHĠ</i>]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kīy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object) with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85
yātsâʾ (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i>]	<i>to go out, to come out, to come forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
machăneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced <i>mah-khuh-NEH</i>]	<i>camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #4264 BDB #334

Translation: ...Furthermore [lit., and], Achish said to David, “You fully understand that you will go out with me in the camps... Achish calls David in (which is more likely than Achish going to David directly) and tells him, “You

understand that, as a part of this country, you must take part in our military maneuvers.” The idea is, it did not matter whether these attacks were against Israel or anyone else. Furthermore, since Achish thought that David was attacking southern Judah anyway, that expecting David to join him was an easy thing to ask. This obviously puts David in a very tough spot. He is beholden to Achish; it appears as though he has already spent much of his time attacking Israel; and, as an adult male, he has an obligation to defend the country in which he has chosen to live.

Gill writes: *David, and whereby he was like to be drawn into a dilemma; either to fight against his country, which he could not do conscientiously; or be guilty of ingratitude to Achish, and incur his displeasure, and be liable to be turned out of his country, or treated in a worse manner, even he and his men, to be seized on and cut to pieces by the forces of the Philistines, should he refuse.*³ Do you see the moral dilemmas which result when you move a little out of God’s will and direction for your life? David went to Philistia originally just to escape Saul’s constant hounding; now he finds himself in the compromised position of being expected to go to war against his own country.

1Samuel 28:1d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong’s #859 BDB #61
w ^o (or v ^o) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions, soldiers, companions</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #376 BDB #35

Translation: ...—[you and your soldiers](#).” It is not just David that Achish expect to join him; he expects for David to bring his army with him. At this point, Achish is possibly testing the waters. He expects David to function in a support role; however, it is not clear yet exactly what that role will be. To some, this may appear to be an uneasy alliance between these two. Achish trusts David, as we have been told; but he is not necessarily a fool. Some may think, Achish has come to David and exactly what part David will play in his assault will depend upon David’s reaction. One might assert that Achish is not 100% certain as to how David will react. Achish has presented David with what would normally be expected under the conditions of becoming a part of Philistia.

On the other hand, given David’s response, and what Achish says after that (in the next verse), Achish seems very willing to place a great deal of faith in David. It is more likely that Achish is not feeling David out here, but simply including him in what would be seen as one’s normal duties to one’s country. Recall the last thing that Achish said at the end of 1Sam. 27: [“He has made himself odious among his people Israel; therefore, he will become my servant forever.”](#) The same verse tells us that Achish trusts David. So, I don’t think that Achish’s approach is tentative in the least. I think he expects a positive reaction from David and is willing to place great trust in David.

When it comes to authorship, notice that we know David’s motivations in 1Sam. 27:11; we receive no similar peek into the mind of Achish (which results in some speculation on my part).

³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:1.

And so says David unto Achish, “For so you [even] you know [that] which does your servant.”

1 Samuel
28:2

David answered Achish, “Certainly you [even] you will know that which your servant will [can?] do.”

And so says Achish unto David, “For so a keeper to my head I make you all the days.”

Then Achish said to David, “Certainly I will make you my bodyguard [lit., a *guard with reference to my head*] perpetually.”

David answered Achish, “Now you will see what your servant can do.”

Then David said to David, “I will make you my permanent bodyguard from now on.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And David said to Achis, “Now you will know what your servant will do.” And Achis said to David, “And I will appoint you to guard my life forever.”
Masoretic Text	And so says David unto Achish, “For so you [even] you know [that] which does your servant.” And so says Achish unto David, “For so a keeper to my head I make you all the days.”
Septuagint	And David said the Anchus, “Thus now you will know what your servant will do.” And Anchus said to David, “So I will make you captain of my body guard continually.”

Significant differences: In the MT, the *you* is emphatic; in the LXX and the Vulgate, we have *now* instead. The Hebrew word for *you* cannot be mistaken for any Hebrew word translated *now*. It is not completely clear whether there are any actual differences in the second line of this verse. The LXX appears to be an interpretation of the MT.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David answered, "That will give you a chance to see for yourself just how well we can fight!" "In that case," Achish said, "you and your men will always be my bodyguards." [a portion of vv. 1–3, which were mixed together].
NAB	David answered Achish, “Good! Now you shall learn what your servant can do.” Then Achish said to David, “I shall appoint you my permanent bodyguard.”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)	David answered Achish, “You sure know what your servant will do.” “In that case,” Achish replied to David, “I will appoint you my bodyguard for life.”
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	David said to Achish, "Very well, you shall know what your servant can do." And Achish said to David, "Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life."
HCSB	David replied to Achish, "Good, you will find out what your servant can do." So Achish said to David, "Very well, I will appoint you as my permanent bodyguard."
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And David says unto Achish, “Therefore—you do know that which your servant does.” And Achish says unto David, “Therefore—keeper of my head I appoint you all the days.”

What is the gist of this verse? David appears to agree to join forces with Achish against the Jews. Achish makes David his permanent bodyguard.

1Samuel 28:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e]</i>	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾākîysh (אָכִישׁ) [pronounced <i>aw-KEESH</i>]	transliterated <i>Achish</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #397 BDB #37
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i>]	<i>so, thus; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted;</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
Together, the lâmed preposition and kên mean <i>therefore, according to such conditions, that being so; certainly, truly.</i>			
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahî-TAW</i>]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
In the Greek and Latin, we have <i>now</i> instead of <i>you</i> .			
yâdaʿ (יָדָע) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHĠ</i>]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
These possibly mean <i>that which; what.</i>			

1Samuel 28:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿāsâh (אָשָׂה) [pronounced ʿaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ʿE ^b -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: David answered Achish, “Certainly you [even] you will know that which your servant will [can?] do.” David’s answer appears to be vague and somewhat ambiguous; I assume that this allows the listener to take it in whatever way he chooses to take it. “You certainly know what your servant does.” Now, I base my assessment on this sentence alone. It is my opinion that David really does not know exactly what he will do; he is being plunged further and further into a morally ambiguous situation.

Despite David’s ambiguous response, most theologians to whom I refer roughly agree upon David’s thinking behind his response. Their interpretations differ, at most, by just a shade. Barnes suggests that David is thinking God will somehow bail him out of this mess—that God will keep him from having to fight against his own people.⁴ Matthew Henry supposes⁵ that David is essentially keeping his options open, giving Achish an ambiguous response while he himself tries to figure out his own next move. This way he makes no direct promise to Achish, and keeps his next move dependent upon what Achish says. Keil and Delitzsch tell us⁶ that David has made no distinct promise and that the words *your servant* are simply a periphrasis for the word *I*. Keil and Delitzsch further tell us that David is no doubt engaged in a frantic personal prayer with God to help him determine what he should do next. Gill writes: *It seems best of all to consider David as quite undetermined, and at a loss what to do, hoping that God in his providence would extricate him out of this difficulty, and direct him what he should do.*⁷ I doubt that David is awaiting direction from God; David does not consider God’s will until 1Sam. 30.

Clarke and I are most closely aligned; he remarks: *This was an equivocal answer; and could only be understood by his succeeding conduct. It might imply what he could do in favor of the Philistines against Israel; or in favor of Israel against the Philistines. Achish understood it in the former sense.*⁸ I think that David is certainly buying time with his answer, but the purpose is so that *he* can figure out what to do next; not so that God can guide him into doing what is proper and right.

Achish does not take this response as vague or noncommittal, regardless of the way that David meant it. Achish takes this as an unqualified affirmative response. Achish now has great trust in David, which will be made clear by what he says next.

1Samuel 28:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:2.

⁵ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:1–6.

⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:1–2.

⁷ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:2.

⁸ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:2. I did some very minor editing to the quotation.

1Samuel 28:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾākīysh (אָכִישׁ) [pronounced aw-KEESH]	transliterated <i>Achish</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #397 BDB #37
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced eʃ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dāvid (דָּוִד); also Dāvīyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʃ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, thus; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted;</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485

Together, the lâmed preposition and kên mean *therefore, according to such conditions, that being so; certainly, truly.*

shâmar (שָׁמַר) [pronounced shaw-MAR]	<i>a keeper of, a guard of, a watcher of, a preserver of</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #8104 BDB #1036
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ʃ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
rô`sh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced rohsh]	<i>head, top, chief, front, choicest</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910

Keeper of my head appears to be euphemistic for *personal bodyguard*.

sîym (סִיַּם) [pronounced seem]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohʃ]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
yâmîym (יָמַיִם) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398

Together, kôl + yâmîym mean *in all time, all the time, perpetually, forever, always.*

Translation: ...Then Achish said to David, “Certainly I will make you my bodyguard [lit., a guard with reference to my head] perpetually.” Achish was apparently satisfied with David’s response, even though it sounds noncommittal to me; and assigns David probably the most important job he could assign him: he made David his personal bodyguard. This indicates that Achish had great trust in David. Achish will be one of the leaders in this war against Israel (it is not clear if he is the head of this attack or not). We also know that the Philistines have before been routed when their leader is killed (as with Goliath). So Achish has a tremendous amount of trust in David. He is trusting David with his very life. It is unlikely that he suspects David of anything, given the position which he awards him.

You have got to think that this gets David to thinking. He is out of God’s geographical will. He is often out of fellowship. His anointment to become king of Israel was a long, long time ago. This man Achish is putting a great deal of trust in him. He treats David in the way that Saul should have treated him. He trusts David in the way that Saul should have trusted him. Perhaps David is thinking to himself, “Maybe this is where I should be.” David’s ambiguous response may not have been an attempt on his part to do anything but to think this situation through while talking to Achish. One can only imagine the confusion that must be in David’s soul. Saul could have trusted him completely, yet did not; here is a traditional enemy of the Jew, and he trusts David implicitly—with his very own life.

If I was going to teach this chronologically, I would move immediately to 1Sam. 29 and teach that first; and then come back and complete this chapter. The remainder of this chapter chronologically follows 1Sam. 29.

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The Stage is Set—the Philistine Army Gathers to War Against Israel

And Samuel died and so lament for him all Israel. And so they bury him in Ramah and [or, even] in his city. And Saul removed the mediums and the necromancers from the land. 1Samuel 28:3

Samuel had died and all Israel mourned for him. They buried him in Ramah—even his [own] city. Also, Saul had removed the mediums and the necromancers from the land [of Israel].

Saul had died and Israel mourned for him. They had buried him in Ramah, his hometown. Also, Saul had removed the mediums and necromancers from Israel.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And Samuel died and so lament for him all Israel. And so they bury him in Ramah and [or, even] in his city. And Saul removed the mediums and the necromancers from the land.
Peshitta	Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned over him and buried him in Ramtha, in his own sepulchre. And Saul had put away the diviners and the wizards out of the land.
Septuagint	And Samuel died, and all Israel lamented for him, and they bury him in his city, in Armathaim. And Saul had removed those who had in them diving spirits, and the wizards, out of the land

Significant differences: The Vulgate and Septuagint omit *even*. The Aramaic has Samuel being buried in his own *sepulcher* instead of his own *city*. Although it is possible the one might be confounded with the other in the Hebrew, it is highly unlikely. Those rendering he Peshitta probably were dealing with a faulty or damaged Hebrew manuscript.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

- CEV Samuel had died some time earlier, and people from all over Israel had attended his funeral in his hometown of Ramah. Meanwhile, Saul had been trying to get rid of everyone who spoke with the spirits of the dead. [The CEV combined vv. 1–3; primarily to list this verse first].
- The Message Samuel was now dead. All Israel had mourned his death and buried him in Ramah, his hometown. Saul had long since cleaned out all those who held seances with the dead.
- NAB Now Samuel had died and, after being mourned by all Israel, was buried in his city, Ramah. Meanwhile Saul had driven mediums and fortune-tellers out of the land.
- NLT Meanwhile, Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him. He was buried in Ramah, his hometown. And Saul had banned all mediums and psychics from the land of Israel.
- REB By this time Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own town; and Saul had banished from the land all who trafficked with ghosts and spirits.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

- God's Word™ Meanwhile, Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in his hometown Ramah. (Saul had rid the land of mediums and psychics.)

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- ESV Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own city. And Saul had put the mediums and the necromancers out of the land.
- MKJV And Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned him and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away the mediums and the spirit-knowers out of the land.
- Young's Updated LT And Samuel has died, and all Israel mourn for him, and bury him in Ramah, even in his city, and Saul has turned aside those having familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

What is the gist of this verse? We are reminded that Samuel had died and was buried. We are also told that Saul removed all of the necromancers and psychics from the land. This sets us up for what is to come.

1Samuel 28:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ו ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
שׁמׁוּאֵל (שְׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh^e-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
מׁוּת (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

Translation: *Samuel had died...* This is an interesting statement. We know from 1Sam. 25:1 that Samuel had died and was buried in his hometown of Ramah. First of all, even though the wording in these two passages are

very similar, they are not so close as to think that one was copied from the other. In other words, we could have two different authors here and we could have the same author. The fact that this information is almost precisely what we find in 1Sam. 25:1 is indicative of two possibilities: (1) we have a different author who is picking up this narrative from Samuel’s death; or (2) Samuel’s death is directly related to what will follow—what Saul has done and what he will do is a result or a natural consequence of Samuel’s death. If we do not find a reasonable connection between Samuel’s death and what follows, then it becomes more likely that the original source is a different author than the original source of the previous chapter (and possibly different from the previous two verses). For those who have read ahead, Samuel’s death and the lack of spiritists in the land is directly related to what is to follow.

In 1Sam. 25:1, Samuel’s death is stated in the imperfect tense, meaning that it probably occurred very close to the time period of the writing of 1Sam. 25. The author is not looking back on something which happened 50 years ago (which would call for a perfect tense); but it is almost as though that passage is written immediately following Samuel’s death, even before the 30 day mourning period is completed. Interestingly enough, the verb for *mourning* (or *grieving*) will be in the imperfect tense in both passages. This also implies an ongoing process among the people of Israel. This does not have to occur during the 30 day mourning period. Samuel was a very public figure and he was, in his day, the spiritual atlas for Israel. That is, through his life and his teaching, he provided Israel with an example of righteousness and grace as well as the teaching of righteousness and grace. The people of Israel learned from him and grew spiritually because of him. His life made the spiritual difference for thousands of people.

1Samuel 28:3b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
çâphad (צָפַד) [pronounced saw-FAHD]	<i>to lament, to grieve, to wail, to bewail</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #5594 BDB #704
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong’s # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong’s #3605 BDB #481
Yis ^o râ ^l êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis ^o -raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong’s #3478 BDB #975

Translation: ...and all Israel mourned for him. There appears to be a 30 day mourning period for any public figure in Israel. This does not mean that at day 31, everyone stops mourning. What happens at this point is, there is a spiritual gap, insofar as most people of Israel are aware. Their spiritual atlas is Samuel and he has gone to be with Jesus Christ; therefore, the people of Israel will continue to grieve his passing simply because there appears to be no replacement for him.

I want you recognize what has happened in Israel. Saul has killed off all of the priests save one; therefore, we would not expect to see any Tabernacle worship during this time period or any properly offered sacrifices. Although Samuel had established a prophet’s college, we do not seem to find any spiritual atlas who has come out of that college (apart from David, who appears to have observed there for a day or so). No one is aware of anyone writing Scripture, even though their position on divinely inspired writing is difficult to determine (it is safe

to assume that almost all Israel saw the books of Moses and Genesis as being of a divine nature—perhaps not as well-defined as our seminaries define Scriptural inspiration today); yet it is unclear whether the other extant writings were viewed in the same way (Joshua, Judges and Ruth; as well as Job). Furthermore, God’s Word was not as ubiquitous then as it is now. The king and the Tent of God probably both had copies of the first five books of Scripture. For this reason, those who have a spiritual stake in Israel will be concerned at the death of Samuel. They are not aware of anyone who can replace him. For his generation—in fact, for several generations—Samuel was the only spiritual leader they had known. Realize that to Israel, a spiritual leader was more important to them than the Word of God. This may be one of the defining characteristic differences between the Age of Israel and the Church Age (as the canon of Scripture had not been completed in the Age of Israel; however, half of it had been).

There are three, maybe four men who are potential spiritual Atlas’s for Israel

Potential Spiritual Atlas’s for Israel	
The Man	Why he is not a Spiritual Atlas at this Time
Samuel	Samuel is dead, therefore he no longer has a ministry in Israel. He was the spiritual Atlas of Israel up until his death.
King Saul	Saul would have been an ideal man to lead Israel, politically and spiritually; but he continually disobeyed direct, unequivocal orders from God—not the kind of person who could ever be a spiritual Atlas. Furthermore, Saul, as he got older, was eaten up by mental attitude sins.
David	David is not in Israel, and his spiritual example at this point in time is rather suspect. He is leading his men to attack other groups of people, apart from God’s guidance, and then he lies to Achish king of Gath about it. He is not ready to be a spiritual Atlas.
Abiathar the Priest	Abiathar is under David’s care, and without a public ministry.
Gad the Seer	Gad is actually our best candidate at this time. However, we have only seen him advise David one time in 1Sam. 22:5. He is apparently a writer of history of David and Israel at this time (1Chron. 29:29). He will also figure prominently into David’s life as David’s primary link to guidance from God. However, he never appears to have a very public ministry. He is one of the great unsung heroes of his time; but his interaction, apart from writing history of this time period, was primarily with David rather than with the people of Israel.
Nathan the Prophet	Nathan will not come on the scene until 2Samuel.

Therefore, at this time in history, Israel has no spiritual Atlas. The people mourned for Samuel’s death because they recognized to some degree that his death was a tremendous loss for Israel.

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1Samuel 28:3c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

1Samuel 28:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qâbar (קָבַר) [pronounced kaw-BAHR]	<i>to bury, to heap up a mound</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6912 BDB #868
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Râmâh (רָמָה) [pronounced raw-MAW]	<i>height, high place; transliterated Ramah</i>	feminine noun used primarily as a proper noun	Strong's #7413 BDB #928

Translation: ...They buried him in Ramah... Again, this is in the imperfect tense, and my first thought was that this indicates that Samuel was probably very recently buried, with respect to the time frame of the writing of this passage. The perfect tense looks upon an action from the standpoint of being completed; the imperfect tense sees the action as a process. We would tie Samuel's burial to his death and to the mourning of Israel. Because they are mourning still, his death and burial also seem current. On the other hand, since the loss of Samuel was felt for decades to follow, and because the burial of Samuel is part of the grieving process; this could indicate grief in the soul of the writer of this passage. In either case, the time between Samuel's death and the recording of this portion of Scripture is probably brief—my guess is less than 30 years (the final form of this passage may have been completed later, however).

1Samuel 28:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ġîyr (גֵּיִר) [pronounced ġeer]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

Translation: ...—even his [own] city. Samuel had a group of cities which he traveled to, as a circuit judge; however, he was born in Ramah and eventually made his home in Ramah (recall that he was raised by Eli in the Tabernacle of God). Because he chose Ramah as his home city, he was buried there as well.

1 Samuel 28:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
çûwr (סור) [pronounced <i>soor</i>]	<i>to cause to depart, to remove, to cause to go away; to turn away from</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
ʿôwb (בוב) [pronounced <i>oh^bv</i>]	<i>a water bottle or a skin-bottle; a medium, ventriloquist demon, familiar spirit, demon spirit, one who speaks through a person</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #178 BDB #15

You may wonder *what's the connection between a water bottle and a medium?* The connection is that one thing is filled up with another. A wine skin is filled with wine; a medium is filled with a demonic spirit. Now, you may wonder about this ventriloquist demon thing, so let me quote directly from Gesenius:⁹ [the] *LXX almost always render by ἐγγαστριμύθοι, ventriloquists, and correctly; because ventriloquists among the ancients commonly abused this art of inward speaking for magical purposes.*¹⁰

w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yidd ^e r ônîy (יִדְדֵי עֹנִי) [pronounced <i>yid-d^e-ôh-NEE</i>]	<i>demon-possessed person, necromancer, psychic, spiritist; the demon that possesses a person</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3049 BDB #396
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...Also, Saul had removed the mediums and the necromancers from the land [of Israel]. This is quite interesting, as this portion of v. 3 appears to be tied to what has already been found. Samuel has died, and Saul, as it will appear to be clear, is sort of lost. He has no one to guide him in anyway. This will also become more clear as this chapter unfolds. However, one thing that Saul has done is he has removed all of those who were demon-possessed or demon-influenced from the land. We are not given a time frame for this, and it is possible and reasonable that Saul chose to do this when Samuel died—perhaps as a tribute, perhaps in the mistaken notion that he had become Israel's spiritual leader. Another possible motivation is that Saul was bribing God to some degree. In any case, Saul did remove anyone who claimed to have a connection with the spirit world from

⁹ For those who do not know, Gesenius assembled pretty much the definitive Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon for the Old Testament. Although my version was printed in 1997, he did this in the mid-1800's.

¹⁰ H.W.F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 177.

Israel; and it is going to be clear that this is a decision that he will regret to some degree, as he will desire some guidance for himself.

We have two categories of spiritists in this verse. The first is the *ʿôbôwth* (אֹבֹת) [pronounced *ohb-^vOHTH*], known as the ventriloquist-demon. In case you have any doubts about this, read through the Hebrew exegesis above, where you will be given documentation. Strong's #178 BDB #15. This appears to be a person who allows a demon to speak through them; to use their vocal cords to speak. I would not be too surprised if there are a number of those in the tongues movement who allow this—and very likely, this is true of some of their leaders. We are not persuaded in Scripture to fall into any sort of a trance state nor to allow our voices to be used by anyone other than ourselves.

The second category of spiritist is called *yîdd^eʿônîy* (יִדְדֵי־עֹנִי) [pronounced *yid-d^e-ġoh-NEE*]. Whereas the *ʿowb* demon has some control over the vocal chords of the spiritist, this person seems to have an even more intimate relationship with a demon—his mind and/or his body is controlled or partially controlled by a demon. Saul removed all spiritists from Israel, which are summed up by these two categories. In making that statement, I should say that *all* does not really mean *all*. There were probably a handful of real spiritists and fakers who remained in Israel. The removal of these types is mandated in Ex. 22:18 Lev. 19:31 20:6, 27 Deu. 18:10–11 (actually, their execution is what is mandated).

With regards to psychics and necromancers, it appears that in those days, as well as today, there are those who were fakers; those who knew how to manipulate others. These pick up subtle clues from their marks and manage to give them what they want to hear. There also appear to be those who have some actual contact with the demon world—something which was allowed to come to a head during the time of our Lord. I think that it is reasonable today that most of these are fakers; however, there are possibly some who do have some limited contact with the demon world. I hesitate to offer any sort of mechanics here as to the manner of communication between a spiritist and a demon. There are possibly those who allow their vocal cords to be used by demons, or their entire bodies to be used by demons. I don't pretend to even have a clue as to the percentages involved here or to even to make the unqualified statement that there must be these kinds of possessed people out there. People commit crimes in a state of mental illness that certainly sounds like demon possession or demon influence (e.g., the woman who killed her five children here in Houston). However, one must be careful not to take what we observe and superimpose it upon Bible doctrine.

Application: Does this mean that we need to run all of the fortune tellers and palm readers out of town? No, as we have no such mandate for this dispensation. This was what was expected of Israel when Israel was a theocracy. However, those days are gone now; Israel is not a theocracy and neither are we. We cannot get God's plan for Israel mixed up with God's plan for the United States (or whatever country you reside in). There are parallels, to be sure; but not everything is a direct carryover.

I have, on several occasions, made mention of the Jewish way of thinking—that they would write with reference to topics rather than with reference to chronology. That is, a topical approach would trump a chronological approach. This is what we find here. Samuel's death was mentioned sometime ago; however, it is pertinent to this chapter—to the events which take place. That Saul removed the spiritists from Israel—this probably took place over several years early in his reign—we can only speculate as to the time that this took place—but that he did remove the spiritists is topically related to this chapter. That the Philistines were ready to war against Israel and that Israel is in a dire situation—that is topically relevant. So, the beginning of this chapter sets us up for all that is going to come to pass in 1Sam. 28. This appears to be a separate literary unit. That is, the writer of this portion of Scripture inserts important pieces of information, some of which we are already aware from what we have read, and some things that we are not aware of. However, this information is presented to us as if we do not have a complete background to the events which are going to take place. That being said, bear in mind, as these events unfold, who would be the person who actually observed these events. Samuel is dead, so he did not record these events. David is miles away, so he did not record these events. The remaining priest is with David at this time, so he did not record these events. Saul and Jonathan and Saul's other sons will all die, so they could not have recorded these events (besides which, Saul's sons did not witness any of these events). So, what we have in this chapter is a fascinating bit of history, but recorded probably as a separate literary unit by someone

who probably did not record much else by way of Scripture. The most logical person to record this information is one of Saul’s trusted aides who goes with him. In any case, bear this in mind as we continue examining this particular series of events.

And so are gathered Philistines and so they come in and so they encamp in Shunem. And so collects Saul all Israel and so they encamp in the Gilboa.

1Samuel
28:4

The Philistines are gathered; they enter [Israel] and they bivouac in Shunem. Saul also gathers all Israel and they bivouac in Gilboa.

Achish gathers the Philistines and they enter into Israel and bivouac in Shunem. Saul also gathered all Israel and they bivouacked in Gilboa.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

- Masoretic Text And so are gathered Philistines and so they come in and so they encamp in Shunem. And so collects Saul all Israel and so they encamp in the Gilboa.
- Peshitta And the Philistines gathered themselves together and came and encamped in Shechem; and Saul gathered all Israel together, and they encamped in Gilgal.
- Septuagint And the Philistines assemble themselves and they come and encamp in Sonam; and Saul gathers all the men of Israel and they encamp in Gelbue.

Significant differences: Very minor differences. The LXX adds in *...the men of...*, which could be for clarification. The Peshitta has the Philistines gathering in Shechem, rather than Shunem.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

- CEV The Philistines went to Shunem and set up camp. Saul called the army of Israel together, and they set up their camp in Gilboa.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

- God’s Word*™ The Philistines assembled and camped in Shunem. Saul also assembled the whole Israelite army, and they camped at Gilboa.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- HCSB The Philistines came together and camped at Shunem. So Saul gathered all Israel, and they camped at Gilboa.
- Young’s Updated LT* And the Philistines are gathered, and come in, and encamp in Shunem, and Saul gathers all Israel, and they encamp in Gilboa,...

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines gathered all of their troops in Shunem and the Israelites gathered their troops in Gilboa.

1Samuel 28:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wāw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

1Samuel 28:4a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
qâbats (קָבַטְוּ) [pronounced kaw-BATS]	<i>to be gathered, to be collected, to be congregated, to congregate selves</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: [The Philistines are gathered](#);... We probably have a gathering of Philistines from all Philistine cities and territories; therefore, Achish is there with his equals from the other four Philistine cities. Each leader gathered a huge army to devastate Israel.

The language in this particular verse is very specific. The Philistine armies will originally gather in Aphek (1Sam. 29:1). From there, they will come in to Shunem and make camp there before their assault against Israel. So, to put some of these events in order:

The Chronological Order of 1Samuel 28–29

1. Achish elicits David's aid in 1Sam. 28:1–2.
2. David goes with Achish to Aphek, where the Philistine armies first gather (1Sam. 29:1–2).
3. The Philistine generals reject David as an ally (1Sam. 29:3–10).
4. David and his men return to their camp in Ziklag (1Sam. 29:11).
5. Simultaneously, the Philistine armies gather together in Shunem (1Sam. 28:4). David goes south while the Philistine armies go north.
6. Saul goes to the witch of Endor (1Sam. 28:7–25).

When we get to 1Sam. 31, I will become more specific, following the armies of David, Saul and the Philistines along a time line.

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1Samuel 28:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw ⁷ (בּוֹאוּ) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chânah (חָנָה) [pronounced khaw-NAW]	<i>to bivouac, to camp, to encamp in [or, against], to set up camp</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2583 BDB #333

1 Samuel 28:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Shûwnêm (שׁוֹנֵם) [pronounced shoo-NAYM]	transliterated <i>Shunem</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #7766 BDB #1002

Translation: ...they enter [Israel] and they bivouac in Shunem. When it says that this Philistine army goes *in*; they are going into Israel; they are crossing over the border from Philistia and they set up camp in Shunem. This appears to be the typical way that the Philistines functioned. They would move into a city in Israel or a city near Israel and bivouac. They may have gone up along the sea coast and come in the valley of Jezreel from the west, or there is a road they may have used, which begins at Aphek (see 1Sam. 29:1).¹¹ When the Philistines moved their armies to a point to the deep interior of Israel, this indicated to all of Israel that they were ready to attack.

Shunem is the generally accepted reading; however, the Aramaic has Shechem. Shunem is a city in Issachar (Joshua 19:18), whose name is also found on a list of cities conquered by Thutmose III (1490–1436 B.C.) as well as in the Amarna letters. This is the first mention of Shunem since its listing in the book of Joshua. We will find it named two more times in Scripture. David has a nurse, Abishag, a Shunammite (which is the feminine form of Shunem). Adonijah makes an unsuccessful attempt to marry her, in order to give more validity to his claim to the throne (1Kings 2:13–22). Elisha also will stay in Shunem (2Kings 4:8).¹² In roughly the same spot is the modern village of Sulem, which is along a mountain range known as *Little Hermon*.

What I have found interesting about the Philistine attacks is, they usually move northward into northern Israel, rather than westward across Judah (which is closer to the primary Philistine cities). It is possible that the Philistines found those in the north easier prey than those in Judah. It is very likely that they already dominated certain cities in northern central Israel as well.

Edersheim writes: *The reason why the scene of battle was laid so far north, distant alike from the cities of the Philistine princes and from the residence of Saul, was, in all probability, that the Philistines now wished to obtain such undoubted supremacy in the north of Palestine as they seem to have virtually possessed in the south. A great victory in Jezreel would not only cut the land, so to speak, in two, but give them the key both to the south and to the north. With this view, then, the Philistines chose their gourd. Where the great plain of Esdraelon shelves down to the Jordan it is broken in the east by two mountain-ranges. On the southern side of the valley, which is here about three miles wide, are the mountains of Gilboa, and at their foot, or rather spur, lies Jezreel, where the spring which gushes down is gathered into a pool of considerable size. On the northern side of the valley is Little Hermon, and at its foot the rich village of Shunem (the "twin rest"). Behind and to the north of Little Hermon runs another narrow branch of the plain. On its other side is the mountain where Endor lay amidst most desolate scenery; and in one of its many limestone caves was the scene of Saul's last interview with Samuel.*¹³

¹¹ 1Sam. 29 probably immediately preceded or was coterminous with 1Sam. 28.

¹² This was all taken from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 5, p. 423.

¹³ Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*; ©1995 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; p. 503.

1Samuel 28:4c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâbats (קָבַט) [pronounced <i>kaw-BATS</i>]	<i>to take, to grasp with the hand; to collect; to congregate</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975

Translation: [Saul also gathers all Israel...](#) As king, Saul's primary duty is to protect Israel. That means, when it comes to aggressive actions on the part of other nations, it was up to Saul to gather an army and respond to these actions. Therefore, Saul had no choice but to gather his army (here, called *all Israel*) and set up camp opposite the Philistines.

You may wonder what it means when Saul gathers *all Israel*. This does not mean that he gathers up every man, woman and child and moves next to the Philistines. However, what is implied is, Saul gathers up as many men as he possibly can. This apparently is not just his standing army; and it is not his standing army plus some of their friends. Saul gathered as many men as he could possibly gather. Given this action and what is to follow indicates that he is more fearful in this battle than in any of those which preceded.

1Samuel 28:4d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâbats (קָבַט) [pronounced <i>kaw-BATS</i>]	<i>to take, to grasp with the hand; to collect; to congregate</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6908 BDB #867
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Gil ^e bbô' a (גִּלְבּוֹא) [pronounced <i>gil-BOH-ahg</i>]	transliterated <i>Gilboa</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #1533 BDB #162

Translation: ...and they bivouac in Gilboa. Saul needs to move his army into place as well. So he takes them to Gilboa. Interestingly enough, Gilboa is only mentioned with respect to this battle and its aftermath, and nowhere else. (1Sam. 28:4 31:1, 8 2Sam. 1:6, 21 21:12 1Chron. 10:1, 8). One of my maps places Mount Gilboa in northern Manasseh, which borders Issachar. Mount Gilboa and Shunem would be approximately 5 or so miles apart (Keil and Delitzsch have the two villages as being 2 hours apart¹⁴), which is in keeping with the positioning of the troops. They are clearly visible to one another (1Sam. 28:5). The deep valley of Jezreel lies between them.¹⁵ ZPEB tells us¹⁶ that this mountain range is 8 miles long and from 3 to 5 miles wide, south-southwest of the Sea of Galilee. Its highest point is listed as 1696 ft. above sea level, although there is a relatively steep 2000 ft. drop on its eastern side, toward the Jordan River. On the western side, we have a more gradual drop to the Plain of Esdraelon, which is 300 ft. above sea level. It is on this western side where Saul and his sons will lose their lives (which we will cover in greater detail in 1Sam. 31). The modern name for Mount Gilboa today is Jebel Fukuak; however, its name is preserved in the village of Jelbon.¹⁷

There were actually a number of famous battles and incidents which took place near Mount Gilboa, none of which actually name Mount Gilboa. I will list these below:¹⁸

How Mount Gilboa Fits into the History of Israel

Scripture	Incident
From secular sources	Thutmose III of Egypt fought the Canaanites in nearby Megiddo. Circa 1460 B.C.
Judges 4–5	The Torrent of Kidron, which flows down from Mount Gilboa, was instrumental in Deborah's defeat of Sisera.
Judges 6:33	The Midianites, the Amalekites and others gathered themselves in the valley of Jezreel to meet Gideon. Jezreel is on the western spur of Gilboa.
1Kings 18:45 2Kings 9:15	Jezreel was the summer capital of the house of Omri. Jezreel was about 200 ft. above the plane and overlooked the Way of the Sea (the trade route between Egypt and Damascus) as well as the highway which ran between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River.
2Kings 9	Jehu murdered Joram of Israel and his mother Jezebel, and <i>he pursued and murdered Ahaziah of Judah</i> as well.
2Kings 23:29 2Chron. 35:20–27	Pharaoh Neco came through nearby plain of Megiddo, with intentions of attacking the Assyrians. King Josiah took it into his own hands to meet Neco and was killed by Neco's archers. 608 B.C.

So even though Mount Gilboa is not mentioned by name in these battles, there is a lot of history which takes place at its foot.

If you read these last few chapters in 1 Samuel carefully, you might become confused—Saul is said to gather the troops by a spring in Jezreel (1Sam. 29:1b) and he is also said to be at the foot of Mount Gilboa (1Sam. 31:1a). Achish and the Philistines are said to gather in Aphek (1Sam. 29:1a) but they are also said to gather in Shunem (1Sam. 28:4). These accounts, if you read them carefully, sound as though they might be histories recorded by different people simply because, even though we are dealing with the same series of incidents, each chapter

¹⁴ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:4–5.

¹⁵ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:4.

¹⁶ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 2, pp. 722–723.

¹⁷ Taken from Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:4.

¹⁸ *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 2, pp. 722–723.

seems to be a separate, almost isolated, incident. Jezreel is at the foot of Mount Gilboa, so Saul calls for his troops to gather there. The Philistines initially begin to gather their troops in Aphek, in order to see what they were working with. Once they were organized, then they marched into Israel and encamped in Shunem. When we get to 1Sam. 31, I will put all of the incidents of the final few chapters of 1Samuel into chronological order (which they are not as they stand).

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And so sees Saul camp of Philistines and so he is afraid and so trembles his heart greatly. 1Samuel 28:5 **Saul saw the camp of the Philistines and he was afraid and his heart greatly trembled.**

When Saul saw the encampment of the Philistines, he became afraid and his heart was pounding from anxiety.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so sees Saul camp of Philistines and so he is afraid and so trembles his heart greatly.
Peshitta	And when Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.
Septuagint	And Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, and he was alarmed, and his heart was greatly dismayed.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Saul took one look at the Philistine army and started shaking with fear.
NLT	When Saul saw the vast Philistine army, he became frantic with fear.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	When Saul looked at the Philistine army, he was very afraid-terrified.
JPS (Tanakh)	When Saul saw the Philistine force, his heart trembled with fear.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And Saul sees the camp of the Philistines, and fears, and his heart trembles greatly.

What is the gist of this verse? Saul became extremely afraid when he saw the camp of the Philistines.

1Samuel 28:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

1Samuel 28:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
Shâ`ûwl (שָׂאֻל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
machăneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced mah-khuh-NEH]	<i>camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4264 BDB #334
P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: [Saul saw the camp of the Philistines...](#) Saul looks out from the mountains of Gilboa across the valley of Jezreel below, to the village of Shunem. He can see the Philistines gather more and more troops. With every few hours, there seem to be more and more Philistine battalions enter into this area and find a spot for themselves and camp.

As you get older, you lose some of your fearlessness. Saul, as a young man, was a fearless warrior and he was a great general. However, as he got older and crazier, he no longer had enough inner strength to deal with this kind of pressure. First, instead of gathering his general fighting force, Saul gathers up all of the men he possibly can. Still, when he looks at the Philistines, he is still taken aback. Apparently, Achish has gathered a significant group of Philistines.

1Samuel 28:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yârê` (יָרֵא) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

Translation: [...and he was afraid...](#) Saul looks out at these Philistines from afar and he is struck with great fear. It is strong and Saul has no control over it. Some men use this fear to push their adrenalin. However, Saul instead is rendered almost incapable of functioning.

There is an odd thing that occurs in one's life. Children and even teenagers are fearless. They do not feel as though anything can harm them. However, as a person gets older, his fears tend to increase. Saul is no exception. He began as a very good military leader, exhibiting little or no fear; but in this impending war, Saul will exhibit strong pre-battle jitters.

1Samuel 28:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
chârad (רָדַד) [pronounced <i>chaw-rahd</i>]	<i>to tremble, to be terrified, to be frightened</i>	3 rd person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2729 BDB #353
lêb (לֵב) [pronounced <i>lay^bv</i>]	<i>heart, inner man, mind, will, thinking</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3820 BDB #524
m ^e ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced <i>m^e-ODE</i>]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

Translation: ...and his heart greatly trembled. Today, we might use the phrase, *his heart was pounding*. The idea is, Saul is unable to think logically through all of this. He had no dying grace; and he knew he was dying. At the end of this chapter, Saul will be struck immobile by his fear.

Matthew Henry comments at this point: *Had Saul kept close to God, he needed not have been afraid at the sight of an army of Philistines; but now that he had provoked God to forsake him his interest failed, his armies dwindled and looked mean, and, which was worse, his spirits failed him, his heart sunk within him, a guilty conscience made him tremble at the shaking of a leaf. Now he remembered the guilty blood of the Amalekites which he had spared, and the innocent blood of the priests which he had spilt. His sins were set in order before his eyes, which put him into confusion, embarrassed all his counsels, robbed him of all his courage, and produced in him a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. Note, **Troubles are terrors to the children of disobedience.***¹⁹ Although we really do not know what was in Saul's mind at this point, apart from being afraid for his own life, what Henry suggests here is reasonable. Saul may be doing an inventory of his own shortcomings and personal rebellion against God; and he may be simply paralyzed with fear for his own life.

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God Will Not Answer Saul, so Saul Seeks out a Medium

And so asks Saul in Y^ehowah and had not answered him Y^ehowah, either in dreams or in the lights [or, *Urim*] or in the prophets.

1Samuel
28:6

So Saul inquired of [lit., *in, before, in the presence of*] Y^ehowah but Y^ehowah did not answer him, either by dreams, by Urim or by the prophets.

So Saul inquired of Jehovah, but Jehovah did not answer him—not by dreams, by Urim or by the prophets.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And he consulted the Lord, and he answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by priests, nor by prophets.

¹⁹ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:1–6.

Masoretic Text And so asks Saul in Yehowah and had not answered him Yehowah, either in dreams or in the lights [or, Urim] or in the prophets.
Peshitta And when Saul inquired of the LORD, He did not answer him, either by dreams or by fire or by prophets.
Septuagint And Saul inquired of the Lord; and the Lord answered him not by dreams, nor by manifestations, nor by prophets.

Significant differences: None, except that those who translated *Urim* were uncertain as to its meaning. The translation from the Latin Vulgate reads *priests*, which is really not a bad translation, given that David will consult Abiathar the priest about God’s will in 1Sam. 30:7. You may say that Saul killed all of the priests of Nob, which he certainly did (apart from Abiathar, who is with David). However, this does not mean that Saul has not hired a personal priest to travel with his troops (we find that sort of thing occurring in the final few chapters of the Judges). You may object to this, and say, *Saul is against God; he is certainly not going to hire a Levite to act as his personal priest*. Saul is irrational. Do not think that everything he does is going to make sense. Saul’s greatest ally is David and Saul has spent years trying to kill David.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV So he asked the LORD what to do. But the LORD would not answer, either in a dream or by a priest or a prophet.
NLT He asked the LORD what he should do, but the LORD refused to answer him, either by dreams or by sacred lots [Hebrew, *by Urim*] or by the prophets.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™ He prayed to the LORD, but the LORD didn’t answer him through dreams, the Urim, or prophets.
JPS (Tanakh) And Saul inquired of the LORD, but eh LORD did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by prophets.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible When Saul inquired of he Lord, He refused to answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim [a symbol worn by the priest, when seeking the will of God for Israel], or by the prophets. [Prov. 1:24–30.]
Updated Emphasized Bible Then Saul inquired of Yahweh, but Yahweh did not answer him—not by dreams, nor by the lights [or, *Urim*], nor by prophets.
HCSB He inquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him in dreams or by the Urim or by the prophets.
Young’s Updated LT And Saul asks at Jehovah, and Jehovah has not answered him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets.

What is the gist of this verse? Saul did inquire of God what was going to happen and what it was he should do, but God would not answer Saul—not in dreams, not by the Urim, and not by the prophets.

1Samuel 28:6a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

1Samuel 28:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shâ'al (שָׁאַל) [pronounced shaw-AHL]	<i>to ask, to petition, to request, to inquire; to demand; to question, to interrogate</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7592 BDB #981
This is a very common word, and often used to inquire of God (1Sam. 22:13 23:2, 4 30:8) but not exclusively (1Chron. 10:13). This is also the word upon which Saul's name is based, and the two used together is alliterative (1Sam. 14:37 28:6).			
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
'ânâh (עָנָה) [pronounced gaw-NAWH]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: *So Saul inquired of [lit., in, before, in the presence of] Y^ehowah but Y^ehowah did not answer him,...* Samuel was no longer there, and had not been with Saul for some time, so Saul apparently gathered some people around him who supposedly spoke for God. That is, he had places to go, or people he could call upon, for this information. Whether he gathered these people to himself or whether he inquired of his troops to see if they knew someone is unknown. As we examine the various types of revelation below, we will go into greater detail.

Before we go on, we should clear up an apparent discrepancy. In 1Chron. 10:13–14, we read: *So Saul died for his trespass which he committed against Jehovah, because the word of Jehovah, which he did not keep; and also because he asked counsel of a medium, making an inquiry; and he did not inquire of Jehovah. Therefore, He killed him, and turned the kingdom over to David, the son of Jesse.* This should lead us to ask...

Has Saul Inquired of Jehovah or Not?

There are several possible explanations to help explain what this verse means in the light of 1Chron. 10:13–14.

1. What we have is, for a long time, Saul ignored God, did not seek revelation from God, and, when God

Has Saul Inquired of Jehovah or Not?

revealed His will to Saul, Saul disobeyed God’s will. So, for an extended period of time, Saul did not inquire of God at all. He just did whatever he felt was right. As Matthew Henry put it, *Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon Him while He is near; for there is a time when he will not be found.** There was a time when Saul could have called upon God, but that time is long past.

2. Matthew Henry offers a second explanation: *He had forfeited the benefit of all the methods of enquiry. Could he that hated and persecuted Samuel and David, who were both prophets, expect to be answered by prophets? Could he that had slain the high priest, expect to be answered by Urim? Or could he that had sinned away the Spirit of grace, expect to be answered by dreams? No. Be not deceived, God is not mocked.*** When Saul had access to God, he ignored God’s unequivocal directives (e.g., he did not kill all of the Amalekites).
3. There is another explanation; Saul may have only come to God while out of fellowship, which seems very likely. In fact, Saul has probably been out of fellowship for a decade or more. So, from Saul’s point of view, he was approaching God and asking for guidance. However, from God’s point of view (which is much of what we have in the book of Chronicles), Saul had not approached Him. You cannot approach God out of fellowship. *If I have iniquity in my heart, He will not hear me* (Psalm 66:18).
4. Conclusion: even though I believe that #3 is the correct explanation here, that does not mean that there are not elements of the previous two explanations which figure in here.

* Isa. 55:6 is quoted by Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:1–6.

** Ibid. Henry is quoted Gal. 6:7.

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1Samuel 28:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so; either...or</i> (but not used disjunctively)	when gam is repeated	Strong’s #1571 BDB #168
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong’s # BDB #88
chälôwm (חַלּוֹמִים) [pronounced <i>khuh-LOHM</i>]	<i>dream</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong’s #2472 BDB #321

Translation: *...either by dreams...* When it came to specific responses from God concerning this situation or that, there were several ways which God used to speak to someone. General doctrinal principles could be gotten from Scripture, which was limited in those days, both in size and availability; so God allowed man to communicate with Him in other ways. One method by which God spoke to man was through his dreams, something which we find a great deal of in the book of Genesis, where revelation was limited to some historical records (which make up the book of Genesis). We find revelatory dreams to be rather rare elsewhere in Scripture (although God did use dreams on occasion).

Recall that Saul is out of fellowship, all day long; so that he goes to bed out of fellowship with God. Therefore, there is no reason to think that Saul would hear anything from God by dreams.

1Samuel 28:6c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so; either...or</i> (but not used disjunctively)	when gam is repeated	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
אֲוִרִים [אֲוִרִים] [pronounced <i>oo-REEM</i>]	<i>lights; revelations and is transliterated Urim</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #224 BDB #21

Translation: ...by Urim... If you will recall, there was a method by which the priest could determine certain pieces of information from God—he had this vest with stones that represented each tribe of Israel and Urim and Thummim, whose exact nature is disputed (see the [Doctrine of Urim and Thummim—PDF version](#), found in Deut. 33:8). I don't know what Saul did here. I suspect that Saul had a personal priest or a set of personal priests (which is very likely, as this seemed to be common in the book of the Judges). I don't know if he seized the priest's vesture or not when he executed the priests in Nob; or if he had a copy made (recall that the one priest who escaped Saul—Abiathar—probably had the Ephod—see the discussion in 1Sam. 23:9). In any case, Saul probably had the real thing or an imitation—this is why Urim is mentioned. In either case, God chose not to answer him by this.

This certain bears a few points of discussion.

A few Points on a Personal Priest

Any man who functions as a personal priest to Saul, similar to what we find at the end of the book of the Judges, can't really be a man with direct ties to God. Therefore, can't he just make something up when Saul asks him a question? In other words, it tells us here that Saul received no information by Urim, which implies that he had a personal priest there—why didn't this priest simply make up an answer for Saul?

1. Even a priest who is out of fellowship will have his life on the line with Saul.
2. We do not know exactly the relationship between God and such a priest; although it makes sense that God did not actually communicate directly with a personal priest.
3. A priest may have offered sacrifices and counseled with Saul, but when asked a direct question about God's plans for Saul's future, he could always say, "I'm not getting any information about that."
4. Finally, recall the prophet Balaam who was asked to curse Israel. God apparently did not allow him to do this. We do not know whether God had ever actually spoken through Balaam before; but God would not allow Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22–24).

My point is, even if Saul did have a personal priest and prophet, they were unable to give him any information about this particular war against the Philistines.

This particular verse, where God does not answer Saul by dreams or by Urim indicates that he probably did have a personal priest (or several) whom God would not communicate with.

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Now, it is possible that God has not answered Saul by Urim because this is in the control of Abiathar, who is with David. So Saul does not have access in this way to God. Furthermore, when Saul will complain to Samuel that God is not listening to him, he says that God will not speak to him by dreams or by prophets only; he does not mention priests nor does he mention Urim and Thummim (1Sam. 28:15). This *might* simply indicate that Saul has no personal access via the Ephod; however, I believe Saul is simply making two groups of God’s access to him—either directly or through a man of God. *Prophets* would include all men of God, including priests. Although no priest is ever directly alluded to with respect to Saul, apart from this verse, I believe that Saul had a priest who traveled with him, along the lines of those priests from the tribe of Levi that we saw in the book of Judges (for a time, this would have been Ahijah, who apparently did have the Ephod of God—1Sam. 14:3, 18). Whether Ahijah was still with him or not is never told to us; however, the Ephod of God was clearly kept in Nob for awhile, and then taken by the hand of Abiathar to David (1Sam. 21:9 22:20 23:6–9). This suggests to me that this phrase—[So Saul inquired of Jehovah, but Jehovah did not answer him—not by dreams, by Urim or by the prophets](#)—is not simply a reference to Saul and his lack of communication with God over the past few days, but really extends back several years if not a decade or two.

Although I have given you what I believe is the correct explanation, there are several other theories about Saul and the Urim.

Various Explanations of Saul and Urim

Explanation	Commentary
Saul had a personal priest—Ahijah—who, apparently, had been unable to guide Saul for some time (say, for at least the previous decade). Although this priest did have the Ephod of God, he returned to Nob with the Ephod at some unspecified time.	<p>The idea is, this verse applies to Saul and his relationship to God over the past decade or so. He had a priest—possibly a legitimate priest—but he never properly utilized the priest, and, at some point in time, the priest was unable to provide him with any direction. In 1Sam. 14:18, Saul calls for Ahijah and the Ephod, but he never asks a question. After this point in time, Saul probably asks the priest about where David is, so that he can kill David—something which the priest could not provide information (as David is God’s anointed). When it became apparent that Ahijah was of no real use to him, Saul sent him back to Nob and probably had him executed later on as well.</p> <p>If Saul took on another private priest after this time, we are not told.</p>
Saul added a private priest to his entourage who was a <i>yes man</i> just like the rest of those under him. This priest had made his own Ephod.	Many Levites, who had old sin natures just like anyone else, offered themselves out as personal priests. We find this same thing occur at the end of the book of the Judges. The design of the ephod was in Scripture, so a priest would be able to construct another ephod, as Abiathar had the original ephod with him.
Saul did not have a priest, a personal priest or the Ephod; therefore, God could not answer him in that way.	It just seems odd that the author of this portion of Scripture would comment that God had not answered Saul by Urim if that option was not even available to him. That this is mentioned implies that Saul had some sort of access. 1Sam. 14:3, 18 indicate that Saul did have some access to the Ephod of God; at least for awhile.

Various Explanations of Saul and Urim

Explanation	Commentary
<p>After killing off all of the priests save one, Saul set up another priesthood to function in the Tabernacle.</p>	<p>However, I don't see Saul as having done this; furthermore, this sudden influx of Philistine soldiers does not give Saul the luxury to make to many trips away from his camp. Saul was probably frustrated with the priests for two reasons: (1) they did not help him find David (I cannot back this up with Scripture); and (2) he assumed that they were on David's side and helped him out without informing him (1Sam. 21–22).</p>
<p>The remaining Levites established a priesthood from who remained and resumed the function of the Tabernacle. They also constructed a new Ephod.²⁰</p>	<p>This makes a great deal of sense. You have men dedicated to the ministry of the Tabernacle and suddenly, after a mass execution, they would not all become farmers or ranchers (they have no land which belongs to them). So they established a new priesthood. Now, whether Saul went to them for guidance is questionable. First, he does not have a lot of time; secondly, if Saul went to Nob and killed all of the priests, these new priests are going to extremely wary of Saul and his visits (and Saul might not go back to the priest city himself, given what he had done). This tells us that there was a dual high priesthood for awhile, which is what is suggested by 2Sam. 8:17 15:35 19:11 20:25 1Chron. 6:8, 53 16:39 18:16, early in David's reign as king (they are actually never called <i>High Priests</i>, as there was only to be one High Priest). What appears to be the case is, a new high priest line was established in the line of Eleazar, beginning with Zadok. This seems to be tentative at first, since no one is referred to during this time period as the <i>High Priest</i>. The priests appear to have congregated in Gibeon (see 1Chron. 16:39) following Saul's mass execution of them at Nob in 1Sam. 22.</p> <p>Note, that this explanation appears to make the most sense if we understand God's non-communication for Saul to be of a recent nature; that is, 1Sam. 28:6 refers to Saul in his final days. However, if we take this verse to apply to Saul over the past decade or so, then we do not need to subscribe to this theory.</p>

Since we are not given the details here, this is simply educated speculation. Given that Saul did wipe out the priesthood, and that there was only one remaining priest who was with David, what is said here must be explained.

I want you to understand that all of this is simply speculation. There are no contradictions here that I am attempting to iron out; there is no real problem with this passage. I am simply trying to fill in some blanks in God's non-communication with Saul that this passage does not address.

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Saul probably had a personal priest; however, there is no reason to believe that this priest had the ability to hear God. A priest who could speak with God would not work directly for Saul. What we have here, at best, is an illegitimate priest hired by Saul. God certainly would not speak to Saul through this priest.

²⁰ Suggested by Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:6.

1Samuel 28:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so; either...or</i> (but not used disjunctively)	when gam is repeated	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
nābîy' (נְבִיִּים) [pronounced <i>naw^b-VEE</i>]	<i>spokesman, speaker, prophet</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5030 BDB #611

Translation: *...or by the prophets.* Finally, Saul probably traveled with prophets or was able to get prophets from Samuel's old school of prophets. There were possibly those who advertised themselves as such and Saul grabbed them up. However, God would not speak to Saul through these prophets. We already know that God can choose to limit His revelation, even through prophets whose spirituality is in question (recall Balaam in Num. 22–24). So, whomever Saul had at his disposal was not revealing any information either because God gave him no information to reveal.

We have talked about this passage in comparison to what we find in 1Chron. 10:13–14. Since God has not answered Saul at all, we may reasonably suppose that Saul is out of fellowship. The reason that God does not answer Saul is, God does not hear Saul. Now you may think, God hears everything that is said; and, in one way, you are correct. However, when it comes to His own, His children, God only listens when we are in fellowship. Therefore, God will only answer Saul when Saul prays to God while in fellowship. The fact that Saul receives no answer from God whatsoever indicates that Saul is out of fellowship and has no intention of getting back into fellowship.

How can I explain this? God hears everything we say and yet does not hear some things. Have you ever called out to your child to come into the house when he is playing and he ignored you? He may have heard your voice; he possibly even heard the words that you said; but, he behaves as though you have said nothing whatsoever.

Application: There are several things to note here: first of all, your prayers and calls for help may go no higher than the ceiling if you are out of fellowship. There is abundant Scripture to document this truth. The second thing to note is, there is a point at which it is too late. Saul has gotten to a point where, it is too late for him. He is playing out the last few moves of a chess game, and he will have few, if any choices. He can lose this way or he can lose that way; but those are his only choices. Finally, why should God speak to someone who does not want to hear Him? Why should God speak to anyone who will not listen to Him? Do you know why so many people pray to God, but apart from that, they have little or no spiritual activity in their lives? That is, they don't go to church, they don't give regularly, they don't study the Bible—but they do pray. They pray because they want God to hear what they have to say, but they aren't really all that interested in anything that God might have to say to them. "These are my problems, God; these are my difficulties. Now you fix them, okay?" It doesn't matter if 90% of their problems they caused themselves; they want God to fix them, and then for God to leave them alone until the next set of problems comes along.

And so says Saul to his servants, “Seek for me a woman of a mistress of a [ventriloquist] demon and I would go to her and I would inquire in her.”

1Samuel
28:7

So Saul said to his servants, “Seek out for me a woman [who] possesses [or, a *mistress of*] a [demonic] spirit that I may go to her and inquire of her.”

And so say his servants unto him, “Behold, a woman of a mistress of a [ventriloquist] demon in Endor.”

His servants said to him, “Listen, [there is] a woman [who] possesses [or, a *mistress of*] a [demonic] spirit in Endor.”

Saul then said to his servants, “Seek out a woman for me—one who possesses a demonic spirit, that I may go to her and ask her questions.”

His servants answered him, saying, “Look, there is a woman in Endor who possesses and demonic spirit.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says Saul to his servants, “Seek for me a woman of a mistress of a [ventriloquist] demon and I would go to her and I would inquire in her. And so say his servants unto him, “Behold, a woman of a mistress of a [ventriloquist] demon in Endor.”

Peshitta

Then Saul said to his servants, “Seek me a woman who has a familiar spirit, that I may go to her and inquire of her.” And his servants said to him, “Behold, there is a woman who has a familiar spirit at Endor.”

Septuagint

Then Saul said to his servants, “Seek for me a woman who has in her a divining spirit, and I will go to her and inquire of her.” And his servants said to him, “Behold, a woman who has in her a diving spirit at Ændor.”

Significant differences:

The relationship between the woman and the spirit (or demon) appear to be different; however, I believe that is simply the interpretation given by the translator of both the LXX and the Peshitta. Therefore, there are no significant differences between the Greek and Hebrew here.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

Then Saul told his officers, "Find me a woman who can talk to the spirits of the dead. I'll go to her and find out what's going to happen." His servants told him, "There's a woman at Endor who can talk to spirits of the dead."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™

Saul told his officers, "Find me a woman who conjures up the dead. Then I'll go to her and ask for her services." His officers told him, "There is a woman at Endor who conjures up the dead."

JPS (Tanakh)

Then Saul said to his courtiers, “Find me a woman who consults ghosts, so that I can go to her and inquire through her.” And his courtiers told him that there was a woman in En-dor who consulted ghosts.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

The Amplified Bible

Then Saul said to his servants, Find me a woman who is a medium [between the living and the dead], that I may go and inquire of her. His servants said, Behold, there is a woman who is a medium at Endor.

HCSB Saul then said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium, so I can go and consult her." His servants replied, "There is a woman at Endor who is a medium. And Saul said to his servants, Seek me a woman *who is* a medium, so that I may go to her and inquire of her. And his servant said to him, Behold, *there is* a woman *who is* a medium, at Endor.

MKJV And Saul said to his servants, Seek me a woman *who is* a medium, so that I may go to her and inquire of her. And his servant said to him, Behold, *there is* a woman *who is* a medium, at Endor.

Young's Updated LT And Saul says to his servants, "Seek for me a woman possessing a familiar spirit, and I go unto her, and inquire of her;" and his servants say unto him, "Lo, a woman possessing a familiar spirit in En-dor."

What is the gist of this verse? Since Saul was unable to contact God, he decided to contact the dead. He asks his servants if they knew of a medium, and they knew of one who resided in Endor.

1Samuel 28:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוֹאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lamed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>Ē^B-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: *So Saul said to his servants,...* Saul depended upon his men a great deal. In fact, it is amazing that he inspired them to follow him, given his mental state and his neediness. However, we have already seen that Saul could very cleverly put a spin on this situation or that. He was able to either twist the actions that he has done (as he did when he offered animal sacrifices instead of Samuel) or he could twist what others did (he made a convincing argument that David had turned Saul's own son against him). This would indicate that he could lead, even though he was in a questionable mental state. Furthermore, sometimes such a state can work in favor of a man in a leadership role—his servants assume that he will kill them if he gets mad at them. Not that this is the proper way to wield authority; but it is apparently working for Saul.

One of the popular topics today is putting a *spin* on this or that event; or giving an interpretation to an event in such a way to give it meaning that it may or may not have. We have newscasters who say they present the news from the *no-spin* zone. Saul was a man who put a spin on the things which happened. David was seen to be a seditionist who led his own son Jonathan astray, even though these facts are untrue. Saul was able to put a spin on the things which Jonathan and David did in order to make this interpretation of the events reasonable.

Now, earlier, I suggested that Saul had a personal priest, something which was not unknown to those times. His dependence upon his men here supports that viewpoint. That is, Saul does not have to go outside his circle of followers in order to get what he feels he needs to get. Saul has surrounded himself by *yes-men*. Therefore, their views are going to be clouded and limited. Later on, we will get a list of David's mighty men, and the first few times I read that I simply assume that this immortalized those men who served under him. However, what strikes me now as I read this list (2Sam. 23:8–39) is that these are men of very different origins and backgrounds. David

chose very diverse men to be under him that gave him a broader view of this world. Now, there were times that those under David took matters into their own hands and acted outside of David's will—on the other hand, there are at least two instances when prophets walked up to David, the King of Israel, poked him in the chest, and said, "King David, you are wrong; you are out of fellowship; you have acted against God." Can you imagine someone doing that to King Saul? Except for Samuel, for whom Saul had build up a great deal of respect over the man years (and Samuel also installed Saul as king), people could not walk up to Saul and challenge him. Even when his own son Jonathan withstood him over the matter of David's allegiance, Saul would have none of it. In fact, Saul did not just publicly berate his own son, he almost killed him (1Sam. 20:25–34).

Application: If you have a possession with some authority, and there are people who are under you, cultivate your relationship with those with whom you tend to disagree; or, hire people who have a background which is not the same as the others who are under you. If you are unable to deal with disagreements or differing opinions, then you should not have a position of authority. This, of course, does not mean that every idea verbalized by those of a different viewpoint is right; nor does it mean that every view espoused by your *yes men* is wrong. However, if you have a position of authority, you should utilize the resources that you have—those under you are not simply extensions of your volition, but they have thoughts and ideas and opinions which may benefit you and the organization for which you all work. You have to get over yourself and you have to have enough humility to honestly listen to others; you need to have enough humility to give some thought to their opinions.

1Samuel 28:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
bâqash (בָּקַשׁ) [pronounced <i>baw-KAHSH</i>]	<i>seek, search out, desire, strive after, attempt to get, require, demand, ask, seek with desire and diligence</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Piel imperative	Strong's #1245 BDB #134
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61
baʿălâh (בַּעֲלָה) [pronounced <i>bah-ġuh-LAW</i>]	<i>mistress; possessed of, endowed with [a demonic spirit]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1172 BDB #128
Baʿălâh is the feminine form of baʿal (which we may recognize as <i>baal</i>). Baʿal properly means <i>owner, lord, husband</i> . Strong's #1167 BDB #127. Therefore, the apparently disparate meanings assigned here to baʿălâh are, in fact, reasonable. ²¹			
ʾôwb (אוֹב) [pronounced <i>oh^bv</i>]	<i>a water bottle or a skin-bottle; a medium, ventriloquist demon, familiar spirit, demon spirit, one who speaks through a person</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #178 BDB #15

²¹ Given that baʿălâh occurs only in three passages (1Sam. 28:7 1Kings 17:17 Nahum 3:4), I had assumed that there were too many meanings assigned to this word. However, the meanings of the cognate justify the variety of meanings which I have listed.

Translation: ...“Seek out for me a woman [who] possesses [or, a mistress of] a [demonic] spirit... Saul asks his men about a specific type of woman—a woman who is the mistress of or a possessor of a ventriloquist demon. This means, a demon can speak through the woman.

Saul has no way to tell what is going to happen and he is very apprehensive about the recent events which have taken place. Many people today respond as he does—they seek spiritists, those who read Tarot cards, those who read palms or tea leaves. There are some who seek a modern-day prophet, although, at the time that I write this, there are very few of those.

One of the most humorous aspects of the modern-day tongues movement is, in a *Holy Ghost-filled church* (I am being facetious here), almost everyone there speaks tongues, but few if any of them are prophets. Despite the fact that they go to 1Cor. 14 and lift out a few verses to support their confused theology, they ignore that Paul urges them to desire the gift of prophecy over the gift of tongues. Instead, all new initiates into their program is encouraged to lean their head back and to start warbling (in order to get the gift of tongues). Nobody corners them and encourages them to start prophesying. Do they really want a new convert, someone they can sort of lead and boss around, start using the gift of prophesy and turn things around—that is, become their boss, their chief? Hell no! They don't want their new converts to become their leaders! They don't want their new initiates to start calling the shots from day one. Furthermore, there is the additional problem that, the gift of prophecy is just too damned easy to verify. Someone could stand up and say, “Hey, guys, I'm a prophet.” But when his prophecies did not come to pass, that would pretty much eliminate him from the line of prophets (and, of course, someone might go to the Old Testament and find the passage where such a man should be killed—a charismatic is going to be quite mixed up on dispensations—that automatically is a part of being a charismatic). As you can see, charismatics cannot go along with all of 1Cor. 14—they cannot encourage members of the flock to prophesy, because that opens up a whole set of problems that they are ill equipped to deal with. However, getting their initiates the babble, well, that is much easier to do. First off, their little superiority trip of leading the convert into tongues remains in tact. No matter gibberish the convert spouts out, everyone is going to be excited and praise him for speaking in tongues, since, no matter what it is, automatically they will simply classify it as the tongues of angels—Holy Ghost language. There is no verification that can be done at this point. No one can say, “The guy is just babbling” because babbling from a sincere and earnest believers mouth has to be how angels talk. You see? There can be no room for arguing here. No matter how lame the babbling sounds, no one can dispute it. Prophecy, on the other hand, is just too easy to dispute. “Charley Brown said such-and-such was going to happen, but it die not. Charley Brown must be a false prophet. It says here in the Law of Moses that we have to put these false prophets to death.” A charismatic church is looking to build up its congregation; they can't be killing them off.

I have digressed. It is interesting that Saul has requested a *woman* who possesses a spirit. We do not have any particular reason why this is, and we could speculate. There is no reason to think that possessions are confined to women; there is no Biblical basis for that. Maybe Saul wanted to feel like he could handle whatever happened; and going to a woman was easier for him to handle? Maybe going to a woman was more comforting to Saul—sort of like going to a mother figure. Again, all of this is speculation, as we do not get to look inside the mind of Saul for his motivation in this respect. A possible explanation is, those who possessed a spirit were typically women during that time.

1Samuel 28:7c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê suffix	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229

1Samuel 28:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>The voluntative is alluded to in Owen's, but I can't find this terminology in any of my Hebrew grammar books, nor in Zodhiates or any other Hebrew source whatsoever. This is probably the jussive. What we have here is the letter hê as a suffix to the verb. I am going to tentatively go with the idea of being compelled by oneself and use the words <i>let, I must, I could, I would</i>. The next verb will also have a voluntative hê suffix.</p>			
<p>ʿel (עַל) [pronounced eʿ]</p>	<p><i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i></p>	<p>directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3rd person feminine singular suffix</p>	<p>Strong's #413 BDB #39</p>

Translation: *...that I may go to her...* My guess is, to the more discerning of his men, Saul's apprehension was perspicuous. However, to others, his desire to speak to a medium was not that far out of the ordinary (if you knew someone and they wanted to speak to someone who threw Tarot cards, you would not necessarily blow a gasket).²² But Saul is making it clear that he wants to find someone in touch with the spirit world to speak to. As we will see, it is Samuel to whom Saul wants to speak. Since he is dead, Saul hopes to contact him by someone who can speak with the dead.

I should point out, at this time, is there is no end run around God. God has decreed that there is no contact between the living and the dead, apart from Jesus arising from the grave (Luke 16:20–31). Therefore, going to a psychic is not going to allow you to chat with anyone who has passed on. God will allow Samuel to speak to Saul, indicating that such a thing is possible. However, this is only with God's permission; and note, the end result is not something which Saul will find to be a warm and fuzzy experience. Saul will become extremely despondent as a result of this incident.

1Samuel 28:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>w^e (or v^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]</p>	<p><i>and, even, then; namely</i></p>	<p>simple wâw conjunction</p>	<p>No Strong's # BDB #251</p>
<p>dârash (דָּרַשׁ) [pronounced daw-RASH]</p>	<p><i>to seek, to make inquiries concerning, to consult, to investigate, to study, to follow, to inquire</i></p>	<p>1st person singular, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê suffix</p>	<p>Strong's #1875 BDB #205</p>
<p>This is a different verb that is found in v. 6 and more often used for inquiries made of demon-influenced people (1Sam. 28:7 2Kings 1:2 Isa. 8:19 19:3).</p>			
<p>b^e (בְּ) [pronounced b^{eh}]</p>	<p><i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i></p>	<p>a preposition of proximity with the 3rd person feminine singular suffix</p>	<p>No Strong's # BDB #88</p>

²² Maybe you would.

Translation: ...and inquire by her.” Saul is in a tight spot and he has questions about what is to occur. I suspect that he has this gnawing sense of dread hanging over him. I have been in a couple situations where it feels as though the ceiling is caving in on me, and I have experienced this terrific sense of dread as well.²³

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown nicely summarize this: *Overwhelmed in perplexity and fear, he yet found the common and legitimate channels of communication with Heaven shut against him. And so, under the impulse of that dark, distempered, superstitious spirit which had overmastered him, he resolved, in desperation, to seek the aid of one of those fortune telling impostors whom, in accordance with the divine command (Lev. 19:31 20:6, 27 Deut. 18:11), he had set himself formerly to exterminate from his kingdom.*²⁴

What Isaiah said is applicable here: [When they say to you, "Consult the spirits of the dead and the spiritists who chirp and mutter," shouldn't a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?](#) (Isa. 8:19).

Application: What do we do today? We have a personal problem, we have some decisions to face, we find ourselves at a crossroads. We might pray like crazy, but is God going to speak to us so that we unequivocally hear him? Will it be audible? Will it be clearly spoken to us in our hearts? Will we get an answer in the mail? One thing that should be clear to you is that God does not audibly speak directly anyone today. When someone talks to you about God coming to them in a dream or about Jesus Christ dropping in on them while they are watching *Lavern and Shirley*,²⁵ and then sits down on the couch and chats for a bit; most of us have the sense to reduce the number of social events where we come into contact with such people. Knowing this, what do we do? Knowing that we cannot go to spiritists; knowing that we cannot depend upon the human viewpoint of others; knowing that God is not going to come to us in a dream and speak to us; that we will not audibly hear His voice—what do we do? We have a *more certain word of prophecy*. We have the Word of God and the filling of the Spirit. My personal experience: I am over 50 years old as I write this; since I have become a Christian, and since I got with doctrine (the daily study of God’s Word) over 20 years ago, I have never faced a decision which I could not make. I have dealt with several life-altering decisions, and, in retrospect, it was surprising how easily everything proceeded and how easily I made whatever decisions needed to be made and how everything fell right into place. Now, don’t misunderstand me—I have not made a series of right decisions and I have not always acted correctly and without sin. I am not some great holy saint who just walks a little closer to God than you do, and, therefore, my life and the decisions pertaining thereto are pretty damned easy. It is quite the opposite. I have made bad decisions. I have sinned knowingly. I have made mistakes. I have made errors in judgment. However, not one time have I ever gone left, when I should have gone right; and been able to point to God and say, “Hey, God, you should have guided me better at this point.” God’s guidance has always been at my disposal. All failures with respect to the decisions I have made rest securely on my own shoulders; every mistake I have made has never once been attributable to God’s unclear guidance. Not one time, can I complain to God, saying, “Why didn’t you guide me more carefully along this path?” And, not one time has God come to me and spoken audibly; not one time has God sent me a telegram from heaven; I have not experienced any other-worldly experiences which guided me in my life. God is the Creator of all things; God rules over the universe. Do you think He finds it difficult to guide you in your day-to-day life? The biggest obstacle in making correct decisions in your life is you. If you name your sins to God, every time that you sin; if you get under a good pastor-teacher who teaches the entire Word of God, line by line, verse by verse; then making choices in your life will not be difficult. Sure, you may choose against God’s plan—we all do—but that will be a choice you knowingly make; you will not make the wrong choice because God’s directives are unclear.

Application: By the way, there is no shortcut here. You don’t get to ignore the teaching of God’s Word day after day after day, and then, when you find yourself in a jam, run to a Christian counselor and ask him to make all of your decisions for you. We believers are not put on this earth to run the lives of other believers. When Onesimus

²³ The end result, by the way, despite my unfaithfulness, has always been good.

²⁴ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; from e-sword, 1Sam. 28:3.

²⁵ I know, you think I am kidding here; but I’m not. This is an assertion of one of the charismatics.

the slave ran away from Philemon his master, Paul did not order Onesimus to return to his master, nor did Paul order Philemon to receive Onesimus as a freeman. Paul asked Onesimus to return to his master Philemon, not knowing what Philemon would do. Paul asked Philemon to free Onesimus but he did not order him to do so. Paul writes: **I did not want to do anything without your consent, that your goodness should not be by compulsion, but of your own free will** (Philemon 14). This is Paul the Apostle. He had great authority over the churches in the Roman empire. Had he wanted to, he could have given orders to anyone to do just about anything. Instead, Paul put the issues before the slave Onesimus and his owner Philemon, and left it up to them to make the right decisions. Paul could have gotten another believer or two to go along with Onesimus in his return, to make certain that he did return to Philemon. Then these believers could have spiritually intimidated Philemon in order to see that Paul's wishes were granted (i.e., that Onesimus was freed and returned to Paul). God has given you free will, and God gives you the option of using your free will again and again. Your choices are meaningful. When you learn enough doctrine to guide to, and then when you make the right decision, based upon the doctrine in your soul, without being coerced by members of your church, this is divine good. You have just socked away more retirement money for your eternity. Now, if several members of your church coerce your decisions, and then you make these decisions because you are too embarrassed to do otherwise, this means nothing in eternity—not for you and not for them. You will not be rewarded nor will they.

Application: If you are in a church where the decisions of your life are made because you are coerced by members of your church, then you are in the wrong church. Here is something which very few Christians understand: yes, it is wrong to sin, and you should not sin. However, if you choose not to sin simply because of social coercion, then no one is better off. It is not the job of the church to see that fewer sins are committed, and to do this by any means possible. Let's say the pastor of your church Xeroxed off a list of sins, handed them to Charley Brown, and then instructed Charley Brown to follow you around to make sure you did not commit these sins, is everyone better off? Hell no! However, we have churches which do this all the time—it's called discipling; and those churches which are a little more worldly might call it mentoring. Again, it is not the job of any church to reduce the number of sins committed in this world by any means possible.

Application: So you don't go overboard, there is some behavior which is monitored by the church, by the deacons, at the discretion of the pastor. There are some overt sins which should not be tolerated in the church. For instance, a man openly carried on an incestuous relationship with his father's wife (it apparently was not his own mother)—Paul heard about this from a long distance away, so the activity was carried on overtly. The Corinthians should have removed the man and his mistress from the church; they did not, so Paul had to deliver them over to Satan for the sin unto death (1Cor. 5:1–5). A church should not tolerate those who commit overt sins in church or whose behavior in church makes it clear that they are embracing teachings which are contrary to the church. To be more particular, a church cannot condone behavior which compromises the learning of doctrine. For instance, there might be a prostitute who quietly shows up and takes in doctrine, and no one really knows her background. However, there might be a prostitute who shows up and hands out business cards—well, that is a problem. There might be a person in church who, outside the church, is very vocal about his own opinions and they are often in opposition to the church. However, in church, he is willing to sit and listen quietly. That is not a problem. However, if this same person is standing up in the middle of the service voicing his opinion, or he harumphs continually when the pastor says something he does not like, or, if he stands out in the foyer handing out literature which is in opposition to the teaching of the church, then this man needs to go. The key to separation is, *does this person compromise doctrine? Does this person keep others from learning the Word of God?* Now, I may find Charley Brown to be offensive and I may not personally like Charley Brown and I might even be able to find things which Charley Brown does which are sinful (if I follow him around enough). However, if I can sit down next to Charley Brown and, in fellowship, learn the Word of God in church, then I have no reason to ask for him to be removed from the church. Let's see if I can phrase this in another way—it is not the severity of the sins which this or that person commits when outside of the church; it is a matter of, does that person consistently keep others from learning the Word of God. And, so there is no misunderstanding, you do not get to remove someone from church just because you don't like him. There are a lot of people I don't particularly want to hang with after church; that does not mean that we cannot attend church together at the same time and all take in a maximum amount of doctrine.

You may question how could Saul outlaw witchcraft, and now he desires to speak with a witch; but there is no consistency in sin. Do not expect Saul to be logical and do not expect him to be consistent. In fact, inconsistency marks Saul's character. He would realize on one day how wrong he has been to pursue David's life; and on the next day, he would be urging his men to go out and hunt for David. When a person is out of fellowship, they will lack consistency.

1 Samuel 28:7e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʿebed (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>ĠE^B-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i>]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Translation: ...His servants said to him,... Note the difference in the prepositions. When Saul speaks *to* his servants, we find the lamed preposition. When his servants speak *to* him, we find the ʾel preposition. The latter preposition indicates respect or deference. Now go back to v. 7c: Saul is going to go *unto* this demon possessed woman. He is expressing respect for this woman, despite the fact that he removed these types from Israel.

Earlier, I spoke of having a diverse group of individuals under you—those who are not *yes men*. That is, obviously, not the case for Saul. No one speaks up and says, “You outlawed spiritists; you yourself know that it is wrong to go to them.” Saul wants to speak to a spiritist, and his underlings simply want to go along with whatever he wants.

Application: If those who are under you are *yes men*, then you will have no one to guide you in the proper direction when you go astray.

1 Samuel 28:7f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hên (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hayn</i>]	<i>lo!, behold, observe, look, look here, get this, listen, listen up</i>	interjection	Strong's #2005 BDB #243
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61
baʿălâh (בַּעֲלָהּ) [pronounced <i>bah-guh-LAW</i>]	<i>mistress; possessed of, endowed with [a demonic spirit]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1172 BDB #128

1Samuel 28:7f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Ba'ālâh is the feminine form of ba'al (which we may recognize as <i>baal</i>). Ba'al properly means <i>owner, lord, husband</i> . Strong's #1167 BDB #127. Therefore, the apparently disparate meanings assigned here to ba'ālâh are reasonable.			
ʾôwb (אוב) [pronounced <i>oh^bv</i>]	<i>a water bottle or a skin-bottle; a medium, ventriloquist demon, familiar spirit, demon, spirit, one who speaks through a person</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #178 BDB #15
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿêyn Dôwr (עין דור) [pronounce <i>gayn-DOHR</i>]	<i>spring [or fountain] of habitation; and is transliterated Endor</i>	proper noun; location	Strong's #5874 BDB #745
This is a combination of Strong's #5869 BDB #733 (<i>an eye; a face; a fountain, a spring</i>) and Strong's #1755 BDB #189 (<i>an age, a generation, a period; an habitation</i>).			

Translation: ... “Listen, [there is] a woman [who] possesses [or, a mistress of] a [demonic] spirit in Endor.” People are so eager to find contradictions in Scripture that this would be a reasonable place to go. Saul has removed all the spiritists and mediums from Israel, but right here, we find one in Endor. Isn't that a glaring contradiction? Of course not! Don't be ridiculous! Just because a state outlaws prostitution and just because this law is vigorously enforced does not mean that prostitutes do not exist in that state. The difference is, there will be a lot fewer spiritists in business in Israel with a billboard outside their house saying, “Spiritist; Inquire Within.” Some have certainly left Israel—possibly even some were executed—but some would simply *go underground*, which is the situation we have here.

By the way, one of the poorest arguments against this or that law is, *well, some people are not going to obey that law*. First of all, *Duh!!* If no one murdered anyone else, then we would not need a law which outlaws murder; if no one stole from anyone else, then we would not need a law which outlawed stealing. We have laws in place simply because people are going to engage in those activities. The law, ideally, will discourage some; and it will give society options of how to deal with a person who engages in these activities. Most countries outlaw prostitution and drug trafficking—this does not mean that there will not be prostitutes; this does not mean that people will not deal in drugs—this simply gives society a way to deal with these people who do these things. If society moves to a point where these things are no longer viewed as seriously wrong, then these laws may be repealed. At one time, adultery was against the law; homosexual behavior was against the law. In the Bible, these are clearly sins, and, during a period of time in our history, we were willing to outlaw these things. However, that is no longer the case; and the same may happen with prostitution and with drug usage.

Endor is located on the east side of the Hill of Moreh. Israel is camped in Jezreel on the north slopes of Mount Gilboa. The Philistines are encamped on the west side of the Hill of Moreh. The Valley of Jezreel lies, in part, between them. In order for Saul and these two men to get to Endor, roughly ten miles away,²⁶ they will have to travel down into the valley and around the Hill of Moreh, traveling counterclockwise from south of the hill to Endor. This means that Saul will move dangerously close to the Philistine encampment. He will be disguised and this will be done at the dead of night. When he is in Endor, then we will be on the opposite side of the Hill of Moreh from the Philistine army.

²⁶ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:7–14.

We know about Endor primarily from the events recorded in this chapter. It means *fountain (or spring) of habitation*, which simply means that there is a spring or fountain there, around which the city is built (or so the name suggests). Endor is named only in three places in Scripture: Joshua 17:11 1Sam. 28:7 Psalm 83:10. In Joshua 17:11, it sounds as though this is a city originally given to Issachar, but that it was later awarded to Manasseh. Another interpretation, which makes more sense, is that these cities were always possessions of West Manasseh and the verbiage of this verse simply indicates that they are along the border of Manasseh (and the other tribes which are named).

The verse in Psalm 83 references Judges 4–5, when Deborah and Barak faced Jabin and Sisera. The Israelite soldiers attacked the Canaanites. They proceeded down the west face of Mount Tabor to route the Canaanites on chariots. The storm caused by God and the attack of the Israelites cause the Canaanites to flee in all directions. One group of them no doubt retreated by Endor, which is at the eastern foot of the Hill of Moreh, which is across the valley from Mount Tabor. The psalmist implies that many Canaanite soldiers were killed in this general area. It is interesting because, even though the geography fits, the city of Endor is not mentioned by name in the book of Judges account.

Perhaps what follows should be a footnote—this is from Gill’s commentary: *It is a tradition of the Jews that this woman was the mother of Abner, the wife of Zephaniah; some say her name was Zephaniah; but, as Abarbinel observes, if so she would have known Saul, and also Saul would have known her, and what she was, if, as they say, she was spared because of her relation to him; nor needed he to have inquired of his servants for such a woman.*²⁷

Saul will apparently say, “Okay, then, let’s go to her.” Matthew Henry makes some apt observations at this point: *Herein Saul is chargeable [with the following offenses]: 1. With contempt of the God of Israel; as if any creature could do him a kindness when God had left him and frowned upon him. 2. With contradiction to himself. He knew the heinousness of the sin of witchcraft, else he would not have cut off those that had familiar spirits; yet now he had recourse to that as an oracle which he had before condemned as an abomination. It is common for men to inveigh severely against those sins which they are in no temptation to, but afterwards to be themselves overcome by them. Had one told Saul, when he was destroying the witches, that he himself would, ere long, consult with one, he would have said, as Hazael did, “What? Is your servant a dog?” But who knows what mischiefs those will run into that forsake God and are forsaken of him?*²⁸ Recall St. Peter’s warning about a dog which returns to his vomit—this is King Saul. He correctly rejected witchcraft and spiritists, and now he goes to one for guidance.

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Saul Locates a Medium and Assures Her that She Will Not be Punished

And so hides himself Saul and so he puts on clothing other and so he goes—he and a pair of men with him—and so they goes into the woman [at] night. And so he says, “Divine please for me in the [ventriloquist] demon and bring up for me who I say unto you.”

1Samuel
28:8

So Saul disguised himself and put on foreign clothing and he went—he and two men with him—and they go to the woman at night. Then he said, “Please contact by the [demon] spirit and bring up for me whomever I say to you.”

So Saul disguised himself by wearing foreign clothing and he and two of his men went to the woman at night. He said to her, “Please bring up for me by your demon spirit whomever I ask for.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

²⁷ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:7. Gill’s reference to Jewish tradition comes from Pirke Eliezer, c. 33. fol. 35. 2. Shalshalet Hakabala, fol. 8. 1. Hieron. Trad. Heb. in lib. Reg. fol. 77. B.

²⁸ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:7–14. I took minor liberties with the text.

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so hides himself Saul and so he puts on clothing other and so he goes—he and a pair of men with him—and so they goes into the woman [at] night. And so he says, “Divine please for me in the [ventriloquist] demon and bring up for me who I say unto you.”

Septuagint And Saul disguised himself, and put on other rainment, and he goes, and two men with him, and they come to the woman by night. And he says to her, “Divine to me, I pray you, by the diving spirit within you, and bring up to me him whom I will name to you.”

Significant differences: No significant differences between the Hebrew and Greek text.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV That night, Saul put on different clothing so nobody would recognize him. Then he and two of his men went to the woman, and asked, “Will you bring up the ghost of someone for us?”

NLT So Saul disguised himself by wearing ordinary clothing instead of his royal robes. Then he went to the woman’s home at night, accompanied by two of his men. “I have to talk to a man who has died,” he said. “Will you call up his spirit for me?”

REB Saul put on different clothes and went in disguise with two of his men. He came to the woman by night and said, ‘Tell me my fortune by consulting the dead, and call up the man I name to you.’

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™ After disguising himself by putting on other clothes, Saul left with two men and came to the woman that night. He said to her, “Please consult with a dead person for me. Conjure up the person I request.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB Saul disguised himself by putting on different clothes and set out with two of his men. They came to the woman at night, and Saul said, “Consult a spirit for me. Bring up for me the one I tell you.”

Young’s Updated LT And Saul disguises himself and puts on other garments, and goes, he and two of the men with him, and they come in unto the woman by night, and he says, “Divine, I pray you, to me by the familiar spirit, and cause to come up to me him whom I say unto you.”

What is the gist of this verse? Saul changes out of his royal robes into regular street clothes and goes to this psychic at night. He asks her to agree to bring someone up for him.

1Samuel 28:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (1) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253

1 Samuel 28:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
châphas (חַפָּס) [pronounced <i>khaw-FAHS</i>]	<i>to allow oneself to be sought for; to hide oneself; to pretend to be someone else, to disguise oneself</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #2664 BDB #344
<p>This should help you to grasp how a different stem changes a verb. In the Qal stem, this means <i>to seek out, to search for</i> (not the same word as we find near the beginning of the previous verse, but a synonym). The Hithpael conveys the idea that one puts himself into the state or the action of the verb, which is an achieved state. Seow gives several uses: (1) Its primary use is reflexive—the verb describes action on or for oneself. That is, the subject of the verb is also the object of the verb. However, this does not completely convey the reflexive use, as there are examples where the verb takes on another object. These verbs are known as tolerative—the subject allows an action to affect himself or herself. (2) Reciprocal use: Occasionally, the Hithpael denotes reciprocity; that is, <i>they worked with one another, they looked at one another</i>. (3) The third use is known as iterative, which means that the Hithpael suggests repeated activity (<i>he walked about, he walked to and fro, and turned back and forth</i>). (4) The fourth use is known as estimative: the verb indicates how one shows himself or regards himself, whether in truth or by pretense (<i>he pretended to be sick, they professed to be Jews</i>).²⁹ The Hithpael is intensive (and sometimes seen as an accomplished state) and it is something that one does to oneself. Here, Saul does something to himself which would make it difficult to seek him out (i.e., to recognize him).</p>			
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּאָל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

Translation: [So Saul disguised himself...](#) Saul was the one who put out the order to get rid of all the spiritists from the land; therefore, him going to a spiritist could be seen as a trap. Furthermore, this would be embarrassing for the king to make a royal proclamation to remove the spiritists from the land, and then for him to go to a spiritist. Therefore, Saul disguises himself. Although the verb used here could refer to several different things, the phrase which follows assures us of its use here.

1 Samuel 28:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâbash (לָבַשׁ) [pronounced <i>law-BAHSH</i>]	<i>to put on, to clothe, to be clothed, to wear</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3847 BDB #527
beged (בְּגָדִים) [pronounced <i>BEH-ged</i>]	<i>garments, clothes, clothing, apparel</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #899 BDB #93
`achêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHEHR</i>]	<i>another, following, other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive; masculine plural	Strong's #312 BDB #29

²⁹ Choon-Leong Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew (Revised Edition)*; Abingdon Press, Nashville; ©1995, pp. 298–299.

Translation: ...and put on foreign clothing and he went... Saul puts on clothing which is foreign, alien or strange. He is going undercover, so to speak. As king and as commander-in-chief, Saul had a particular garb which he put together to distinguish himself from all other men (this is an assumption on my part, as he is, more or less, the first king of Israel).³⁰ I assume that these would be royal robes and expensive coloration. Whatever it is that he normally wears, Saul puts on clothing which prevents him from being recognized. The spiritist will not know who he is; those on the street will not know who he is; and if there are any stray Philistines roaming about, they won't know who he is. Furthermore, this allows Saul to slip out of his own camp, unknown to the other soldiers. It seems likely that there might be a great exodus of soldiers if they knew their commander-in-chief was slipping out for awhile. So, Saul, for several reasons, is in disguise.

1Samuel 28:8c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the voluntative hê suffix	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
hûw ^ʾ (הוּ) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh ^e nayim (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced <i>sh^eNAH-yim</i>]	<i>two of, a pair of, a duo of</i>	masculine plural numeral	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>men; inhabitants, citizens; companions, soldiers, companions</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: ...—he and two men with him—... Saul goes with a very small entourage here. These are, more than likely, his personal bodyguards. Or, perhaps one is a bodyguard and the other knows where this spiritist is. Saul somehow in all of this hopes that he can somehow cheat God and remain king until he dies of natural causes.

You may recall that we have discussed the authorship of this one chapter of Samuel, as there are details found here which only 4 people would know—Saul, the witch and these two men. Some one of them had to write this down. Given that Saul has probably not been in fellowship for years and that the witch is an unbeliever, one of these two men probably authored this chapter.

³⁰ The actual first king of Israel was in the book of the Judges.

1Samuel 28:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eġ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAWH]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
lay'êlâh (לַיְלָאָה) [pronounced LAY-law]	<i>night; nightly, at night, in the night, during the night</i>	masculine singular noun; this word can take on adverbial qualities	Strong's #3915 BDB #538

Translation: ...and they go to the woman at night... Not only is Saul disguised, but he goes at night, so he is even less likely to be recognized. He is also moving closer to the Philistine encampment, and he certainly does not want to be caught by them. Besides, men tend to do their most evil deeds at night (however, the old sin nature functions 24 hours a day).

1Samuel 28:8e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
qâçam (קָצַם) [pronounced kaw-SAHM]	<i>to divine, to determine by divination, to practice divination; to contact the spirits of the dead [this can be real or faked]</i>	2 nd person feminine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #7080 BDB #890
nâ' (נָא) [pronounced naw]	<i>please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	particle of entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88

1Samuel 28:8e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿōwb (וּבֹ) [pronounced oh ^b v]	<i>a water bottle or a skin-bottle; a medium, ventriloquist demon, familiar spirit, demon spirit, one who speaks through a person</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #178 BDB #15

Translation: Then he said, “Please contact for me by the [demon] spirit... He goes into the woman, gains entrance; and then he tells her what he wants. He wants her to bring someone up for him. The idea is, this is a person who has died and this woman, Saul assumes, can establish contact with the person who has died. Saul really has no idea what is involved here; he simply believes that there are some who can easily communicate with the dead.

1Samuel 28:8f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced ġaw-LAWH]	<i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	2 nd person feminine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>together, they mean how, that which, what, whatever; whom, whomever</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>together, they mean how, that which, what, whatever; whom, whomever</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʿamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 2 nd person feminine singular suffix; pausal form	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Translation: ...and bring up for me whomever I say to you.” Saul asks for her to agree to contact via her spirit contact whomever he asks for. Essentially, Saul is simply stating exactly what service he would prefer. “I want you to contact by any means possible someone who has died” is the essence of what he is saying. That is the service he wishes to pay for.

And so says the woman unto him, “Behold, you [even] you have known that which has done Saul; that he has killed [or, *cut off*] the mediums and the necromancers from the land. And for why are you laying a snare in my soul to kill me?”

1 Samuel
28:9

The woman then said to him, “Listen, you [even] you know that which Saul has done—that he has cut off [or, *killed*] the mediums and the necromancers from the land. So [lit., *and*] why are you laying a snare for my life to kill me?”

The woman then said to him, “Listen, you know that which Saul has done—how he has cut off and/or killed the mediums and the necromancers from the land. Therefore, why are you laying a snare for my life? Why are you trying to get me killed?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says the woman unto him, “Behold, you [even] you have known that which has done Saul; that he has killed [or, <i>cut off</i>] the mediums and the necromancers from the land. And for why are you laying a snare in my soul to kill me?”
Peshitta	And the woman said to him, “Behold, you know what Saul has done—how he has removed those who have familiar spirits and the wizards out of the land. Why then are you laying a snare for my life to cause me to be put to death?”
Septuagint	And the woman said to him, “Behold now, you know what Saul has done—how he has cut off those who had in them diving spirits [or, <i>ventriloquists</i>]; and the wizards from the land. So why do you spread a snare for my life to destroy it?”

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The woman said, "Why are you trying to trick me and get me killed? You know King Saul has gotten rid of everyone who talks to the spirits of the dead!"
The Message	The woman said, "Just hold on now! You know what Saul did, how he swept the country clean of mediums. Why are you trying to trap me and get me killed?"
NJB	The woman replied, 'Look, you know what Saul has done, how he has outlawed necromancers and wizards from the country; why are you setting a trap for my life, then, to have me killed?'
NLT	"Are you trying to get me killed?" the woman demanded. "You know that Saul has expelled all the mediums and psychics from the land. Why are you setting a trap for me?"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> ™	The woman told him, "You know that Saul rid the land of mediums and psychics. Why are you trying to trap me and have me killed?"
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>Updated Emphasized Bible</i>	And the woman said to him, “Listen! You know what Saul has done: how he has cut off them who have familiar spirits [or, <i>necromancists</i>] and him who is an oracle [or, <i>wizard</i> ; Septuagint, Syriac and Vulgate have <i>oracles</i> or <i>wizards</i>] out of the land. Why then are you striking at my life, to put me to death?”
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ESV	The woman said to him, "Surely you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off the mediums and the necromancers from the land. Why then are you laying a trap for my life to bring about my death?:"
HCSB	But the woman said to him, "You surely know what Saul has done, how he has killed the mediums and spiritists in the land. Why are you setting a trap for me to get me killed?"
Young's Updated LT	And the woman says unto him, "Lo, you have known that which Saul has done, that he has cut off those having familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land; and why are you laying a snare for my soul—to put me to death?"

What is the gist of this verse? Saul had removed the spiritists from the land, so the woman asked Saul, who is disguised, if he is trying to get her in trouble—if he is trying to have her put to death.

1Samuel 28:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAWH]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced ahT-TAW]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
yâdaʿ (יָדָעַ) [pronounced yaw-DAHG]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>together, they mean how, that which, what, whatever; whom, whomever</i>	untranslated mark of a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>together, they mean how, that which, what, whatever; whom, whomever</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

1Samuel 28:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

Translation: The woman then said to him, “Listen, you [even] you know that which Saul has done— ... This woman is practicing something which Saul has outlawed from the land. She is engaging in illegal activity. She tells Saul (not knowing who he is) what Saul has done.

In the Hebrew, she verbally grabs Saul by the collar and says, “Listen here...” She inserts the emphatic personal pronoun *you*. She is telling Saul, *you* know what Saul has done. He has just asked her to perform an illegal act and she tells him, *you, even you, know what you have asked me to do is illegal!* So you understand why she is saying this to Saul—emphatically telling him that he must know this—is that it clear to her that he is an Israelite. Probably it is the Hebrew language that he speaks; but the accent as well as his clothes make it clear that Saul is an Israelite. Therefore, the woman is saying, *you definitely know what is going on in Israel.*³¹

We are used to nations with clearly defined boundaries. However, these boundaries were not as well defined in those days. It was more like what we have in Israel and Palestine today. Furthermore, there were apparently men of several nationalities living in various cities. Israel did not remove all the heathen from their land, as we find in the first chapter of Judges, so there could be men coming to this woman from maybe a half dozen different origins.

1Samuel 28:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʿăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
kârath (כָּרַת) [pronounced kaw-RAHTH]	<i>to kill, to destroy [men]; to separate, to remove, to withdraw; to cut off, to cut down; to allow to perish</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #3772 BDB #503
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿôwb (אוֹב) [pronounced oh ^b v]	<i>a water bottle or a skin-bottle; a medium, ventriloquist demon, familiar spirit, demon spirit, one who speaks through a person</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #178 BDB #15

³¹ Gill originally made this point, although he did not tie it to the emphatic language used by the woman. Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:9.

1Samuel 28:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
yidd ^e ʾônîy (יִדְדֵי ʾוֹנִי) [pronounced <i>yid-d^e-goh-NEE</i>]	<i>demon-possessed person, necromancer, psychic, spiritist; the demon that possesses a person</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #3049 BDB #396
Owen lists this as a masculine singular, but it appears to be in the plural. Rotherham tells us ³² that the Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac have this in the plural (which implies it is singular in the Masoretic text).			
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʾerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...that he has cut off [or, killed] the mediums and the necromancers from the land. To make certain this man knows what the policy is, she tells him that Saul has cut off or killed all of the mediums and necromancers from the land. Here she is not referring to the demons but to those who harness the demon power; as well as the fakers. As we will find out, this woman is a fake. She did not have any real contact with the spirit world (i.e., she was unable to contact demons for anything).

I believe that the difference between these two types of spiritists is: the first are those through whom demons speak; demons function like ventriloquists, so to speak. The second are those who are demon-possessed; the demon possesses the entire body of the person. This woman, being a fake, falls into neither of these categories.

1Samuel 28:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l^e</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552

Lâmed + mâh can be rendered *why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose*, indicating an interrogatory sentence.

³² Joseph Bryant Rotherham's *The Emphasized Bible*; ©1971 by Kregel Publications; p. 318.

1 Samuel 28:9c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
nâqash (נִקַּשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-KAHSH</i>]	<i>to lay a snare</i> when followed by the <i>bêyth</i> preposition	Hithpael participle	Strong's #5367 BDB #669
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>NEH-fesh</i>]	<i>soul, life, living being, desire</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659

Translation: *So [lit., and] why are you laying a snare for my life...* This woman thinks that Saul is attempting to entrap her; and she knows that she will either be executed or put out of Israel for what he wants her to do. She is apparently one who practices fake divination, but she is also suspicious, of course, of any client; knowing that she could be arrested and executed for committing these acts.

1 Samuel 28:9d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l^e</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to kill, to cause to die, to put to death, to execute</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

The Hiphil is the causative stem; she is accusing Saul of trying to cause her death.

Translation: *...to kill me?* As mentioned, the stem of this verb is the Hiphil, which is the causative stem. She is accusing Saul of causing her to be killed; of causing her to face execution. If King Saul finds out about her business, he will have her executed, is what she tells him. She, of course, does not realize that she is speaking with King Saul.

It appears to be unclear as to whether Saul expelled the necromancers from the land or whether he executed them. Here, the woman clearly shows a fear of being executed; in v. 3, Saul is said to have *removed* the spiritists from the land. Earlier in this verse, she speaks of Saul *cutting off* the spiritists from the land, which is inconclusive. My thinking is this: Saul made a proclamation about executing spiritists, then he killed a couple as an example, and the others either went underground (as did this woman) or left Israel altogether. This fits well with Saul's personality (recall that he did not kill every Amalekite) and easily explains the passages cited.

Matthew Henry comments: *Observe how sensible she is of danger from the edict of Saul, and what care she is in to guard against it; but not at all apprehensive of the obligations off God's law and the terrors of his wrath. She considered what Saul had done, not what God had done, against such practices, and feared a snare laid for her life more than a snare laid for her soul. It is common for sinners to be more afraid of punishment from men than of God's righteous judgment.*³³

And so swears to her Saul in Y^ehowah to say, “Living Y^ehowah if meets you punishment [or, iniquity] in the word the this.” 1Samuel 28:10 **Then Saul swore to her by Y^ehowah, saying, “[As] Y^ehowah lives, no punishment will befall you in this matter.”**

Then Saul swore to her by Jehovah, saying, “As Jehovah lives, no punishment for this thing will befall you.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so swears to her Saul in Y ^e howah to say, “Living Yehowah if meets you punishment [or, iniquity] in the word the this.”
Peshitta	And Saul swore to her by the LORD, saying, “As the LORD lives, there will no harm come upon you for this thing.”
Septuagint	And Saul swore to her, and said, “The Lord lives, if injury will come upon you on this account.”

Significant differences: Apart from there being an extra reference to Jehovah in the MT, there is no difference between the versions. That is really not a significant difference.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Saul replied, "I swear by the living LORD that nothing will happen to you because of this."
The Message	Saul swore solemnly, "As GOD lives, you won't get in any trouble for this."
NAB	But Saul swore to her by the LORD, "As the LORD lives, you shall incur no blame for this."
NLT	But Saul took an oath in the name of the LORD and promised, "As surely as the LORD lives, nothing bad will happen to you for doing this."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	But Saul took an oath in the LORD'S name, "I solemnly swear, as the LORD lives, you will not be harmed if you do this."
JPS (Tanakh)	Saul swore to her by the LORD: "As the LORD lives, you won't get into trouble over this."

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB	Then Saul swore to her by the LORD: "As surely as the LORD lives, nothing bad will happen to you because of this."
WEB	Saul swore to her by Yahweh, saying, As Yahweh lives, there shall no punishment happen to you for this thing.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And Saul swears to her by Jehovah, saying, "Jehovah lives, punishment does not meet you for this thing."

³³ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:9.

What is the gist of this verse? Saul swears by Jehovah that no harm will come upon her for contacting the dead.

1Samuel 28:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâbva ^ʿ (שָׁבַע) [pronounced <i>shaw^b-VAHG</i>]	<i>to swear, to imprecate, to curse, to swear an oath, to take a solemn oath, to swear allegiance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #7650 BDB #989
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^ʰ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 2 nd person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
<p>Κύριος (Lord), is not found here in the Greek. You might be thinking, <i>why mention this, as it makes very little difference?</i> This is one of the reasons I mention the slight variations found in the ancient manuscripts—to illustrate just how little difference there is between them.</p>			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^ʰ)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
chay (חַי) [pronounced <i>KHAH-ee</i>]	<i>living, alive, active, lively, vigorous [used of man or animals]; green [vegetation]; fresh [used of a plant]; flowing [water]; reviving [of the springtime]; raw [flesh]</i>	adjective	Strong's #2416 BDB #311
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: Then Saul swore to her by Y^ehowah, saying, “[As] Y^ehowah lives,... This is the first of many tragic/humorous things which are said and done in this chapter. Saul is estranged from God. God will not speak to Saul in any way. So Saul has gone to a woman whom, he hopes, legitimately contact the dead, even if it

involves the use of demons. This makes her also against God as well. So, Saul gives her assurances by Jehovah, the God of Israel. Saul is making an oath by the very Person that he and this woman have rejected.

1Samuel 28:10b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced eem]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
When following an oath, either stated or implied, ʾîm, by itself, functions as an emphatic negative.			
qârâh (קָרָה) [pronounced kaw-RAWH]	<i>to encounter, to meet, to go to meet</i> [this can be taken in a hostile sense]; <i>to happen, to befall</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; with the 2 nd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #7136 BDB #899
ʿâvôwn (עָוֹן) [pronounced ʿaw-VOHN]	<i>iniquity, crime, offense, transgression, depraved action, guilt, punishment from wrongdoing</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5771 BDB #730
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: *...no punishment will befall you in this matter.* The ʾîm particle in this verse is generally translated *if*; however, in conjunction with an oath, it acts more like a negation. I believe in the original Hebrew, it is still properly an hypothetical particle, but that it was understood in such a way that the outcome of this particle with an oath is best translated for us as a negation. I am guessing that this is somewhat elliptical in the Hebrew, “As God lives, if any harms comes to you...” In the English, we might say, “I oughtta...” meaning, “I ought to knock your block off” (whatever). It is an elliptical oath, which we may best understand be simply inserting an emphatic negative.

Now, see if you can get the humor here—Saul is estranged from God and this woman is estranged from God. Still, he offers his oath by Jehovah and she accepts this oath made by Jehovah, even though both of them are in direct opposition to Jehovah God. Now, it was Saul who made the decree to remove the psychics and necromancers from the land; so Saul could have said, “Look here, sister, I’m Saul; I made the law and I can override the law. That’s what being king is all about.” In other words, it would have been more genuine for Saul to give an oath by himself, as that kind of an oath he could guarantee (okay, well, maybe not—but she does not realize how screwed up Saul is). However, Saul is a man of deception; you realize, there are people out there who are like that. They always have a hidden agenda; they always slant the truth; even when being straightforward will work, they are still deceptive—it is second nature to them. This is Saul. He began by deceiving this woman and sees no reason why he should change from that.

In today's political world, we call that *spin*. Not only do politicians do it, but newspaper reporters do it all the time. I recall a criminal whose mother spoke during the punishment phrase of his trial. According to one account, several jury members were moved to tears by what she had to say. Another reporter said that her words had little effect upon most of the jury members. Both reports could be absolutely true, but to the listener/reader, one conveys a completely different perspective than does the other.

At this moment, we are in Iraq. A news service which does not support this can easily find an Iraqi citizen who is fed up with all of the fighting and the killing which take place there. Airing his or her opinion gives one slant to our being there in Iraq. Another person can be found who has lived under terror and persecution for years prior to the US involvement, and have a much different take on the situation. Certainly, there will be many who will vote there, risking their lives, in order to have a say in their future. Any news agency can over-report one side; or simply ignore the other, and still be disseminating accurate information without lying, but simply by not telling the entire story.

Another illustration: when Bush and Kerry were running against one another, a particularly damaging story came out about Bush and his service in the Texas National Guard. This story was released at a crucial time in the pre-election, and certainly had an effect on voters. However, it also turned out that the source for this story had falsified documents and was a person known to strongly oppose Bush. And, apparently, this information was known well in advance, but it was not released until the election drew near. Those involved in this *story* had a political agenda; they were not simply reporting the news; they were looking to influence the electorate. The same news services also reported Bush and Kerry as being neck and neck in the polls. However, oddsmakers had the election in favor of Bush 2 to 1 (this does not mean that Bush would win twice as many votes; it meant that, in their estimation, Bush was two times more likely to win than Kerry). These were oddsmakers in Vegas and in Great Britain. Apparently, from what I have read, they are much more accurate when it comes to predicting election results. When they set odds, then that means some betting can occur, whether legal or illegal. No oddsmaker is going to give even odds in that election, because no oddsmaker wanted to lose money. However, a news organization is not looking to win or lose money; many are apparently looking to affect the outcome of the election. If you want to know in advance who will win the next election, don't listen to a poll; don't listen to a news service; investigate the gambling odds. They are not looking to influence you one way or the other; they are looking to set accurate odds for the purpose of bettering, which could involve huge amounts of money. That overrides any political agenda which they may have.

Application: Do you see how it is Saul's nature to lie; to put a spin on the truth; to slant the facts in whatever way is good for him? Now, bear in mind, there are people and there are organizations all around you who are the same way. Saul never stopped doing this to the end of his life; you know people who this is the way that they are; there are news gathering organizations and this is the way that they are. You cannot simply take whatever you hear on television or read in the newspaper as a fact.

The other evening I was watching *Boston Legal*, a television show. One of the issues at hand was creationism being taught in the schools. When the arguments were presented, they were presented as though creationists had only faith on their side; while evolutionists had science and evidence on their side. Even those who argued for the side of the creationists admitted to believing in evolution. The show was presented as though there was no scientific basis for creationism whatsoever apart from intelligent design (something carefully and intricately designed requires a Designer). And at the end of the show, two lawyers are chatting, and one worried that someday, only creationism will be taught in the classroom. This is the view of evolutionists and it is so much bullcrap, it makes my pants tired.³⁴ There are hundreds of scientific arguments against evolution. There are hundreds of arguments *based upon scientific evidence* against evolution. In the 1970's, there were creationists and evolutionists who traveled to college campuses all over the US, and it was

There are hundreds of arguments
based upon scientific evidence
against evolution.

³⁴ I stole this expression from R. B. Thieme, Jr.

generally conceded that the creationists won most of the debates. **You cannot win a debate by jumping up and down and saying, “But this is what I believe in!!!”** (however, it is stated or implied that this is all creationists have in their arsenal of facts).

There have been classes in some college campuses where creationists and evolutionists both taught. At the beginning, the classes were often split nearly 50-50; that is, the creationists were given almost as much time as the evolutionists to speak. However, as time progressed, the number of sessions given to the creationists was continually decreased. However, the before and after surveys of these classes always yielded the same results: more people exited the class than entered believing in creationism. That is, when debated; when the evidence is presented side by side, people who were once evolutionists sometimes become creationists (and this occurred more often than the reverse).

When I was younger—high school and early college age; I believed in evolution. Sometimes, I believed in God guiding evolution—sort of a halfway choice. I did not become a Christian and suddenly believe in creationism. Like most people who believe in creationism, this was *not* something I picked up at home from religious indoctrination; it was a conclusion I came to on my own by reading book after book after book on the topic. My *conversion*, if you will, was not a result of religious indoctrination, but a result of reading books which dealt with the available evidence and the interpretations given to the evidence.

Allow me one more tangent before I return to our topic: almost every rabid evolutionist which I know thinks that we who believe in special creation have come to this conclusion through religious indoctrination, often from our youth. The idea is, it is such a emphatic point of doctrine that was beaten into us from our youth, that we have trouble apprehending an opposing opinion. The idea is, our belief in creationism rests so firmly upon our indoctrinated faith as to be almost unshakable. However, it is actually quite the opposite which is true. First of all, there are only a limited number of churches who mention creationism or evolution; and many pastors hedge on the meaning of Genesis if and when they teach it. I came out of high school believing in evolution. In college, I was taught evolution in a child development class, in a math history course and in an education course, among others. Most people, if they have been brought up in the public school system, naturally assume that the only reasonable and scientific explanation for how things are is evolution. It is a fundamental, indoctrinated point of our education. In the 13 years I spent in public education and in the 8 years I spent in higher education, I never heard a single, disparaging point made about evolution; I never heard a single teacher ever mention creationism and how it might better model the earth that we live on. Most people share that experience with me; and we have exited our public education, fully indoctrinated that evolution is the only reasonable explanation for the way things are. That, my friend, is true religious indoctrination. Evolutionists actually have done in the public school system exactly what they accuse Christianity of doing. They produce believers in evolution who have never heard even a single piece of conflicting evidence. Interestingly enough, much of the evidence presented in schools for evolution is disparaged by most evolutionists (those who are in the field or in a related field).³⁵

Most people will exit the public school system and they will be able to give a half a dozen general reasons why evolution is true—why it is the only scientific explanation. Furthermore, most will be able to explain, to some limited degree, why evolution is not observable (except for observable changes within a species). On the other hand, as I mentioned before, most religious types believe in a mixture of evolution and creationism—that God simply guided evolution through those millions of years. And most of these believers could also cite a half a dozen reasons which support evolution and they could also explain why we cannot observe evolution today (except on the small scale of within a species).

Now that I have vented for awhile, let me return you to our regularly scheduled program: today, especially, you might read this and ask, *so what that Saul made this oath?* Up until perhaps the 1950's or 1960's, a man's word was his bond. That is, if you told someone that you were going to do this or that, you meant it. They could depend upon it. Some people transacted agreements verbally and with a handshake, and kept to their agreement. So Saul's oath, despite the fact that he was sometimes out of touch with reality, was meaningful to this woman. The

³⁵ For instance, the increase in cranial capacity as man evolved; the increase of the size of horses from the dog size to the present-day size—these things are found in museums and in textbooks, even though an evolutionist who actually knows something rejects these as arguments of any substance.

fact that this stranger swore by Jehovah that no harm would come to her, that was greatly reassuring. Now, if she knew that this was Saul, and realized how little his oaths meant (see 1Sam. 19:6), she may not have felt all that reassured. However, a stranger making such an oath in that time period was meaningful. Now, today, someone can swear on a stack of Bibles and on their mother's eyes, and it means nothing whatsoever. It simply means, *I want you to agree to something; and I am saying whatever I think you might want to hear in order to procure that from you.*

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The Spiritist Conjures up Samuel from the Dead

And so says the woman, "Whom do I bring up for you?"

1 Samuel
28:11

So the woman said, "Whom should I bring up for you?"

And so he says, "Samuel bring up for me."

And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me."

So the woman asked, "Whom should I bring up for you?"

And he answered, "Bring up Samuel for me."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so says the woman, "Whom do I bring up for you?"
And so he says, "Samuel bring up for me."

The Septuagint

And the woman said, "Whom should I bring up to you?" And he said, "Bring up to me Samuel."

Significant differences:

None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

"Who do you want me to bring up?" she asked. "Bring up the ghost of Samuel," he answered.

NLT

Finally, the woman said, "Well, whose spirit do you want me to call up?"
"Call up Samuel," Saul replied.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

*God's Word*TM

"Whom should I conjure up for you?" the woman asked. "Conjure up Samuel for me," he answered.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB

"Who is it that you want me to bring up for you?" the woman asked. "Bring up Samuel for me," he answered.

Young's Updated LT

And the woman says, "Whom do I bring up to you?" and he says, "Samuel—bring up to me."

What is the gist of this verse? The woman finally asks Saul whom from the dead should she bring up, and he answers, "Samuel."

1Samuel 28:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>]	<i>who; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	1 st person singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: So the woman said, “Whom should I bring up for you?” The woman is assured, as well as she can be, that Saul will not have her arrested for bringing up the dead. So she now asks him, “Just exactly who is it from the dead that you want to talk to?” Saul had asked her in v. 8 to bring up whomever he named; now she wants to know who it is he wants to speak to.

1Samuel 28:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Sh ^o mûwʿêl (שָׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh^o-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	2 nd person feminine singular, Hiphil imperative	Strong's #5927 BDB #748

1Samuel 28:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l^e</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: ...And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me." Saul immediately blurts out Samuel's name. In the Hebrew, Samuel's name occurs first in what Saul says. Now, this was quite interesting for Saul to go to Samuel. I guess he had figured enough time had passed and that maybe Samuel would not be so pissy as he was the last time they spoke. Saul has no clue as to how things work. Generally speaking, when someone dies, that ends their contact with this world. They don't hang around in some sort of spirit form hoping that someone will want to talk with them. They don't wander about aimlessly, searching for the light (or avoiding the light). And they certainly do not hang out near the houses of mediums hoping that Charlie Brown Jr. will drop by and ask to visit with them.

I want you to recognize the colossal arrogance of Saul in this request. Even if Saul had no idea exactly where Samuel was, this does not mean that Samuel is just hanging around just waiting for a word from Saul. Samuel had no interest in speaking to Saul when he was alive (1Sam. 15:26–35); why should Samuel want to speak to Saul now from the grave? Saul does not know a single person who has ever spoken to anyone beyond the grave; still, he thinks this will all come together just as he expects it to.

Now, Saul has little or no doctrine in his soul. Time and time again he has failed; and in this instance, it is clear that he does not know how things work. Insofar as this world is concerned, when Samuel died, he was out the picture (except for God's grace in this instance).

And so sees the woman Samuel and so she cries out in a voice great and so says the woman unto Saul, to say, "For why you have deceived me? And you [are] Saul!"

1Samuel
28:12

Then the woman saw Samuel and she cried out in a loud [lit, *great*] voice. So the woman says to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You [are] Saul!"

When the woman saw Samuel, she screamed, and then she said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me! You're Saul!"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so sees the woman Samuel and so she cries out in a voice great and so says the woman unto Saul, to say, "For why you have deceived me? And you [are] Saul!"

Septuagint

And the woman saw Samuel, and cried out with a loud voice; and the woman said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul."

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV When the woman saw Samuel, she screamed. Then she turned to Saul and said, "You've tricked me! You're the king!"

NAB When the woman saw Samuel, she shrieked at the top of her voice and said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!"

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

- God's Word™ When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out loudly and asked, "Why did you deceive me? You're Saul!"
- JPS (Tanakh) Then the woman recognized Samuel [Some Septuagint manuscripts read *Saul*], and she shrieked loudly, and said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!"

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

- HCSB When the woman saw Samuel, she screamed, and then she asked Saul, "Why did you deceive me? You are Saul!"
- Young's Updated LT And the woman sees Samuel, and cries with a loud voice, and the woman speaks unto Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me—and you Saul?"

What is the gist of this verse? Several things happen all at once. The woman sees Samuel, something she did not expect, and shrieked. Then she turns to Saul, suddenly knows who he is, and asks him why he has deceived her.

1Samuel 28:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>râw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
`ishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
`êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Sh ^o mûw`êl (שָׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh^o-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

According to the JPS, some LXX manuscripts read *Saul* here.³⁶ This would not necessarily cause this woman to scream.

Translation: *Then the woman saw Samuel...* Okay, I hope you realize that most psychics (possibly not all) are complete fakes. Sometimes they are very perceptive and sensitive to others, and this particular woman is a fake. She cannot call up the dead. She has no such power. The best she can do is read the people in the room with her. However, when she calls up Samuel, there he is, and she freaks out. See, this isn't supposed to happen. She isn't supposed to call out for Samuel to come back from the dead and suddenly, there's Samuel. This falls outside of this woman's abilities.

³⁶ Tanakh, the Jewish Bible by the Jewish Publication Society; ©1985; p. 464.

1Samuel 28:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
zâ' aq (צָעַק) [pronounced zaw-GAHK]	to cry out, to call, to cry	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2199 BDB #277
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced kohl]	sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
gâdôwl (גָּדוֹל) [pronounced gaw-DOHL]	great in quantity, great in magnitude and extent, mighty, vast, unyielding, immutable, significant, astonishing	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #1419 BDB #152

Translation: ...and she cried out in a loud [lit, great] voice. This means, she screamed. She is freaked out. She is used to running the show and deceiving the client into thinking that she has called up the dead; she is just a scam artist. But when she actually sees Samuel, the man she is supposed to bring up from the dead, she is totally freaked out. Hey, if you started seeing dead people, you'd be freaked out as well. Seeing Samuel causes this woman to scream at the top of her lungs.

Barnes succinct comment: *It is manifest both that the apparition of Samuel was real, and also that the woman was utterly unprepared for it.*³⁷ Keil and Delitzsch: *It is an uncontrovertable fact that the woman saw an apparition which she did not anticipate, and therefore that she was not really able to conjure up departed spirits or persons who had died, but that she either merely pretended to do so, or if her witchcraft was not mere trickery and delusion, but had a certain demoniacal background, that the appearance of Samuel differed essentially from everything she had experienced and effected before, and therefore filled her with alarm and horror. The very fact, whoever, that she recognized Saul as soon as Samuel appeared, precludes us from declaring her art to have been nothing more than jugglery and deception; for she said to him, "Why hast thou cheated me, as thou art certainly Saul?"*³⁸ Clarke's comments: *That Samuel did appear on this occasion, is most evident from the text; nor can this be denied from any legitimate mode of interpretation: and it is as evident that he was neither raised by the power of the devil nor the incantations of the witch, for the appearances which took place at this time were such as she was wholly unacquainted with. Her familiar did not appear; and from the confused description she gives, it is fully evident that she was both surprised and alarmed at what she saw, being so widely different from what she expected to see.*³⁹ In other words, the reaction of this woman indicates that she did not regularly bring up the dead, despite her vocation, and to see that this had occurred was more of shock to her than to Saul. However, her recognition of Saul (which follows in this verse) indicates that she was not a complete phoney. She was likely in league with demons, and she may even channel demons through her vocal cords, but she typically did not raise the dead.

³⁷ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:12.

³⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:12.

³⁹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:12.

Even though I quoted three exegetes above who testify to the validity of this apparition, Gill and Henry do not agree. I honestly don't give much weight to their opinions here and will cover them in a [footnote](#) in v. 14.

As you must realize, I examine over a dozen commentaries when I prepare this. So far, no exegete that I have read answers the simple question...

Why did God allow Samuel to be brought up from the dead?

God has the power over Sheol (the place of the dead). He is able to bring men out of Sheol. You will recall from 1Sam. 2 that Samuel is a type of Christ; he is a shadow of Jesus Christ (1Sam. 2:36 and 7:3 is where we studied this). Therefore, God has brought Samuel up from the grave to complete the parallelism. After all, in 1Sam. 2:6b, did not Samuel's mother testify to God's power? ["He brings \[men\] down to Sheol and He raises \[some\] up \[from Sheol\]."](#) Since God will bring Jesus Christ up from the dead, He will also bring Samuel up from the dead. God has power over the grave.

I realize that this is a very short point to make, but I don't think anyone has made it before.

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1Samuel 28:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAWH]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced el]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâʾûwl (שׂאֻל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l))	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l))	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552

1Samuel 28:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence.			
râmâh (רָמָה) [pronounced raw-MAW]	<i>to beguile, to deceive, to mislead, to deal treacherously with, to betray</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel perfect; with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #7411 BDB #941

Translation: ...So the woman says to Saul, “Why have you deceived me? This woman actually, for whatever reason, can see very clearly now. Her powers of perception have been greatly increased all of a sudden. Before she thought this was just some mark that she could play for money; and now she realizes that it is she who has been deceived. The first area of deception is, she is speaking to Saul, the king—the one who had removed all psychics from Israel. We are never told exactly how she recognized Saul. My assumption is, God the Holy Spirit had a hand in bringing up Samuel’s spirit from the dead; and He also made Saul’s identity known to the woman. However, that is simply a guess. God has a sense of humor, and His revealing of Saul’s identity may be seen as humorous. After all, this is a psychic, a woman who is ostensibly able to see beyond the great beyond, yet she does not even know that it is King Saul who is speaking to her until God reveals this to her.

Only Gordon, of the exegetes I read, ventures a guess here. He also suggests that the identity of Saul is made known to the woman by God. In addition, he mentions that some Greek manuscripts read *Saul* for *Samuel*, which does not solve the problem or answer the question. He also suggests that no one but King Saul could really be a part of conjuring up the prophet Samuel and he quotes Hamlet, Act I, Scene I to support this notion.⁴⁰

1Samuel 28:12d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^o (or v ^o) (ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced ahT-TAW]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
Shâʾûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

Translation: ...You [are] Saul!” For some reason, this psychic has a moment of psychic clarity and she realizes that the man sitting before her is Saul. We are not told much about why this is the case—why she has the ability to know who Saul is; but apparently, God the Holy Spirit (I am assuming) has allowed her to recognize Saul.

Another explanation is, this woman is not a complete fake. She has some connection to the demonic world. The demon spirits know this is Saul, and in whatever way, even in speaking through her voice, they make his identity known.⁴¹ Remember, this woman may or may not have actually known what Saul looked like; much less that he would actually travel to her specifically. If the president of the United States showed up at my doorstep in a good

⁴⁰ This is not a bad explanation, by the way. Quoting Shakespear to justify a point of view is an interesting approach. Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 195.

⁴¹ This is one explanation offered by Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:12.

disguise, even if I knew he was disguised, it is highly unlikely that I would guess, *hey, this is the president*. This woman is shocked both to see Samuel, and to suddenly realize that the one petitioning her to bring Samuel up is Saul.

And so says to her the king, “Do not fear. For what do you see?”

So the king says to her, “Do not fear. What do you see?”

And says the woman unto Saul, “Elohim I have seen coming up from the earth.”

1Samuel
28:13

And the woman says to Saul, “I saw Elohim coming up from out of the earth.”

So the king says to her, “Don’t be afraid. Now, what do you see?”

And the woman answers Saul, saying, “I saw God coming up from out of the earth.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says to her the king, “Do not fear. For what do you see?” And says the woman unto Saul, “Elohim I have seen coming up from the earth.”
Septuagint	And the king said to her, “Fear not; tell me whom you have seen.” And the woman said to him, “I saw gods ascending out of the earth.”

Significant differences: Apart from referring to Saul with a pronoun, there is no difference between the texts.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	“Don't be afraid,” Saul replied. “Just tell me what you see.” She answered, “I see a spirit rising up out of the ground.”
The Message	The king told her, “You have nothing to fear . . . but what do you see?” “I see a spirit ascending from the underground.”
NAB	But the king said to her, “Have no fear. What do you see?” The woman answered Saul, “I see a preternatural being rising from the earth.”
REB	The king said to her, ‘Do not be afraid. What do you see?’ The woman answered, ‘I see a ghostly form coming up from the earth.’

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God’s Word™</i>	“Don't be afraid,” the king said to her. “What do you see?” “I see a god rising from the ground,” the woman answered.
JPS (Tanakh)	The king answered her, “Don’t be afraid. What do you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “I see a divine being coming up from the earth.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	The king said to her, Be not afraid; what do you see? The woman said to Saul, I see a god [terrorizing superhuman being] coming up out of the earth!
ESV	The king said to her, “Do not be afraid. What do you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “I see a god coming up out of the earth.”
HCSB	But the king said to her, “Don't be afraid. What do you see?” “I see a spirit form coming up out of the earth,” the woman answered.
<i>Young’s Updated LT</i>	And the king saith to her, “Do not fear; for what hast thou seen?” and the woman saith unto Saul, “Gods I have seen coming up out of the earth.”

What is the gist of this verse? Saul calms the woman, telling her not to be afraid; and then asks what she sees. She tells Saul that she sees God coming up out of the earth.

1 Samuel 28:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek ^e (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i>]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
ʾal (אַל) [pronounced <i>a/</i>]	<i>not; nothing; none</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39.
yârê ^ʾ (יָרֵא) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i>]	<i>to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 nd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

There are two primary negatives in the Hebrew and this verse may help us to distinguish between them. If we had used the other negative, lô^ʾ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced *low*]; this would read, *you will not fear* or *you are not fearing*. However, this is an order here, a command; Saul is profiting the woman from fearing. Therefore, this reads, *do not fear* or *do not be afraid*.

Translation: [So the king says to her, “Do not fear.](#) To the king, this is routine 6—you go to a psychic, she summons up whomever she is suppose to summon up, and then you ask him questions. It never occurs to Saul that most of these mediums are fakes. He has just assumed the they deliver what they claim to deliver. So he simply tries ot calm this woman down, telling her not to be afraid.

People don't come back from the dead; their spirits do not talk to us later on. Our dreams of people who have died are not a place where we communicate directly with dead people. This isn't some dimension that we can go to and communicate with those who have passed on. Subconsciously, we may be working out this or that; or our emotions may be working through the loss of a loved one—but typically, when a person dies, we do not see them again. Well, Saul does not know this. Therefore, when this woman cries out, and obviously sees something, Saul figures, “It's probably Samuel. Now I can talk to him.” Therefore, he tells the woman not to be afraid.

Now let's see if I can approach this in a different way: Saul is not afraid, as he expects this to happen; the woman, who is a fake, is totally freaked out, because she does not expect any of this to happen. She doesn't know what the hell is going on. She was going to do some mumbo jumbo, fake a few things, and then charge Saul some money and send him on his way. The idea that she actually does see something just blows her away.

1Samuel 28:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Not sure yet if there is a meaning which may be assigned to this combination. Literally, <i>for what</i> ; possibly, <i>what</i> .			
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	2 nd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

Translation: [What do you see?](#)” Saul is anxious to know if she sees Samuel, as opposed, say, to someone else who might be hanging about in the netherworld. Or, he just wants to know what is going on. What has happened is, the woman does see Samuel; however, Saul does not. This is how a medium is supposed to work. They see what we cannot, and provide the translation, interpretation or conversation for us. Saul sees this woman hyperventilating and he tells her to calm down and tell him what she is looking at.

Bear in mind that Samuel's bones are buried and his body is deteriorating in the ground. His soul remains, and his soul is visible in some way to this woman.

1Samuel 28:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
`amar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
`ishshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
`el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>eI</i>]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâ`ûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
`elôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i>]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	1 st person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906

1Samuel 28:13c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿālāh (עָלָה) [pronounced gaw-LAWH]	going up, ascending, coming up, climbing	Qal active participle	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than, greater than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...And the woman says to Saul, “I saw Elohim coming up from out of the earth.” This woman is clearly freaking. She has never had a vision or an experience like this. She is good at reading her customers and then telling them things that might soothe or satisfy them. She did not expect to see anything. So, when she sees Samuel, she is so freaked, she figures he is God. The word used here is *Elohim*. This is the word for *God*, although it can also be rendered *god* or *gods*. She does not see a pantheon of mythological beings coming up out of the earth; she sees one person; so, she is not saying, “I see gods.” She is so totally freaked out at this vision, she assumes this must be God (Samuel, I am sure, in this state, must be unsettling to this woman).

Let me point out that it is interesting that the woman recognizes Saul, in disguise, but does not recognize Samuel. Her moment of clarity with Saul may have been revealed to her through demonic contact, also known, perhaps, as a moment of clairvoyant clarity; but this was actually Samuel, up from the dead—I believe that even the demons were unprepared for that, knowing even more than we the unpassable barrier between life and death.

Allow me, if you will, two tangents. First off, what is happening is real. Therefore, Samuel must come from where Samuel is. Samuel is in a place called Abraham’s bosom; between him and those who are not saved is a great gulf fixed (Jesus tells us about this in the gospels). This is somewhere in the earth; however, we are speaking of a place of spirits—we cannot start digging and find this place. When someone dies, this is apparently where they go. Therefore, when Samuel comes up to speak with this psychic, he is going to come up out of the earth.

The second tangent is this—I have heard several other people tell me (and I used this same excuse)—“I will believe in God as soon as he shows Himself to me.” All God has to do is to pop up and say, “Hey, here I am; I’m God. Check me out.” And then I would believe. This is ridiculous and fallacious for many reasons. The most obvious is what we find here—this woman sees Samuel, after he has died, in essentially a form that God allows her to see him in, and she says, “It’s God.” My point? How does the unbeliever recognize God? What happens that the unbeliever looks at this or that and says, “Okay, I recognize that as God.” Don’t give me this crap, “I’ll know God when I see Him” because you can make the statement based upon nothing in your life experience. It is just a semi-clever way of skirting the issue. Unbelievers observe the work of God’s hands every single day and do not recognize that it is God Who created all that we see. Scientists explore chemistry and biology, and the processes even at the most fundamental level are so infinitesimal and so carefully designed and directed; and yet, they often think to themselves, “This just happened. This is simply a star which exploded and then this stuff all just came about after millions of years.” So, if the unbeliever refuses to recognize a Creator from creation, how will he recognize God?

Furthermore, God cannot be seen, as He is a spirit; and any manifestation of God requires faith to begin with. Jesus was God come in the flesh—only His own sheep recognized Him. The few times Jesus admitted to those who were negative that He is God, they would take up stones to kill Him. They considered it blasphemy for Him to say this. So, these are unbelievers who look directly at God and they do not recognize Him.

At some point in time, you will talk to an unbeliever and they will give you this song and dance, “Well, God just has to show Himself to me, and I will believe.” You can tell them, that is a load of crap (perhaps phrase it differently) and point out that no one automatically identified Jesus as God. Not all believers even recognized this. When Peter confessed Jesus, this was a revelation—it was revealed to Peter that Jesus is the Son of God and he was a believer already. Furthermore, in retrospect, men do not look back to Jesus and recognize, “He is God.” So, when an unbeliever gives you this excuse, go right to Jesus (i.e., use Jesus as an illustration); and tell them that God did walk the earth, that many people saw Him and listened to Him; and not all of them recognized that He was God. In fact, it appears as though the clear majority of people did not believe that He was God. Therefore, this person’s excuse does not hold water. Also, when presenting the gospel and dealing with excuses, the best thing to do is to deal quickly with the excuse and take the conversation back to the gospel and back to Jesus. Using Him as an illustration for this objection accomplishes both of these objectives.

And so he says to her, “What [is] his form?”

Then he said, “What [is] his form?”

And so she says, “A man old coming up and he covers himself [with] a robe.”

1Samuel
28:14

And she says, “An old man coming up; he covers himself [with] a robe.”

And so knows Saul that Samuel [is] he and so he bows [two] nostrils ground-ward and so does obeisance.

Saul knew that this [lit., *he*] [is] Samuel and he bows his face [lit., *nostrils*] to the ground and does obeisance [to him].

Then Saul said, “What does he look like?”

And she said, “An old man wearing a robe.”

Saul knew that this was Samuel, so he bowed himself to the ground and did obeisance to him.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so he says to her, “What [is] his form?”

And so she says, “A man old coming up and he covers himself [with] a robe.”

And so knows Saul that Samuel [is] he and so he bows [two] nostrils ground-ward and so does obeisance.

Peshitta

And he said to her, “What is their appearance?” And she said to him, “An old man is coming up; and he is covered with a mantle.” And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and made obeisance.

Septuagint

And he said to her, “What did you perceive?” And she said to him, “An upright man ascending out of the earth, and he [is] clothed with a mantel.” And Saul knew that this was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the earth, and did obeisance to him.

Significant differences:

The minor differences are noted; none of them are significant (except that the Peshitta has a plural possessive pronoun). The LXX was probably given over to interpretation rather than to possessing a different text.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV "What does it look like?" "It looks like an old man wearing a robe." Saul knew it was Samuel, so he bowed down low.

NLT "What does he look like?" Saul asked.
"He is an old man wrapped in a robe," she replied. Saul realized that it was Samuel, and he fell to the ground before him.

REB 'What is it like?' he asked; she answered, 'Like an old man coming up, wrapped in a cloak.' Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed low with his face to the ground, and prostrated himself.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ "In what form?" he asked her. She answered, "An old man is coming up, and he's wearing a robe." Then Saul knew it was Samuel. Saul knelt down with his face touching the ground.

JPS (Tanakh) "What does he look like?" he asked her. "It is an old man coming up," she said, "and he is wrapped in a robe." Then Saul knew that it was Samuel; and he bowed low in homage with his face to the ground.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB Then Saul asked her, "What does he look like?" "An old man is coming up," she replied. "He's wearing a robe." Then Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed his face to the ground and paid homage.

MKJV And he said to her, What *is* his form? And she said, An old man comes up, and he is covered with a cloak. And Saul saw that it was Samuel, and *he* bowed *his* face to the ground, and prostrated himself.

Young's Updated LT And he says to her, "What is his form?" And she says, "An aged man is coming up, and he is covered with an upper robe;" and Saul knows that he is Samuel, and bows—face to you earth—and does obeisance.

What is the gist of this verse? Saul asks for a physical description, and she tells him it is an old man coming up wearing a robe. Saul knows this is Samuel (he cannot see him); and he prostrates himself in respect.

1Samuel 28:14a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced lē)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
tô'ar (תּוֹאֵר) [pronounced TOH-ahr]	<i>a striking figure, an eye-catching form, a form which stands out, which catches your eye, which gets your attention; a form</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8389 BDB #1061

Translation: Then he said, "What [is] his form?" All of this is routine 6 to Saul. He has not been to a psychic before; he has assumed that these are legitimate people who contact the dead, and that God did not allow that (i.e., they were able to contact the dead, but God did not like that). On the other hand, this woman is panicked; she is freaking out, because she actually does see Samuel. Saul is calm as can be, not realizing that God is

allowing something pretty wild to occur. Saul, knowing that he has contracted her to contact Samuel, assumes that it is Samuel, and asks about what he looks like.

1Samuel 28:14b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #376 BDB #35
zâkên (זָקֵן) [pronounced <i>zaw-KANE</i>]	<i>old, elderly, aged</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #2205 BDB #278
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>ġaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>going up, ascending, coming up, climbing</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5927 BDB #748

Translation: *And she says, “An old man coming up;...* If you will recall, the Bible several times refers to Samuel as an old man. He is called an old man in one passage, and then, about 20 years later, he is called an old man. So, this was the way that most people would recall him. As we are in some sort of spirit form at death, whatever physical manifestation there would be to us is unclear. God has apparently allowed Samuel to return looking as he did during the final 20 years of his life. That would not have been my choice for my appearance, but I am a lot more vain than Samuel.

1Samuel 28:14c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûwʾ (הוּא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
ʿâṭâh (עָטָה) [pronounced <i>ġaw-TAW</i>]	<i>to cover, to cover over; to clothe oneself; to envelop, to wrap oneself; to conceal, to wrap up, to roll up; to become languid, to faint, to faint away</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5844 BDB #741
m ^e ʿîyl (מַעֲיָל) [pronounced <i>m^eĠEEL</i>]	<i>robe, upper coat or cloak</i>	masculine singular	Strong's #4598 BDB #591

Translation: *...he covers himself [with] a robe.”* Apparently, there was a characteristic robe which Samuel wore, and that is what is being referred to here. Recall that God knows what is going on, that Saul wants to contact Samuel, and therefore, is allowing for his appearance to be as Saul would think of him. Therefore, the barest of

descriptions is good for Saul. Now, either we are just getting a small portion of her description of Samuel, or Saul is hearing just what he wants to hear. An old man covered in a robe really could be a description of a large number of people.

1Samuel 28:14d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâda' (יָדָעַ) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHÇ</i>]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאֹוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
Sh ^e mûw'êl (שִׁמְוֹאֵל) [pronounced <i>sh^e-moo-ALE</i>]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced <i>hoo</i>]	<i>he, it</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: *Saul knew that this* [lit., *he*] *[is] Samuel..* Even though, this description would do little or nothing for us—that is, we'd hear the description and think, “Well, sure, maybe it is just some old Bible guy.” However, this is exactly how Saul pictured Samuel, and this limited description is exactly what Saul expected to hear (or, as mentioned, we might not be getting all of the description). He is positive that it is Samuel (which it is).

Let's approach this from a slightly different angle. Saul has gone to this woman to bring up Samuel from the dead. She does bring someone up from the dead, but that, of course, freaks her out. Even if a person is in league with demons, this sort of thing is not allowed. So, perhaps Saul is simply looking for a few confirmatory remarks which would indicate, “Yes, that is what Samuel looks like. You've called up the right person.” Let me see if I can give you a parallel situation: your secretary calls up the home phone of a male colleague, who has a wife, two daughters and no sons. He answers the phone and she is not sure if it is him. You ask, “What does he sound like?” “It's a masculine voice,…” “That's him.” You do not need a full description; the idea of the description is more of a confirmation. That is probably what is happening here. Quite obviously, this means that Saul cannot see Samuel.

In the previous verse, we could have gone in either direction; that is, we could have interpreted what the woman said as *god, God or gods*. Let delve into this point by point:

Should <i>Elohim</i> be Understood as Singular or Plural Here?	
Scripture	Verse/Explanation
1Sam. 28:13b	And the woman says to Saul, “I saw <u>Elohim coming up</u> from out of the earth.” What is in the plural has been underlined.
1Sam. 28:14	Then he said, “What [is] his form?” And she says, “An old man coming up; he covers himself [with] a robe.” Saul knew that this [lit., <i>he</i>] [is] Samuel and he bows his face [lit., <i>nostrils</i>] to the ground and does obeisance [to him]. All singular references to Samuel are in boldface. There are no plural references here.
Explanation #1:	Since Elohim is a plural noun, it takes a plural verb. Therefore, the woman used the masculine plural verb <i>coming up</i> with Elohim. The only problem with this is, often <i>Elohim</i> takes a singular verb (Gen. 1:1, for instance).
Explanation #2:	There is an interesting thing about people. People often exaggerate when a situation does not warrant exaggeration. She may have been saying <i>gods are coming up</i> , even though she saw but one form. She may have exaggerated the vision in her hysteria.
Explanation #3:	This woman may have thought God was coming from the earth; she may have used a plural verb by mistake—because she was so shaken up or because Hebrew is not her native language. However, it is clear by what Saul says and what she then says that we are speaking of one person. I believe that this is the correct interpretation of the situation.
Explanation #4:	Clarke suggests ⁴² that there was first an angelic apparition (angels coming out of the ground) followed by Samuel. Although this is possible, I doubt that this explains the situation.

I realize that some of these things may not require discussion in your eyes; I tend to get anal retentive about them, and therefore, I want to explore the possibilities. One might assert that there is a contraction here, but that is certainly not the case. Any of the explanations explain the apparent contradiction of plural vs. singular.

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1Samuel 28:14e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâdad (קָדָד) [pronounced <i>kaw-DAHD</i>]	<i>to bow down, to worship, to prostrate oneself [out of honor or reverence]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6915 BDB #869
ʿaphayim (אֶפְיַיִם) [pronounced <i>ah-fah-YIM</i>]	<i>face; noses, nostrils, but is also translated brows, face; anger, fierce anger</i>	masculine dual noun	Strong's #639 BDB #60

⁴² Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:14.

1Samuel 28:14e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land	feminine singular noun with the directional hê suffix	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...and he bows his face [lit., nostrils] to the ground... Saul here may or may not be overcome with emotion. However, he feels the proper thing to do is to bow down before Samuel—although, Samuel is not actually there in a physical presence that Saul can see (recall, Saul asked the woman what does he look like).

1Samuel 28:14f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw- KHAW]	to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to	3 rd person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005

Translation: ...and does obeisance [to him]. This is what Saul thinks he should do in a case like this. He is thinking that Samuel is right there looking at him, so he bows down, showing him respect, if not reverence. Gill seems to disparage this notion that Saul is revering Samuel, but instead, getting on the ground to hear better.⁴³ The two phrases together are always used for reverence, not for simply laying down on the ground. Furthermore, if anyone is going to know how to do the wrong thing, it is Saul.

It is interesting that the woman allows the woman to see Samuel, but does not let Saul see him.

And so says Samuel unto Saul, “For why have you disturbed me to bring me up?”

Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me, to bring me up?”

And so says Saul, “An adversary to me great and Philistines waging war in me and Elohim has departed from over me and has not answered me yet, both in a hand of the prophets and in dreams; and so I call to you to make me know what I am doing.”

1Samuel
28:15

And Saul answered [lit., said], “[There is] great distress to me—the Philistines are waging war against me and Elohim has departed from me and still does not answer me, either by the hand of the prophets or by dreams; so I called to you to make me know what I should do.”

⁴³ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:14. In fact, Gill was one of the few exegetes to question the validity of this experience. He says that Samuel would come from heaven and not from the earth (false—all the dead remain in the earth—1Cor. 15); and he says that Samuel would have told Saul to stand up and not to fall down in obeisance to him (Rev. 19:10—we may not have all of what Samuel said). Furthermore, Gill says that God would not do this, as God refused to answer Saul by any earthly prophet. Gill's conclusion is that this was the devil (or a demon) pretending to be Samuel. Matthew Henry also suggests that Saul fell to the ground to hear better. Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:7–14.

Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me, bringing me up?”

And Saul answered, saying, “I am under great pressure right now—the Philistines are waging war against me and God apparently has departed from me, as He will not answer me, either through the prophets or by dreams; therefore, I call upon you to tell me what I should do.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so says Samuel unto Saul, “For why have you disturbed me to bring me up?” so says Saul, “An adversary to me great and Philistines waging war in me and Elohim has departed from over me and has not answered me yet, both in a hand of the prophets and in dreams; and so I call to you to make me know what I am doing.”
Peshitta	And Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me to bring me up?” And Saul answered, “I am sore distressed; for the Philistines are making war against me, and God has departed from me, and answers me no more although I have inquired by the prophets and also by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you ma tell me what I should do.”
Septuagint	And Samuel said, “Why have you troubled me, that I should come up?” And Saul said, “I am greatly distressed, and the Philistines war against me, and God has departed from me, and He no longer has listened to me, either by the hand of prophets or by dreams. And now I have called you to tell me what I should do.”

Significant differences: No significant differences.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	“Why are you bothering me by bringing me up like this?” Samuel asked. “I’m terribly worried,” Saul answered. “The Philistines are about to attack me. God has turned his back on me and won’t answer any more by prophets or by dreams. What should I do?”
NLT	“Why have you disturbed me by calling me back?” Samuel asked. “Because I am in deep trouble,” Saul replied. “The Philistines are at war with us, and God has left me and won’t reply by prophets or dreams. So I have called for you to tell me what to do.”
TEV	Samuel said to Saul, “Why have you disturbed me? Why did you make me come back?” Saul answered, “I am in great trouble. The Philistines are at war with me, and God has abandoned me. He doesn’t answer me any more, either by prophets or by dreams. And so I have called you, for you to tell me what I must do.”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God’s Word™</i>	Samuel asked Saul, “Why did you disturb me by conjuring me up?” Saul answered, “I’m in serious trouble. The Philistines are at war with me, and God has turned against me and doesn’t answer me anymore—either by the prophets or in dreams. So I’ve called on you to tell me what to do.”
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB	“Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?” Samuel asked Saul. “I’m in serious trouble,” replied Saul. “The Philistines are fighting against me and God has
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turned away from me. He doesn't answer me any more, either through the prophets or in dreams. So I've called on you to tell me what I should do."

MKJV

And Samuel said to Saul, Why have you disturbed me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am grievously distressed, for the Philistines are warring against me. And God has left me and does not answer me any more, neither by prophets nor by dreams. And I have called you so that you may make known to me what I should do.

Young's Updated LT

And Samuel says unto Saul, "Why have you troubled me, to bring me up?" And Saul says, "I have great distress, and the Philistines are fighting against me, God has turned aside from me, and has not answered me any more, either by the hand of the prophets, or by dreams; and I call for you to let me know what I do."

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel asks Saul (apparently directly) why he has brought him up from the dead. Saul tells him that he is under great pressure because the Philistines are going to war against him and God has turned away from him. "God will not answer me, not by prophets or in dreams. Therefore, I have called upon you to tell me what to do."

1Samuel 28:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾamar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Sh ^e mûw'êl (שְׁמוּאֵל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means <i>heard of El</i> ; it is transliterated <i>Samuel</i>	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced e]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence.			
râgaz (רָגַז) [pronounced rawg-GAHZ]	<i>to cause to quake [or be disquieted]; to disturb, to disquiet; to provoke to anger, to irritate, to provoke; to cause to fear, to make tremble</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect; with a 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #7264 BDB #919

Translation: Then Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me,... We do not know exactly the state that man is in when he dies; but we may reasonably assume that it is a wonderful state; and enjoyable state, and that

the affairs of this world are no longer pressing. Samuel was in this state, and had no reason to leave it. Even though there are periods of time on this earth which are pretty good, there are also times when we are in pain, confused, and/or upset. There are times that we wonder about God and what we see in this world. In our own arrogance, we even think, "That's too harsh; I wouldn't be quite that harsh." However, when we die, we apparently have a much better understanding of God and of what is going on; and that His perfect justice and righteousness are so apparent that we are no longer burdened by the cares of this world. In fact, in death, we have no desire to become entangled again in this world. However, God chose to bring Samuel back, to speak to Saul. However, returning to this troubled earth, even in spirit form, is disturbing to Samuel.

What appears to be the case, although I would not state this dogmatically, is that Saul can hear Samuel, although he cannot see him. There is no indication that the woman does any back and forth translating between them.

Matthew Henry sees this person speaking to Saul as Satan disguised as Samuel, pointing out the obvious irony of Saul going to the woman in disguise, and then Satan speaking to Saul in disguise.⁴⁴ There is nothing in this passage to suggest that Henry's theory is correct. Gill takes the same position.

Matthew Henry and John Gill's Position: *This is not Samuel; it is a Demon*

Henry and Gill's Opinions	Arguments For	Arguments Against
Matthew Henry believes that the witch did not bring Samuel back from the dead.	No witch has the power to bring anyone back from the dead.	God brought Samuel back from the dead; this in fact shocked the witch. So, in one way, Henry is correct.
Matthew Henry believes that this is Satan posing as Samuel (or, at least a demon).	Perhaps the woman was surprised because this apparition was greater than had ever been observed by her before.	If this had occurred, there would be no reason for the woman to be surprised; she made her living from faking out others.
God has not spoken to Saul in any other way; why did He choose this?	If God did not answer Samuel by dreams, prophets or priests, why would God answer him in this way?	Good point. However, given that Saul probably has a paid-for priest and a paid-for prophet, and given the fact that they and Saul are probably out of fellowship, there is no method by which God can actually contact Saul.
Gill states that Samuel was in a state of bliss in Abraham's bosom <i>in heaven</i> .	Samuel had no more ties to this world and would have come down from heaven.	All of the saints, at this point in time, are in Abraham's bosom, in the earth (Job 7:9 Luke 16:19-31).
Samuel should have dissuaded Saul from worshipping him.	Angels do not permit men to worship them (Rev. 19:10); therefore Samuel would not permit Saul to worship him.	Saul's falling to the ground was not necessarily in worship, but his way of showing respect (1Sam. 20:41 24:8 25:23, 41). In a situation like this, he did not know what to do. Given who and what Saul is, straightening him out on a couple minor theological points would be a waste of time.
Samuel would not give this advice.	Samuel would have told Saul to repent and to change his attitude.	This is not necessarily so. The last time that Samuel and Saul talked, Samuel did not tell Saul to repent; he told Saul that he had screwed up and Scripture tells us that Saul would not see Samuel again until the day of his death.

⁴⁴ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:15-19.

Matthew Henry and John Gill's Position: *This is not Samuel; it is a Demon*

Henry and Gill's Opinions	Arguments For	Arguments Against
This is <i>cold comfort</i> from a man of God.	Where is Samuel's exhortation to Saul to change his attitude and work his way back into God's graces?	This is a point at which a man has gone too far in his soul with regards to negative volition; Saul had reached that point a long time ago—something which should give us pause.
One reading of the end of v. 16 is that God favors David, Saul's enemy.	The real Samuel would never call David Saul's enemy.	Poppycock; Samuel is speaking to Saul, so he presents things from Saul's point of view—i.e., David as Saul's enemy. However, this text, in any case, is suspect.

As I studied this topic more thoroughly, I found that even Luther and Calvin believed this to be an apparition or a demon posing as Samuel. In fact, apparently for hundreds of years, this was the common belief. I first heard this taught by R. B. Thieme Jr. that this was actually Samuel; and in my investigation of the passage, believe this to be true. The chief reasons given for this not being Samuel are given above, and, as you can see, they do not hold water.

Now, let me give you one more reason why we know that this is Samuel and not a demon speaking pretending to be Samuel: God's Word tells us that this is Samuel speaking; God's Word does not tell us that there is a demon speaking here instead of Samuel. At the end of Samuel and Saul's speaking, I will offer a little more on this same topic. However, it is proper for you to be prepared for the exegesis with the knowledge that this is really happening; this is really Samuel who is really speaking.

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The best question introduced here is, *if God has not chosen to speak to Saul through dreams or through a priest or prophet, why does He choose to speak to him through this medium?*

Why Does God Speak to Saul Through Samuel?

1. First of all, God will not speak to Saul through his dreams because Saul has been out of fellowship for a long, long time. God does not communicate, in general, with a person out of fellowship, and certainly not with a man under the sin unto death.
2. Secondly, God has not pronounced anything to Saul via a priest or a prophet. Saul killed all but one priest, so if he has a personal priest, then it is someone he has hired, as we saw done in the book of the Judges. Such a priest has no way to contact God. Saul may have a personal prophet under similar circumstances, and, like the priest, this prophet has no way to contact God. Furthermore, God has already pronounced clear judgment by Samuel, the priest/prophet. God here has allowed Samuel to pass the final sentence of judgment against Saul, to let him know that this is his final day, and that his sentence, pronounced many years earlier, is being carried out.
3. Why God did not use those other methods to speak to Saul is clear. Why God allowed Samuel to indicate that Saul's sentence is being carried out is more poetic than anything. Samuel pronounced the original judgment against Saul (1Sam. 15:22–29), and now he tells Saul that this judgment is now being carried out.
4. Please bear in mind that Saul is a peculiar case. He is the first king of Israel who was promoted by God (there was another king of Israel in the book of Judges). Saul was a king chosen by God and chosen by the people. Just as David will have two prophets who will come and straighten him out (Nathan and Gad), Samuel was the priest/prophet chosen by God to straighten Saul out. There was no one else available to do this. A new prophet or priest would have been slain by Saul, had he approached Saul with this kind of news. So, essentially, God is being gracious to Saul, even though Saul is under the sin unto death, and guiding him to his death and destiny.
5. I should also point out, God is not speaking to Saul, but Samuel is speaking to Saul.

The idea that God brings one back from the dead for a temporary service is not unprecedented; He will bring back Moses and Elijah in the end times as well.

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What this study does bring up is, where are the dead? Where were the dead during the time of Saul? Where are the dead today? At this point, we should review the **Doctrine of Sheol (or Hades)**, which we first studied in Job7:9.

1Samuel 28:15b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^l)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿâlâh (עָלָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>to cause to go up, to lead up, to take up, to bring up</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
ʾêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	affixed to a 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: ...to bring me up? Samuel was brought up, again indicating that men apparently have some sort of state of life in the earth (which is consistent in Scripture). Whether this consistency refers to a literal state within the earth—somehow occupying a spirit state within the earth—or whether this is simply language of accommodation, I don't know. It appears to be so consistent in Scripture that I personally take it as literal.

There are some mechanics here which are glossed over in the narrative. It appears as though Saul is speaking directly with Samuel, although Saul cannot seem to see Samuel (v. 13). The medium clearly sees Samuel, but she seems to be out of the picture at this point—at least with regards to the conversation, and will not say anything to Saul until he passes out from fear, lack of food and exhaustion (vv. 20–22). We don't know if Samuel speaks through the medium, as they pretend to do (or allow a demon to do); or whether Samuel's words are actually audible to Saul (or to anybody else there). My guess is that Samuel's voice is at least audible to Saul and perhaps to the others there, which accounts for the fact that no one except Saul speaks (everyone else is too dumbfounded by what is occurring). Furthermore, God brought Samuel up from the dead, not this woman; therefore, God would allow Samuel and Saul to speak directly to one another. The only purpose of letting this woman see Samuel is to shock her so much as to remove her from the conversation and the interaction. In all actuality, she has little or nothing to do here, and absolutely nothing to contribute.

1Samuel 28:15c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

1Samuel 28:15c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Shâ`ûwl (לֹוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
tsar (צָר) [pronounced <i>tsar</i>]	<i>an adversary, an enemy; narrow, tight</i> and therefore, <i>distress, affliction, intense distress</i> [caused by an adversary]	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6862 BDB #865
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
m ^e ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced <i>m^e-ODE</i>]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

Translation: ...And Saul answered [lit., *said*], “[There is] great distress to me—... Do you recall the way Saul explains himself? When he offered up an animal sacrifice instead of Samuel, because he became impatient, he had a very long and well-rehearsed explanation. We have the same thing here. Saul feels justified in his own mind to bring Samuel up from the dead. The only person that Saul cares about is Saul, and now he is in a tight spot. Therefore, he will do whatever he can to get out of it. He is greatly distressed, and what follows will tell us exactly how distressed he is as well as why he is so troubled. You can tell that he has rehearsed this in his mind several times—just exactly what he would say to Samuel when he got the chance to speak to him.

1Samuel 28:15d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
P ^e lish ^{et} îy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (which acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced <i>law-KHAHM</i>]	<i>engage in battle, engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	masculine plural, Niphal participle	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 1 st person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

Translation: ...the Philistines are waging war against me... The first problem is, the Philistines are waging war against Saul. This is interesting, as the Philistines have fought against Saul since time immemorial. This is about the 7th time that Saul has faced them (and I am only going by the wars recorded in the Bible; there could have been more). However, I suspect at this time, Saul has a bad feeling about this. Furthermore, his greatest ally, David, was not there with him (although Saul could not list this as one of his problems, as David's absence was Saul's fault).

1Samuel 28:15e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>gods or God; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43
çûwr (סוּר) [pronounced <i>soor</i>]	<i>to turn aside, to depart, to go away</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

Together, they mean *from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to*

Translation: ...and Elohim has departed from me... It is clear to Saul that God was no longer there to guide him. This had been true for a long time. Saul had hoped that God would be mad for awhile, and then come back to protect him. However, this was not the case. God no longer communicated with Saul in any way. Again, this is Samuel speaking to Saul—not God.

1Samuel 28:15f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lôʾ (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʿânâh (אָנָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-NAWH</i>]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #6030 BDB #772
ʿôwd (עוֹד) [pronounced <i>gohd</i>]	<i>still, yet, again, besides, in addition to, even yet</i>	adverb with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5750 BDB #728

Translation: ...and still does not answer me,... Saul tells Samuel that God will not answer him at all. No matter what approach Saul takes, God will not speak to him. This, by the way, is nothing new—nor is this news to Samuel. When Saul offered up a sacrifice in Samuel's stead, that marked the point at which God stopped speaking to Saul (through Samuel).

I have mentioned that Saul probably has a priest or two traveling with him; and possibly a prophet or two. We saw in the book of Judges that this was not abnormal (although God did not approve of a Levite taking this sort of job as a personal priest). I have no evidence of this, apart from this having occurred before; and because Saul states this as though he has spoken to a priest and a prophet, who were not helpful. Another option is, no priest or prophet has come to Saul to guide him. This is also what could have been meant here (however, we have no indication that any priest or prophet has gone to Saul with information from God—apart from Samuel).

1Samuel 28:15g			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so; either...or</i> (but not used disjunctively)	when gam is repeated	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
nâbîy' (נְבִיאִים) [pronounced <i>naw^b-VEE</i>]	<i>spokesman, speaker, prophet</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5030 BDB #611
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>both...and, furthermore...as well as, also...also, that...so; either...or</i> (but not used disjunctively)	when gam is repeated	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
châlôwm (חֲלוֹמִים) [pronounced <i>khuh-LOHM</i>]	<i>dream</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #2472 BDB #321

Translation: ...[either by the hand of the prophets or by dreams](#);... None of the prophets which Saul has consulted have been able to give him any information.⁴⁵ Furthermore, God is not speaking to Saul by dreams either. Saul may be praying like crazy every night for God to speak to him, but, once he falls asleep, there is nothing. God does not communicate to Saul through his dreams.

Now, back in v. 6, we are told that God is not speaking to Saul by dreams, *by Urim* or by prophets. Here, Saul only mentions prophets and dreams? Why doesn't Saul also make mention to Samuel of Urim or of the priests? The explanation is simple.

⁴⁵ The other possibility is no prophet has come to Saul with information. As you may recall from the Bible (where we have not been yet), Nathan the prophet seemed to show up out of nowhere to speak to David.

Why Doesn't Saul Mention Urim or the Priests?

1. Samuel is speaking to Saul from the dead.
2. Saul does not know what Samuel knows, so he assumes Samuel knows everything.
3. In the past, Saul has always carefully chosen his words, if he has had time to anticipate a meeting (and he traveled all the way from the Israeli camp to Endor).
4. Saul slaughtered the priests at Nob; only Abiathar escaped with the Ephod.
5. The remaining priests (which may not have been residing at Nob) apparently reestablished themselves in Gibeon (1Chron. 16:39) under Zadok, who is in the line of Eleazar. It is very likely that this was, during the final years of Saul, an underground *priesthood*. That is, they probably kept to themselves, did not make their organization known, and did not offer the full set of services as prescribed in the Law out of fear of Saul.
6. Saul has probably hired a private priest or two who fashioned his own ephod (we are not told this information, so that we do not mistake his private priests as being in the High Priest line).
7. Because of Saul's heinous behavior—the killing of the priests in Nob and the probable hiring of a personal priest—saying anything about the priesthood would only dredge up a very negative response from Samuel (or so Saul would suppose).
8. Therefore, Saul, being in a jam, and speaking to Samuel, hoping to get advice out of this jam, does not want to bring up that which would strongly offend Samuel.
9. Saul wants Samuel, the priest-prophet, to get him out of this jam he is in. He does not need Samuel's condemnation, which a mention of the priesthood would surely bring (I am speaking from Saul's point of view).
10. Saul *knows* what he has done is wrong; he *knows* that he deserves condemnation from Samuel for these things. Therefore, he does not mention anything about the priesthood so that they could deal more with the primary issue, in Saul's mind, which is bailing Saul out of a jam.

Saul's personality and human nature explains Saul's approach here completely.

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1Samuel 28:15h

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>lê</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>lê</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
yâda' (יָדָע) [pronounced <i>yaw-DAHĠ</i>]	<i>to cause to know, to make one know, to instruct, to teach</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3045 BDB #393

1Samuel 28:15h			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâh (מַה) [pronounced maw]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

Translation: ...so I called to you to make me know what I should do.” I don’t know if you realize the inconsistency here. Samuel cannot simply chose to respond to Saul. Samuel cannot be called by Saul, and then decide, “Should I help him out of this jam or not?” This is not the situation. The situation is, God has to bring Samuel up. Samuel possibly has no idea what is going on, on earth, and probably has no actual interest in this.⁴⁶ God chose to bring Samuel up, in order to answer Saul.

Saul’s reasoning is also moderately flawed. If God would not speak to Saul via those he believed to be men of God, then it would be less likely for God to speak to Saul through a psychic, whose connection to God is even more suspect. Furthermore, Samuel was a prophet of God; it makes little sense for Samuel to speak to Saul now, when he refused to speak to him in life. However, despite the fact that his reasoning is flawed, also realize that Saul is actually trying to side-step God; Saul is trying to do an end run around God here, and speak directly to Samuel. Notice in all of his communication with this psychic, Saul does not speak of God (except in an oath). Saul wants to speak to Samuel and to get his advice, not God’s. Saul believes that this woman has raised Samuel up; he does not realize that God brought Samuel up. So, in Saul’s mind, he is going around God to get to Samuel.

We can only speculate about Samuel and his involvement with this world. His answer to Saul will reveal that he knows what is going on and that Saul will die the next day. What we do not know is, whether this is information which Samuel possessed all along or whether God revealed it to him. Given the story of Lazarus and the rich man, it seems to indicate that the rich man did not know exactly what was occurring on earth, but he was able to somehow observe Lazarus along side of Abraham. However, it would be really difficult to draw either conclusion from that passage or this.

And so says Samuel, “For why do you ask me and Y^ehowah has turned from you and so He is your adversary?”

1Samuel 28:16

Then Samuel said, “Why do you ask me since [lit., and] Y^ehowah has turned away from you and has become your adversary?”

Then Samuel said, “Why do you ask me since Jehovah has turned away from you and has become your adversary?”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

- Masoretic Text And so says Samuel, “For why do you ask me and Yehowah has turned from you and so He is your adversary?”
- Peshitta Then Samuel said to Saul, “Why do you ask of me, seeing the LORD has departed from you, and now He is with your neighbor David?”
- Septuagint And Samuel said, “Why do you ask me, whereas the Lord has departed from you and has taken part with your neighbor?”

⁴⁶ People in the other compartment of Hades do apparently have both regrets and an interest in what happens in the world. Recall the story that Jesus told of the man who wanted to return to warn his brothers—I don’t believe that was a parable but an actual event. Those who die not having believed in Jesus Christ apparently do have regrets.

Significant differences: In the Massoretic text, God is turned from Saul and has become his enemy. In the Septuagint, God is with Saul’s neighbor (who is named in the Peshitta).

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Samuel said: “If the LORD has turned away from you and is now your enemy, don't ask me what to do
 NLT But Samuel replied, “Why ask me if the LORD has left you and has become your enemy?”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God’s Word™ Samuel said, “Why are you asking me when the LORD has turned against you and become your enemy?
 JPS (Tanakh) Samuel said, “Why do you ask me, seeing that the LORD has turned away from you and has become your adversary [meaning of Hebrew uncertain].

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Updated Emphasized Bible Then said Samuel,
 Why then should you ask me,— when ||Yahweh|| has turned away from you and has come to be with your neighbor [so it should be, as per the Septuagint and Syriac].
 HCSB Samuel answered, "Since the LORD has turned away from you and has become your enemy, why are you asking me?
 WEB Samuel said, Why then do you ask of me, seeing Yahweh has departed from you, and has become your adversary?
 Young’s Updated LT And Samuel says, “And why do you ask me, and Jehovah has turned aside from you, and is your enemy?”

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel asks Saul, “Why do you ask me, since Jehovah has turned away from you and is now your enemy?”

1Samuel 28:16a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong’s # BDB #253
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MARH]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong’s #559 BDB #55
Sh ^e mûwʾêl (שמ׳וּאֵל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means heard of El; it is transliterated Samuel	proper masculine noun	Strong’s #8050 BDB #1028
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to	preposition	No Strong’s # BDB #510

1Samuel 28:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâh (מה) [pronounced <i>maw</i>]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
Lâmed + mâh can be rendered <i>why, for what reason, to what purpose, for what purpose</i> , indicating an interrogatory sentence.			
shâ'al (שאל) [pronounced <i>shaw-AHL</i>]	<i>to ask, to petition, to request, to inquire; to demand; to question, to interrogate</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #7592 BDB #981

Translation: Then Samuel said, "Why do you ask me... From Samuel's point of view, what Saul is doing is illogical. If God will not answer Saul in any way, why should Samuel, a man of God, answer Saul? Furthermore, Saul cannot talk to Samuel apart from God's power; so it is even odd that God would allow this (however, Saul is not aware of this; he thinks bringing up people from the dead is what spiritists do).

I should also mention that we do not know exactly what the physical reality is here. It appears as though Samuel is speaking and that Saul is hearing Samuel's words (even though he apparently is unable to see Samuel, as he had to ask the medium about his appearance). There is the possibility that Samuel spoke through the woman; however, there is nothing in this passage to indicate that. There is the possibility that Samuel spoke to the woman, and then she spoke to Saul. However, there is no indication of that either. Since this psychic has screamed just at the sight of Samuel (not really expecting to raise the dead, yet raising the dead with her scream, so to speak), I doubt that she is emotionally up to passing along all that Samuel has to say. My thinking is, Saul is actually hearing Samuel's real voice and that Samuel is really speaking to him. I do not believe that Saul actually sees Samuel at any time; although that is not clear (at the beginning, Saul did not see Samuel, as the psychic had to describe Samuel to him). Since Samuel's words are presented alone and since Saul *immediately* collapses at the end of them, this indicates that Saul can hear Samuel, but he probably cannot see him. We could chalk this up to God's sense of humor; allowing a medium to actually bring up someone from the dead. The medium, who supposedly does this for a living, is thrown for a loop; and Saul, who should know that these mediums are fakes, thinks that this is all routine 6.

1Samuel 28:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
çûwr (סור) [pronounced <i>soor</i>]	<i>to turn aside, to depart, to go away</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5493 (and #5494) BDB #693

1Samuel 28:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5920, #5921 BDB #752

Together, they mean *from upon, from over, from by, from beside, from attachment to, from companionship with, from accompanying [in a protective manner], from adhesion to*

Translation: ...since [lit., and] Y^ehowah has turned away from you... It is clear to both Samuel and Saul that God has turned away from Saul. Since God does not answer any of Saul's questions, either by dreams or by prophets, clearly God has cut off all ties with Saul. Samuel's reasoning is, "God has turned away from you, Saul; you don't really think you can do an end run around God for the same information, do you?"

Application: You cannot get around God. His mandates and expectations are clear; so we are foolish to think that there is some way that we can circumvent His power or His justice.

1Samuel 28:16c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
ʿar (עָר) [pronounced <i>gahr</i>]	<i>enemy, adversary; city</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6145 & #5892 BDB #786

Owen lists this noun as being a masculine plural, but that is a mistake, I believe. Also, you will note that this noun is apparently a homonym, as the meanings are so diverse.

Translation: ...and has become your adversary? Not only has God cut off Saul, but God has become Saul's enemy. Note that Samuel is, to some extent, saying what Jeremiah said: "Have you not brought this on yourself by abandoning the LORD your God while He was leading you along the way?" (Jer. 2:17). Or, "Your way of life and your actions have brought this on you. This is your punishment. It is very bitter, because it has reached your heart!" (Jer. 4:18).

Samuel presents the same reasoning to Saul as we find in many commentaries. "God has stopped speaking to you; I am a man of God; therefore, why do you think that I will speak to you?" What will follow in the next few verses will be what Samuel has already told Saul when he was still alive. Samuel will remind Saul of the judgment that God pronounced against him, and why—all things which Samuel has already told Saul.

There are a few times when the Septuagint differs significantly from the Masoretic text, and the end of this verse is one of those times. When there is a significant different in the text, I'd like you to see the Greek so that you can compare it to the Hebrew text. People who know little or nothing about the Bible think that religious groups came in and changed the text in many places to suit their own doctrine. Whereas, that is true, to some extent, with a translation (e.g., from the Hebrew into the Latin; or any of the English translations), the amount of change imposed on the original manuscripts is quite small. Most of the differences in ancient manuscripts involved the spelling of a word, interpretation of the text (i.e., do you interpret the text literally or do you try to convey the general meaning, which may not be the literal text?). However, to find text changed in order to support this doctrine or that—that kind of change is extremely rare (there are a handful of well-documented cases in the New Testament—primarily of additions).

1 Samuel 28:16c from the Greek Septuagint

Greek/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	Strong's Number
καί (Καί) [pronounced <i>kī</i>]	<i>and, even, also</i>	conjunction	Strong's #2532
γίνομαι (γίνομαι) [pronounced <i>GIN-oh-mī</i>]	<i>to become [something it was not before]; to be born; to arise, come about; to be made, to be created; to happen, to take place</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, perfect active indicative	Strong's #1096
Here, this verb is in the form γίγνομαι [pronounced <i>GIHG-noh-mī</i>] and written γέγove.			
meta (μετά) [pronounced <i>meht-AH</i>]	<i>with, among, in the company of, in the midst of</i>	preposition with the genitive	Strong's #3326
του (τοῦ) [pronounced <i>tu</i>]	<i>of the; from the, [away, out] from the; from the source of; by the; than the</i>	masculine singular definite article, genitive/ablative case	Strong's #3588
plêsion (πλησίον, α, ον) [pronounced <i>play-SEE-on</i>]	<i>neighbor, one who is near, close by; fellow man; associate</i>	noun (accusative with a genitive definite article?)	Strong's #4139
sou (σου) [pronounced <i>sue</i>]	<i>of you, your; from you</i>	2 nd person singular pronoun, genitive/ablative case	Strong's #4771

Translation: ...and he had become with your neighbor. In the MT, God has become Saul's enemy; in the Septuagint, God is with Saul's neighbor (which refers to David, apparently). Although the meanings are substantially different, the end result is the same. God had sided with David against Saul.

In view of what is coming up in the next verse, there are two very good explanations for the LXX: (1) they worked from a text where the copyist looked back to the original text and copied the end of v. 17 instead of the end of v. 16; or (2) the copyist worked from a difficult-to-read manuscript, and could not read the end of v. 16, so inserted instead the end of v. 17. Either of these explanations would indicate to us that the MT is probably correct. So, in this case, we can reasonably determine what the original text is, why it was changed, and, even if the text was seriously in question, the difference between the Greek and Hebrew when it comes to understanding the overall passage, is minor.

And so does Y^ehowah to him as which he spoke in my hand and so has torn Y^ehowah the kingdom from your hand and so he gives her to your associate—to David. 1Samuel 28:17

Therefore [lit., *and so*] Y^ehowah will do to him [or, *for Himself*] just as He spoke by my hand: Y^ehowah has torn the kingdom out of your hand and has given it to your associate—to David.

Therefore, Jehovah will do to you just as He has promised by me: He will tear the kingdom out of your hand and give it to your associate, David.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so does Yehowah to him as which he spoke in my hand and so has torn Yehowah the kingdom from your hand and so he gives her to your associate—to David.

Septuagint And the Lord has done to you as the Lord spoke by my hand; and the Lord will take your kingdom out of your hand, and He will give it to your neighbor David,...

Significant differences: Jehovah does to *him* in the MT; and Jehovah does to *you* in the LXX and the Vulgate. The Peshitta is in agreement with the MT. Some discussion will be found in the Hebrew exegesis.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV I've already told you: The LORD has sworn to take the kingdom from you and give it to David. And that's just what he's doing!

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ The LORD has done to you exactly what he spoke through me: The LORD has torn the kingship out of your hands and given it to your fellow Israelite David.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB The LORD has done exactly what He said through me: The LORD has torn the kingship out of your hand and given it to your neighbor David.

Young's Updated LT And Jehovah does for Himself as He has spoken by my hand, and Jehovah rends the kingdom out of your hand, and gives it to your neighbour—to David.

What is the gist of this verse? Samuel continues to admonish Saul, “Nothing has changed; God is taking the kingdom from you and giving it to David.”

1Samuel 28:17a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

1Samuel 28:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) (pronounced ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
In the Greek and Latin, this reads <i>to you</i> . In the Hebrew and Aramaic, this reads <i>to him</i> (or, <i>for Himself</i>), although there are apparently some Hebrew manuscripts which read <i>to you</i> . I think for our way of thinking and pulling things together, we see Samuel as speaking to Saul about Saul's judgment, and we interpret this as God doing to Saul as he had promised. However, the probable meaning here is that God will do to David as He had promised. As we have seen in the past, even though there is a question about the ancient text, the resultant meaning is not radically different.			
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
ʾăšher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, kaʾăšher (כֹּ אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>kah-uh-SHER</i>] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as</i> .			
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b- VAHR</i>]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^e</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

Translation: *Therefore [lit., and so] Y^ehowah will do to him [or, for Himself] just as He spoke by my hand:...* God has already told Saul what is going to happen—God spoke to Saul by Samuel. God would take the kingdom from Saul's hand—this is what has been promised to Saul. So God has spoken to him by Samuel. Samuel assures Saul that God's game plan has not changed. He told Saul what was going to happen, and there is no reason for Saul to think that things had changed.

Application: You cannot do the same wrong things over and over again, receive punishment from God, and then do them again and think that things have changed. Saul has been out of fellowship for a long time, disobeying God constantly; there is no reason for him to assume that somehow, God is going to bail him out of this jam which, essentially, God has promised. Samuel simply tells Saul here, "This is what God has promised; don't be surprised that God is going to bring it to pass."

1Samuel 28:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qâra' (קָרַע) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAHG</i>]	<i>to bend, to tear apart; to tear out, to tear away; to cut in pieces [with a knife]; to cut out; to tear with words [i.e., to curse]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7167 BDB #902
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mam ^e lâkâh (מַמְלָכָה) [pronounced <i>mahm^e-law-kaw</i>]	<i>kingdom, sovereignty, dominion, reign, dynasty; used to refer to both the royal dignity and to the country of a king</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4467 BDB #575
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

Translation: ...Y^ehowah has torn the kingdom out of your hand... God has already told Saul exactly what He would do; He would tear the kingdom out of Saul's hand. This means that, not only would Saul lose the kingdom but it would not be passed down to any of his heirs.

Theological point: There is almost always an interval between the time God judges a believer (or any other creature) and the time that God carries out this judgment. We do not know how long ago it was when Samuel told Saul that God had taken the kingdom and given it to another (1Sam. 15); however, since then, a lot of things have occurred. Saul began to attempt to apprehend David, his primary mission over these past few years. Saul killed all but one of the priests at Nob. Saul chased down David on several occasions, God giving David an escape time and time again. David will live for at least one year of this time with the Philistines. By my estimation, 5–10 years will pass between the sentence imposed upon Saul and the carrying out of this sentence. God has also pronounced judgment on Satan—God pronounced judgment on Satan at the fall in Gen. 3:15. However, God will not carry out this judgment until the end of the 1000 year reign of Jesus Christ on this earth. In fact, Satan is only restrained during that time frame, and not under God's punishment per se.

Theological point: God always allows some time between the sentencing and the punishment. What generally happens is, the person who has been sentenced becomes worse—his behavior becomes worse. What Saul did prior to God's judgment against him was horrid; but he continued in this behavior and it became more and more pronounced. Look at all of the suffering in this world—much of it is a result of Satan's actions. Not on did he trick Eve into eating the fruit from the tree forbidden by God, but after being judged, Satan has inspired murder and torture throughout time, pretty much based upon his personal whims.

Theological point: As an unbeliever, we are born into judgment. As soon as we reach the point of God consciousness, our desire or lack thereof to know God places us under judgment. Most of the time, God does not impose death, but allows us to live. Unbelievers can live long, long lives, and never show any interest in knowing God. Even after physical death, punishment is not leveled against man for 1000 years, the point at which death and Hades are thrown into the Lake of Fire.

1Samuel 28:17c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
rêa' (רֵעַ) [pronounced <i>RAY-ahg</i>]	<i>associate, neighbor, colleague, fellow, acquaintance</i>	masculine singular noun with a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִיִּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i>]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

Translation: ...and has given it to your associate—to David. God will take the kingdom of Israel from the hand of Saul and He will give it to David, Saul's associate (or *neighbor*). Samuel pronounced this judgment against Saul in 1Sam. 15:28 and Saul fully acknowledged it in 1Sam. 24:20. However, Saul will not be removed as king until 1Sam. 30 (which is the next day future from this narrative). Also, David will not step in immediately as king; when we have a change of presidency in the US, there is a very short interval of time—the new president is elected, a few months pass, he is sworn in, and he becomes president. It will take David about three years to assume kingship over all Israel.

There are two relatively good exegetes who have said that this is just the woman pretending to be Samuel; that this is a part of her deviousness. However, how does she know all of these promises made by God through Samuel to Saul? Why do we find complete accuracy in the words that Samuel is saying? The reason is simple: this is Samuel, it is not the woman pretending to be him, nor is it some spirit pretending to be him. His message is too accurate, too on target, and will be in complete agreement with the facts. That which is fallacious almost always contains some truth—a lie is better with some truth mixed in. However, we would not expect 100% truth either from a demon or a demon's lackey.

As which you did not listen [and obey] in the voice of Y^ehowah and you did not do a burning of His nostrils in Amalek upon so the word the this he has done to you the day the this.

1Samuel
28:18

Because you did not listen [and obey] the voice of Y^ehowah and you did not execute His fierce anger [lit., *did not do the anger of His nostrils*] against Amalek; therefore, Y^ehowah will do this thing to you this day:...

Because you did not listen to the voice of Jehovah and because you did not execute his fierce anger against Amalek, Jehovah, therefore, will do the following to you on this day:...

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text As which you did not listen [and obey] in the voice of Yehowah and you did not do a burning of His nostrils in Amalek upon so the word the this he has done to you the day the this..
 Septuagint ...because you did not listen to the voice of the Lord and you did not execute His fierce anger upon Amalek; therefore, the Lord h done this thing to you this day.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

NLT The LORD has done this because you did not obey his instructions concerning the Amalekites.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word The LORD is doing this to you today because you didn't listen to him or unleash his burning anger on Amalek.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB You did not obey the LORD and did not carry out His wrath against Amalek; therefore the LORD has done this to you today.
 MKJV Because you did not obey the voice of Jehovah, nor execute his fierce wrath on Amalek, therefore Jehovah has done this thing to you now.
 Young's Updated LT Because you have not hearkened to the voice of Jehovah, nor did the fierceness of His anger on Amalek—therefore this thing has Jehovah done to you this day.

What is the gist of this verse? What turned God against Saul was disobedience to a clear and direct order: Saul was to destroy all of the Amalekites and he did not.

1Samuel 28:18a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כּ) [pronounced k ^e]	like, as, according to; about, approximately	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
ʿăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	that, which, when, who	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81

1Samuel 28:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Together, ka`āsher (כִּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>kah-uh-SHER</i>] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; according to what manner; because</i> .			
lô` (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
shâma` (שָׁמַע) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
b ^e (בּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Translation: *Because you did not listen [and obey] the voice of Y^ehowah...* Samuel explains to Saul exactly what is going on. This should have been clear to anyone, particularly Saul—but it is repeated for his benefit. The problem was, Saul did not listen to the voice of Jehovah; he did not obey the voice of Jehovah.

1Samuel 28:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô` (לוֹא or לֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
`âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
chârôwn (חַרוֹן) [pronounced <i>khaw-ROHN</i>]	<i>heat, burning; a burning [of anger], the heat of anger, anger, wrath, rage</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2740 BDB #354

1Samuel 28:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿaphayim (אַפַּיִם) [pronounced <i>ah-fāh-YIM</i>]	<i>face; noses, nostrils</i> , but is also translated <i>brows, face; anger, fierce anger</i>	masculine dual noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #639 BDB #60
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
ʿamâlêq (עַמְלֵק) [pronounced <i>ʿah-maw-LAYK</i>]	transliterated <i>Amalek</i>	masculine proper noun (used infrequently as an gentilic adjective)	Strong's #6002 BDB #766

Translation: ...and you did not execute His fierce anger [lit., *did not do the anger of His nostrils*] against Amalek;... God was angry with Amalek for what he did and what he was going to do. We are dealing with a people who are very degenerate, whose destiny is to attack and destroy the Jew. God knows perfectly what Amalek has done and knows perfectly what Amalek is capable of doing. It is so heinous that God demanded that Saul completely destroy all of the Amalekites. We covered the **Doctrine of the Amalekites** back in Num. 24:20. However, suffice it to say that thousands of Israelites died—perhaps even tens of thousands—because the Amalekites were allowed to live. God is able to see into the future; God knows the various options and how this or that action affects what comes after.

What is named here is not Saul's only transgression. It marked the beginning of a long series of transgressions where Saul again and again disobeyed the Law of God. We will later read [Saul died for his unfaithfulness to the LORD because he did not keep the LORD's word. He even consulted a medium for guidance, but he did not inquire of the LORD. So the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse \(1Chron. 10:13–14⁴⁷\)](#). Had God the Holy Spirit wanted to, He could have gone on and on naming one transgression after another committed by Saul. However, the biggie was that Saul did not obey the Word of God.

Application: I hate to even ask this, but, how many direct commands from God have you disobeyed? Or, even, better yet, how many things have you done which you have rationalize away as being okay to do, simply because everyone does them, or because it is accepted human behavior? Look at Saul—Saul is dying the sin unto death because he has disobeyed the Word of God. It began as a transgression here or there and, after awhile—probably marked by his war against Amalek—Saul disobeyed Jehovah God continually. There was no fellowship with God.

Application: There are sins which are addictive; there are sins that you may rationalize away, but, deep down, you know what you are doing is against God. How long will it be before God takes you out of this life? If you remain out of fellowship, you are no good to God. If your sins take you away from fellowship for any period of time, then you are no good to God during that period of time. No amount of money given to the church, no amount of good deeds done, no amount of hustling around the church makes up for being out of fellowship. You get involved in any set of sins which takes you out of fellowship, and you are risking that God will take you out of this life.

Application: Saul had a 10–20 year run; maybe I can go for that amount of time and accept that? Bear in mind, Saul was miserable in these final years. His life was hell. He spent much of it chasing down David, trying to gain some small amount of happiness by persecuting David. Is this what you want? Do you want this for your life? Do you want this for the final decade or two or three of your life? As Keil and Delitzsch write: *The last hope taken*

⁴⁷ Saul violated Lev. 19:31, by the way.

from Saul. His day of grace was gone, and judgment was now to burst upon him without delay.⁴⁸ Or, as we read in Psalm 50:21–22: *You have done these things, and I kept silent; you thought I was just like you. But I will rebuke you and lay out the case before you. "Understand this, you who forget God, or I will tear you apart, and there will be no rescuer."*

By the way, why are we reading this? What benefit do we get out of studying Saul's life? We read the Scriptures because they guide us in our lives; these men of old are examples for us—and these examples may be good examples and they may be poor examples. After giving several examples of Old Testament believers and their faith, the writer of Hebrews says, *Since we are surrounded by so many examples of faith, we must get rid of everything that slows us down, especially sin that distracts us* (Heb. 12:1a). And we examine the Old Testament for both good and bad examples: *All of them ate the same spiritual food, and all of them drank the same spiritual drink. They drank from the spiritual rock that went with them, and that rock was Christ. Yet, God was not pleased with most of them, so their dead bodies were scattered over the desert. These things have become examples for us so that we won't desire what is evil, as they did* (1Cor. 10:3–6).

God is gracious—He is gracious to you and He is far too gracious with me. However, in reading about Saul, we find that there is a point at which God brings His judgments against us to pass. These judgments against Saul will come to pass—there is absolutely no question about it. If you choose to remain out of fellowship for a long period of time, then do not be surprised when God takes you out of this world.

1Samuel 28:18c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i>]	<i>so or thus</i>	adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
Together, ʿal kên (עַל כֵּן) mean <i>so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, on this account, on account.</i>			
dâbâr (דְּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAWR</i>]	<i>word, saying, doctrine, thing, matter, command</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced <i>zeh</i>]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
Even though the perfect tense is completed action, God has decreed this action in eternity past; God has also told Saul that He would bring his reign to an end. What we have here is an event, future from the time at which it was spoken, but treated as a completed action, as its futurity is so absolutely certain. Insofar as God is concerned, Whose words are spoken by Samuel, this event has come to pass.			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l^e</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

⁴⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:18–19.

1Samuel 28:18c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
yôwm (יומ) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
zeh (זה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, thus</i>	demonstrative adjective with a definite article	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260

Translation: ...therefore, Y^ehowah will do this thing to you this day:... Because Saul refused to obey God in that matter, God has done this thing (taken the kingdom from Saul) on this day. *This day* could be more reasonably rendered *at this time*. God did not decide to do something against Saul that day that Samuel is speaking to him from beyond the grave. Nor does God do something to Saul right then and there. Therefore, we are looking at that general time period—from Saul’s disobedience up until tomorrow for Saul.

The verb here is in the perfect tense, the tense of completed action. However, Samuel was not speaking of the events which had already taken place that day. Samuel was not speaking of Saul becoming frightened and getting two of his men together and going to find this witch of Endor. Samuel was not speaking of even him speaking to Saul. You have to go with the entire thought—*Jehovah did this to Saul today because Saul did not execute God’s fierce wrath against Amalek*. God had commanded Saul to completely and thoroughly destroy the Amalekites. Saul did not do this (1Sam. 15:1–9). Saul’s men were too busy picking through the booty that the Amalekites left behind to make certain that they were all dead; even Saul kept their king alive as, apparently, a professional courtesy. Now, this judgement that Samuel speaks of has not taken place, even though the verb used here is in the perfect tense. What God was going to do to Saul had not taken place. When God brings the Philistines en masse against the Israelites, and destroys the Israelite army, and causes Saul to kill himself—that is what God has done—perfect tense—to Saul. This event is so certain, that Samuel, as a man of God speaking the judgment of God, speaks of it as a completed event. The futurity of this event was, in effect, a fact, in relationship to Samuel and to God Who put all events into motion. What God will do in judgment of Saul will be stated in the next verse. However, Samuel speaks of it as action which has been completed.

I don’t want to take this too far afield, and lose sight of the context, but we know that God is outside of time and that God invented time. This verb in the perfect tense suggests to us that Samuel is also outside of time where he is. I am only suggesting that here; and I certainly would not base an entire doctrine on the tense of one verb. I am suggesting that this is a possibility.

And gives Y^ehowah also Israel with you into a hand of Philistines and tomorrow you and your sons [will be] with me; also the army of Israel gives Y^ehowah into a hand of Philistines.” 1Samuel 28:19

...Y^ehowah will also give Israel and you into the hand of the Philistines and tomorrow, you and your sons [will be] with me. Furthermore, Y^ehowah will give the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.”

...Jehovah will also give Israel and you into the hand of the Philistines and, tomorrow, you and your sons will be with me in paradise. Furthermore, Jehovah will give the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And gives Yehowah also Israel with you into a hand of Philistines and tomorrow you and your sons [will be] with me; also the army of Israel gives Yehowah into a hand of Philistines.”
Septuagint	And the Lord will deliver Israel with you into the hands of the Philistines and tomorrow, you and your sons with you will fail [Rotherham has <i>fall</i>], and the Lord will deliver the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines.
Significant differences:	In the LXX, Saul and his sons will fail against the Philistines on the next day; in the MT, they will be with Samuel the next day. The Peshitta and Latin Vulgate are in agreement with the MT. Of the 20+ translation which I use, only Rotherham followed the Septuagint.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Tomorrow the LORD will let the Philistines defeat Israel's army, then you and your sons will join me down here in the world of the dead.”
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Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	For the same reasons the LORD will hand you and Israel over to the Philistines. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. And then the LORD will hand Israel's army over to the Philistines.”
JPS (Tanakh)	Further, the LORD will deliver the Israelites who are with you into the hands of the Philistines. Tomorrow your sons and you will be with me; and the LORD will also deliver the Israelites forces into the hands of the Philistines.”What's more, the LORD will hand you and the army of Israel over to the Philistines tomorrow, and you and your sons will be here with me. The LORD will bring the entire army of Israel down in defeat.”

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>Updated Emphasized Bible</i>	...that Yahweh may deliver Israel also with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons with you are about to fall—[and] Yahweh will deliver <the host of Israel also> into the hand of the Philistines.
HCSB	The LORD will also hand Israel over to the Philistines along with you. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me, and the LORD will hand Israel's army over to the Philistines.”
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	Yea, Jehovah gives also Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines, and tomorrow you and your sons are with me; also the camp of Israel does Jehovah give into the hand of the Philistines.”

What is the gist of this verse? The Philistines would defeat the army of Israel the next day and Saul and his sons would be with Samuel—dead.

1 Samuel 28:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (î) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

1Samuel 28:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nāthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
YHWH (יְהוָה) [pronunciation is possibly yohoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Yis ^e râ ^e l (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced geem]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced yawd]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced p ^e -lish-TEE]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: *Y^ehowah will also give Israel and you into the hand of the Philistines...* Samuel removes all hope from Saul with regards to his continuing as king of Israel. God will give him and Israel into the hand of the Philistines, meaning that the Philistines will defeat Saul and his army.

There is always a corporate responsibility, and even though Saul is a complete failure, so is Israel. Recall that Israel begged God for a king and then was extremely happy about Saul. On the exterior, he seemed to be the perfect candidate. Recall that again and again, David, when on the run, would do right by the people of Israel, and still, there would be those who would be willing to turn him in.⁴⁹ Israel got the king she deserved, and when he goes down, there will be discipline put upon Israel as well. They will lose, as a nation, to the Philistines.

⁴⁹ When David got out of God's geographical will, this changed considerably; however, none of David's actions got to the point of being actions which were against Israel.

1Samuel 28:19b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâchâr (מָחָר) [pronounced <i>maw-KHAWR</i>]	literally, <i>tomorrow</i> ; but figuratively can stand for <i>in time to come, in the future, later on, down the road</i> (chronologically speaking)	adverb of time	Strong's #4279 BDB #563
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>ahT-TAW</i>]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i>]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: ...and tomorrow, you and your sons [will be] with me. This is an interesting thing to say: Saul and his sons will be with Samuel tomorrow. This indicates that they are believers and will spend eternity in the presence of God. Although one could interpret this as, they will join Samuel in death; it really sounds more as though they will be in the same place; they will be with Samuel.

Now note that Saul and all of his sons must be removed from this earth because there needs to be no one from the family of Saul who can contest the throne of Israel. God is moving the throne to a different family altogether. This is part of the judgment against Saul.

1Samuel 28:19c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
machăneh (מַחֲנֶה) [pronounced <i>mah-khuh-NEH</i>]	<i>camp, encampment; the courts [of Jehovah]; the heavenly host</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4264 BDB #334

1Samuel 28:19c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Yis ^e râ ^l êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced <i>yis'-raw-ALE</i>]	transliterated <i>Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 BDB #975
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	<i>hand</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #3027 BDB #388
P ^e lish ^e tîy (פְּלִשְׁתִּי) [pronounced <i>p^e-lish-TEE</i>]	transliterated <i>Philistines</i>	masculine plural gentilic adjective (acts like a proper noun)	Strong's #6430 BDB #814

Translation: ...Furthermore, Y^ehowah will give the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.” This may seem cruel to us: that God is going to put Saul’s army as well as Saul in the power of the Philistines, but bear in mind, all of the men in Saul’s army were yes men. When Saul had a problem with David and demanded to know where David was, instead of men standing up and telling Saul that he was overreacting, his men often told him where David was—and they, in every case, followed Saul in pursuit of David. Even if their following Saul was half-hearted, they still chose to do that. Therefore, the army of Israel will be judged by God as well.

Saul has already heard that God would take his kingdom from him, but this was promised some time ago. Saul has been fighting that promise ever since. Now, Saul knows that his time is up. When this battle is over, Saul will be dead, along with his sons; along with most or all of his army. Saul will react as most carnal men would.

As I have mentioned, Gill believes this to be a demon and not Samuel speaking to Saul; he writes: *had he been the true Samuel, he would have directed him to have altered his course of life, and especially his behaviour toward David, and advised him in those difficulties to send for him, who might have been of singular use unto him; he would have exhorted him to repentance for his sins, and humiliation before God on account of them, and given him hope on this that God would appear for him, and work deliverance, as he had done.*⁵⁰ What you need to realize is, there is a point at which it is too late. Saul was not going to turn things around. All the exhortation in the world was not going to turn Saul around. Perhaps, a good talking to, and Saul might turn himself around for a few days—even a week—but he would have returned to the old Saul in a very short amount of time. It was not up to Samuel to turn Saul around! That could not be done. Recall that Scripture told us that Samuel, many years back, walked away from Saul and would not see Saul again until the day of his death (1Sam. 15:35). Saul’s time was up.

⁵⁰ Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:19.

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A lot has happened to Saul, particularly in the past few minutes.

What Can We Learn from Saul's Mistakes?

1. Saul has shown negative volition toward God and God's plan again and again.
2. There is no call here from Samuel for Saul to repent.
3. There is no call from Samuel to tell Saul, "Hey, if you do this or that, God is going to give you a break here."
4. There is a point at which you can go too far. There is a point at which your negative volition is too much for you to be allowed to remain on this earth.
5. Saul's fate was sealed all the way back to 1Sam. 15; God had a number of other things in His plan which had to come together first (David's spiritual growth, for instance) before He would remove Saul.
6. However, there is nothing that Saul can do. I have observed a chess game, and 15 moves back, I could not find a way for one person to defeat the winner of that match. Our life is not a chess game, but we can make enough bad moves to the point where, we are a lost cause. God may let us live for awhile, but that is unrelated to our repentance, good behavior, changed attitude, or whatever.
7. In other words, Saul's negative volition had gone past the point of temporal forgiveness; Saul did not have it within himself to gain forgiveness from God because he himself was unable to change his own attitude.
8. You can sin and rebound; you can sin and rebound; you can chain sin and rebound; and you can chain sin and rebound. God always allows you to be picked up from where you fell off the wagon. However, Saul tells us here, by his actions, that you can take your negative volition to a point of no return. Saul's death, at this point, and probably for some time, was inevitable. Saul did not have it within himself to change his own attitude.
9. Sin is a pervasive, destructive force which acts against everything that we can be spiritually.
10. God's grace is incredible and God allows us a great deal of leeway; however, we can continue to sin to a point to where God puts the sin unto death upon us.
11. Let me give you an example from a human perspective: you are happily married with children, and then you mentally begin to cheat on your spouse. At some point in time, you begin to cheat on your spouse using pornography. Later, you might even choose to cheat on your spouse with another person. After that, you begin to cheat on your spouse with more and more people. Now, there is a point at which your marriage is doomed. There is nothing that can be done to save it, given your negative volition and given the person of your spouse. They may not be able to deal with the pornography; they may not be able to deal with the infidelity; but there will be a breaking point—the straw which broke the camel's back—which will end your marriage. There will be a point at which there is no asking of forgiveness, no begging, no promising which will turn things around. Your marriage will be over, much to the hurt of yourself, your spouse and your children. This can happen with a marriage between believers or unbelievers. The principle is the same: you can continue to sin until you are at the point where one sin finally breaks the marriage.
12. Let me give you another example in the human realm: rarely does a person become an alcoholic after the first drink. You may have 100 drinks and be fine. However, the first time you get drunk, you move in the direction of alcoholism. The second time you get drunk, you move again in that direction. Now, there probably is a genetic predisposition for alcoholism. However, this does not remove human volition from the picture. I have known people who have *never* take a drink because they come from a family of alcoholics. These people will never become alcoholics. However, others, particularly those with the genetic predisposition (assuming that exists, and I believe that it does) can continue to get drunk to a point where, that is their driving force in life. Once that occurs, that person may sell their car, drain their accounts, borrow money, and sell their house in order to drink. Some alcoholics stop; and others spend the rest of their lives on the streets, having abandoned their families and their station in life to drink. This is analogous to what it is like to sin against God again and again and again without restraint. You can reach a point to where you are out on the street, spiritually speaking (and, sometimes, literally speaking). Obviously, I could have given the exact same example using drugs.
13. This is Saul's spiritual state at this time. He is drunk, out on the street, and he has no intention of ever

What Can We Learn from Saul's Mistakes?

- getting sober again. He is long past the point where he will change his own mind and turn toward God.
14. Samuel at no time offers Saul hope or help; he simply informs him of what is to come. Saul can only return to the battle and fulfill his destiny, such that it is.

Life, for believers and unbelievers both, is filled with examples of those who make incredible mistakes. You can simply be observant and recognize that people ruin their lives committing this litany of sins or that. Even the unbeliever can see this. Sometimes you don't have to learn the hard way; you can see another person who has made mistakes which lead his life to a disgusting point—and you can choose not to make those mistakes yourself. Many people have observed, for instance, those who have abused drugs, and have chosen never to take drugs because the obvious results are too destructive to want to pursue. We can observe this behavior in Saul (or in others from Scripture) and take our cue from them not to make these same mistakes.

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You can read what follows or not. Gill took the wrong theological stance on this passage, and, as a result, most of what he had to say was a waste of time. I offer this just so you can see that, improperly interpreting Scripture will lead you further and further away from the truth. There is also a point of logic to be understood here: if you begin with a false premise, then you can build a huge set of ideas and principles upon this premise, none of which are true, because they are built upon that which is false.

Gill Continues to Misinterpret 1Samuel 28

*"...and tomorrow you and your sons will be with me;" which if understood in what sense it may, seems to be a lie of the devil, and at best an ambiguous expression, such as he has been wont to give in the Heathen oracles; if he meant this of himself as an evil spirit, it could not be true of Saul and all his sons, that they should be with him in hell, especially of Jonathan who appears throughout the whole of his life to have been a good man; if he would have it understood of him as representing Samuel, and of their being with him in heaven, it must be a great stretch of charity to believe it true of Saul, so wicked a man, and who died in the act of suicide; though the Jews (k), some of them, understand it in this sense, that his sins were pardoned, and he was saved; and if it is taken in the sense of being in the state of the dead, and in the earth, from whence he is said to ascend, and where the body of Samuel was, which seems to be the best sense that is put upon the phrase, "with me"; yet this was not true, if he meant it of all the sons of Saul, as the expression seems to suggest; for there were Ishbosheth, and his two sons by Rizpah, which survived him; nor was it true of Saul and his sons that they were cut off, and that they died the next day; for the battle was not fought till several days after this, see 1Sa_28:23; if it should be said, that "tomorrow" signifies some future time, and not strictly the next day, this shows the ambiguity of the expression used, and the insignificance of it to the present purpose; for who knew not that Saul and his sons would die some time or another? **

Hopefully, you grasp that Gill's problem is, he begins with the false premise that the apparition of Samuel is really a demon speaking to Saul. Therefore, all of his conclusions which are built upon this are going to be confused and generally false.

* Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:19.

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Clarke is one of the exegetes who got this right. So that we do not end this portion of Scripture with the incorrect view, allow me to offer Clarke's explanation.

Clarke Presents the Correct Understanding of these Events*

1. I believe there is a supernatural and spiritual world, in which Human spirits, both good and bad, live in a state of consciousness.
2. I believe there is an invisible world, in which various orders of spirits, not human, live and act.
3. I believe that any of these spirits may, according to the order of God, in the laws of their place of residence,

Clarke Presents the Correct Understanding of these Events*

- have intercourse with this world, and become visible to mortals.
4. I believe there is a possibility, by arts not strictly good, to evoke and have intercourse with spirits, not Human; and to employ, in a certain limited way, their power and influence.
 5. I believe that the woman of En-dor had no power over Samuel; and that no incantation can avail over any departed saint of God, nor indeed over any human disembodied spirit.
 6. I believe Samuel did actually appear to Saul; and that he was sent by the especial mercy of God to warn this infatuated king of his approaching death, that he might have an opportunity to make his peace with his Maker.
 7. I believe that the woman found, from the appearances, that her real or pretended charms had no effect; and that what now took place came from a totally different disposition of things from those with which she was conversant.
 8. I believe that direct, circumstantial, and unequivocal oracles were now delivered concerning things which neither human nor diabolical wisdom could foresee or penetrate; that the defeat of the Israelites, and the death of Saul and his three sons on the following day, were matters which, from their nature, could only be known to God himself; and that no demon or bad spirit could be employed in such a transaction.

I hope that you can recognize that each of Clarke's statements, from the premise on down, are almost all theologically verifiable.

*Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:25.

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The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge, Scofield and Keil and Delitzsch also got this right:

The Correct View of These Events

*The Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge: There is considerable diversity of opinion, both among learned and pious men, relative to this appearance to Saul. But the most probable opinion seems to be, that Samuel himself did actually appear to Saul, not by the power of enchantment, but by the appointment and especial mercy of God, to warn this infatuated monarch of his approaching end, that he might be reconciled with his Maker. There is not the smallest intimation of chicanery or Satanic influence given in the text; but on the contrary, from the plain and obvious meaning of the language employed, it is perfectly evident that it was Samuel himself, Shemoool hoo, as it is expressed in 1Sam. 28:14. Indeed the very soul of Samuel seems to breathe in his expressions of displeasure against the disobedience and wickedness of Saul; while the awful prophetic denunciations which accordingly came to pass, were such as neither human nor diabolical wisdom could foresee, and which could only be known to God himself, and to those to whom he chose to reveal them.**

Also, let me offer you the learned opinion of Keil and Delitzsch: *The reality of the appearance of Samuel from the kingdom of the dead cannot therefore be called in question, especially as it has an analogon in the appearance of Moses and Elijah at the transfiguration of Christ (Matt. 17:3; Luke 9:30-31); except that this difference must not be overlooked, namely, that Moses and Elijah appeared "in glory," i.e., in a glorified form, whereas Samuel appeared in earthly corporeality with the prophet's mantle which he had worn on earth. Just as the transfiguration of Christ was a phenomenal anticipation of His future heavenly glory, into which He was to enter after His resurrection and ascension, so may we think of the appearance of Moses and Elijah "in glory" upon the mount of transfiguration as an anticipation of their heavenly transfiguration in eternal life with God. It was different with Samuel, whom God brought up from Hades through an act of His omnipotence. This appearance is not to be regarded as the appearance of one who had risen in a glorified body; but though somewhat spirit-like in its external manifestation, so that it was only to the witch that it was visible, and not to Saul, it was merely an appearance of the soul of Samuel, that had been at rest in Hades, in the clothing of the earthly corporeality and dress of the prophet, which were assumed for the purpose of rendering it visible. In this respect the appearance of Samuel rather resembled the appearances of incorporeal angels in human form and dress, such as the three angels who came to Abraham in the grove at Mamre (Gen 18), and the angel who appeared to Manoah (Judg 13); with this exception, however, that these angels manifested themselves in a*

The Correct View of These Events

*human form, which was visible to the ordinary bodily eye, whereas Samuel appeared in the spirit-like form of the inhabitants of Hades. In all these cases the bodily form and clothing were only a dress assumed for the soul or spirit, and intended to facilitate perception, so that such appearances furnish no proof that the souls of departed men possess an immaterial corporeality.***

The Bible gives us strict instructions against delving into the realm of spirits (Lev. 19:31 20:6–7, 27 Deut. 18:10–12). Some who claim to have contact with spirits are frauds, but certainly there are genuine cases. God is against any form of spiritism, fraudulent or real. See 1Chron. 10:13–14.

The most likely explanation is that the woman expected contact with a demon (posing as Samuel, v. 11) but, to her amazement and terror (v. 12), God actually permitted Samuel to appear to her and give a message of doom to Saul. The text clearly states that it was Samuel (vv. 15–16, 20). No agent of Satan could have given a message so clearly from the LORD as v. 17.

The passage does not say that the woman “brought up” Samuel from the dead. The incident gives no support to the false contention of spiritists that they can speak with the dead. Mediums do not have access to the dead but communicate with spirits posing as persons who have died; thus these spirits are called lying spirits (1Kings 22:22).†

I hope that the accurate analysis of these various exegetes ring true to you as well.

* *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge*; by Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, and others about 1880, with introduction by R. A. Torrey; courtesy of E-sword, 1Sam. 28:19.

** Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:21.

† *The New Scofield Reference Bible*; Dr. C.I. Scofield; ©1967 New York·Oxford University Press; pp. 354–355.

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Finally, a summary of the reasons why we know this is really Samuel:

Why We Know this is Really Samuel

1. The woman is clearly frightened or upset about this apparition. We would expect this from a phoney medium who, at best, has some connection with demons, but not with the souls of those who have actually died.
2. Everything that Samuel says in is accordance with God’s Word. At no time does he speak a falsehood or even half-truth.
3. Samuel at no time encourages Saul to sin or to do anything apart from his role as king of Israel.
4. Samuel upbraids Saul for what Saul has done wrong.
5. Samuel predicts exactly what would transpire in Saul’s life and is 100% accurate. Demons do not have this power (although demons are incredibly intelligent).
6. The Bible nowhere suggests that this is a demon or a false apparition.
7. The Bible refers to this person as Samuel.
8. Although we do not have an exact replication of this event elsewhere, we have a similar event described in the end times, when Moses and Elijah will return to earth in glorified bodies. God has control over life and death; God is able to bring such things to pass as long as the event does not violate His character.
9. God has, in the past, spoken to men in unusual ways; for example, God speaks through Balam’s donkey in Num. 22.
10. Again, there is a reason *why* God allows all of this to happen—Samuel is a type of Christ, and therefore, bringing Samuel back from the dead is completely in line with this parallel.

When studying the Word of God, and there is more than one interpretation, then these interpretations must be followed out to their logical conclusions. That is, the entire passage must be looked at in that light, along with all of the implications. You will find that you are either explaining too much away, or that everything falls right into place. With exegetes like Gill, since he devoted so much time to this passage, he had to continually discuss and explain away this and that. Other exegetes may give their opinion and then move on without comment. However, since we have examined his comments specifically, we can see that his premise, that this is not Samuel, is fallacious.

Interestingly enough, many of the ancient exegetes saw this as deception of some sort on the part of the witch; whereas, all of the modern commentators (at least, those to whom I have access) understand this to really be Samuel (e.g., Edersheim, Archer and Geisler).

Finally, one book⁵¹ did bring up the question as to whether or not there Samuel appeared in a physical body or in some sort of a resurrected body. That Samuel was in a physical body seems highly unlikely; there is no indication of that—otherwise, how does he rise up out of the earth? What sort of form he had is completely unclear—the psychic could see him, but Saul could not (at least, not at first); and he had a visage which was apparently very similar to his physical body, as the woman gave a physical description of him which Saul recognized (v. 14).

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Saul Collapses, Understanding His Fate and is Strengthened with Food

And so hastens Saul and so he falls a fullness of his height ground-ward. And so he fears greatly from words of Samuel. Also, strength was not in him for he had not eaten bread all the day and all the night.

1 Samuel
28:20

Then Saul suddenly fell headlong onto the ground [lit., and Saul hastened and fell his full length to the ground]. He was in great fear because of the words of Samuel; furthermore, [there was] no strength in him, for he had not eaten [any] food all day and all night.

Saul then suddenly collapsed, falling headlong onto the ground. The words of Samuel had caused him to be terrified; furthermore, he had not eaten any food for over 24 hours.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text

And so hastens Saul and so he falls a fullness of his height ground-ward. And so he fears greatly from words of Samuel. Also, strength was not in him for he had not eaten bread all the day and all the night.

Septuagint

And Saul instantly fell at his full length upon the earth and was greatly afraid because of the words of Samuel; and there was no longer any strength in him, for he ate no bread all that day and that night.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

At once, Saul collapsed and lay stretched out on the floor, terrified at what Samuel had said. He was weak because he had not eaten anything since the day before.

⁵¹ *Hard Sayings of the Bible*; Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce, Manfred Brauch; InterVarsity Press; ©1996; p. 218.

NLT Saul fell full length on the ground, paralyzed with fright because of Samuel's words. He was also faint with hunger, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Immediately, Saul fell flat on the ground. He was frightened by Samuel's words. He also had no strength left, because he hadn't eaten anything all day or all night.
 JPS (Tanakh) At once Saul flung himself prone on the ground, terrified by Samuel's words. Besides, there was no strength in him, for he had not eaten anything all day and all night.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV Then Saul fell at once full length on the ground, filled with fear because of the words of Samuel. And there was no strength in him, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night.
 HCSB Immediately, Saul fell flat on the ground. He was terrified by Samuel's words and was also weak because he hadn't had any food all day and all night.
 Young's Updated LT And Saul haves and falls—the fulness of his stature—to the earth, and fears greatly because of the words of Samuel; also power was not in him, for he had not eaten bread all the day, and all the night.

What is the gist of this verse? Saul faints, partially because of what Samuel said and partially because he had not eaten all day.

1Samuel 28:20a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâhar (מָהַר) [pronounced maw-HAHR]	to hasten, to hurry, to make haste; its transitive use is to prepare quickly, to bring quickly, to do quickly	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #4116 BDB #554
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL]	to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
m ^e lô' (מְלֵא) [pronounced m ^e low]	fulness, that which fills, that which is full; multitude, crowd [i.e., those filling a city, an area]	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4393 BDB #571
qôwmâh (קוֹמָה) [pronounced koh-MAW]	stature of a man, tallness, height	feminine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6967 BDB #879

1Samuel 28:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land	feminine singular noun with the directional hê suffix	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: Then Saul suddenly fell headlong onto the ground [lit., and Saul hastened and fell his full length to the ground]. One might say that Saul's whole world came crashing down. He was king, he was revered, he had great power; now, he was set to fight the Philistines, and he is seized with terror; and he finds out that he will die. Saul just collapses. The way this is written in the Hebrew is that he seems to fall without any regard for himself. This would be like a boxer who has received a knockout punch and has fallen over backwards; or someone who is hit in the back of his head with a steel pipe and falls forward, unconscious at impact with the pipe. His entire body crashes down onto the ground. Saul has lost all reason to live and he has lost all motivation. I would not be surprised if, in some way, this was sort of a suicide attempt, if only subconsciously.

1Samuel 28:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yârêʿ (יָרַע) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	to fear, to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
m ^o ʿôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced m ^o -ODE]	exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
dâbâr (דְּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
Sh ^e mûwʿêl (שְׁמוֹעַל) [pronounced sh ^e -moo-ALE]	which means heard of El; it is transliterated Samuel	proper masculine noun	Strong's #8050 BDB #1028

Translation: He was in great fear because of the words of Samuel;... Saul is completely overtaken by Samuel's words. Even though Samuel has told Saul that he and his sons will be *with* Samuel, he could interpret this as simply meaning, *dead, just as Samuel is dead*. An unbeliever should rightly fear death; a believer out of fellowship should not fear death, but he probably will. Believers out of fellowship have no reason to have confidence. Our faith finds its strength in the filling of God the Holy Spirit; so without that, we have little or no muscle in our faith. For the Old Testament saints, they had even less strength, as most of them did not have God the Holy Spirit.

One of the things which I have tossed around in my brain is obedience—how do we compare to Old Testament saints with regards to obedience? I look at Moses, whose sins are few and far between, and know that I am so

far from following God as he did. Half a millennium later, we have David, a man after God's own heart. David's record was not so exemplary; but, again, he is called [a man after God's own heart](#). A millennium later, we have the Apostles, whose lives, at least with Jesus, is laughable. They argue who is the greatest; ten of them desert Jesus when He goes to the cross (and one, of course, betrays Him). It makes me wonder if, as life progresses through time, whether our sins become more and more heinous as believers; or, at least, more and more frequent. Maybe I am looking to mitigate in some way the wrong I have done, I don't know. In any case, whether our degeneracy tends to become worse over the years or not, Saul's disobedience to God is legend, recorded here in Scripture for us always to take note of and to be warned about.

1Samuel 28:20c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
gam (גַּם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
kôach (כֹּחַ) [pronounced <i>KOE-ahkh</i>]	<i>strength, power, ability</i>	masculine singular substantive	Strong's #3581 BDB #470
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88

Translation: ...[furthermore, \[there was\] no strength in him,](#)... There were several factors which came into play here. I suspect that Saul had not slept for a couple of days. This is not mentioned, but given all that has happened and given Saul's mental state, I doubt that Saul has been able to have a complete, full night's sleep (which is not unusual for anyone going into battle or for one who is in battle). For Saul, he has been in a great panic since the Philistines moved their armies into Israel; and I suspect any sleep that he has gotten since then has been fitful at best.

1Samuel 28:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
'âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i>]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37

1Samuel 28:20d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced LEH-khem]	literally means <i>bread</i> ; used more generally for <i>food</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3899 BDB #536
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i> ; can also be rendered <i>any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; today</i> (with a definite article)	masculine singular noun with a definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all</i> ; can also be rendered <i>any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
lay ^e lâh (לַיְלָאָה) [pronounced LAY-law]	<i>night; nightly, at night, in the night, during the night</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3915 BDB #538

Translation: ...for he had not eaten [any] food all day and all night. Not only had Saul been in great fear and probably without sleep, but he has lacked any sort of appetite. For at least 24 hours, Saul has been unable to eat. I think that he knew this was it; that his time had come. See the warning of Psalm 50:22: [Understand this, you who forget God, or I will tear you apart, and there will be no rescuer.](#)

So Saul is completely without hope, in great fear, weak from lack of nourishment, and exhausted from lack of sleep. He just collapsed. If he could have died there, he would have. There is also another factor at play here—up until this point in time, Saul thought there was somewhere he could run, something that he could do, but now he realizes that his fate is sealed, that God is bringing judgment upon him, and there is nothing that he can do. Realizing that causes him to be able to collapse. If those people were not with him and if he did not have a destiny to fulfill, Saul could have fallen asleep right there. He could do nothing at this point to deliver himself. Although he had a great deal of anxiety about his impending death, there was some slight comfort in it; that is, he could actually rest knowing that it was coming. The other view would be that the was the reaction of depression; some people become depressed, and sleep a lot because of the depression.

And so comes the woman unto Saul and so she sees that he was overwhelmed greatly and so she says unto him, “Behold, has listened [and obeyed] your maid in your voice and so I have placed my soul in my palm and so I listen [and obey] your words which you have said unto me.

1Samuel
28:21

The woman then went to Saul and she could see that he was greatly overwhelmed and she said to him, “Look, your handmaid has listened to [and obeyed] your voice; furthermore [lit., and], I placed my soul in your hand [lit., my palm] when [lit., and] I [listened to and] obeyed the words you said to me.

Then women then knelt down beside Saul and she could see that he was greatly overwhelmed by all of this. Therefore, she said to him, “Listen, I have obeyed your requests; in fact, I placed my life in your hands by obeying your requests.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so comes the woman unto Saul and so she sees that he was overwhelmed greatly and so she says unto him, "Behold, has listened [and obeyed] your maid in your voice and so I have placed my soul in my palm and so I listen [and obey] your words which you have said unto me.
Peshitta	..and I have put my life in your hand,...
Septuagint	And the women went in to Saul and saw that he was greatly disquieted [or, <i>hasted?</i>] and she said to him, "Behold now, your handmaid has listened to your voice and I have put my life in my hand, and have heard [and obeyed] the words which you have spoken to me.

Significant differences: None except the Peshitta has *your hand* instead of *my hand*. This could simply be a matter of reasonable interpretation on the part of those who translated the Hebrew into Aramaic. A few English translators will do the same, even though they are not purposely following the Aramaic.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	The woman came over to Saul, and when she saw that he was completely terrified, she said, "Your Majesty, I listened to you and risked my life to do what you asked.
NLT	When the woman saw how distraught he was, she said, "Sir, I obeyed your command at the risk of my life.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word™</i>	The woman came over to Saul and saw that he was terrified. "I listened to you," she told him, "and I took my life in my hands when I did what you told me to do.
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

HCSB	The woman came over to Saul, and she saw that he was terrified and said to him, "Look, your servant has obeyed you. I took my life in my hands and did what you told me to do.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And the woman comes in unto Saul, and sees that he has been greatly troubled, and says unto him, "Lo, your maid-servant has hearkened to your voice, and I put my soul in my hand, and I obey your words which you have spoken unto me.

What is the gist of this verse? The woman sees how upset Saul is, so she reminds him that she was simply doing what he had requested and that she risked her own life to do what Saul asked her to do.

1Samuel 28:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (בּוֹ) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAWH</i>]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61

1 Samuel 28:21a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e]l	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

Translation: *The woman then went to Saul...* There are some interesting things in the Hebrew in this verse. I would have expected to find that the woman knelt down next to Saul, but it reads that she goes to Saul. Now my impression is that Saul is right there with her, in the same room (there is no indication that they are in separate places or separate rooms, apart from this verb). I don't know if she screamed and left the room because she was frightened, or what happened; however, in the previous few verses, it appears as though Saul and Samuel were conversing directly. Keil and Delitzsch suggest that they are in separate rooms or separated by a partition during the seance. Matthew Henry suggests that she left the room to allow Saul and Samuel to communicate and she returns when she hears Saul fall. What this does imply, however, is that Saul and Samuel spoke directly to one another (although I am hesitant to be dogmatic about this, as I would be basing this upon the one verb *bôw`*, as well as the gist of the narrative). Robert Gordon further suggests⁵² that Samuel's spirit would not be subject to the whims of the medium, further suggesting that Samuel spoke directly to Saul.

Right now, Saul is laying on the ground. He fell like a ton of bricks. She goes to him—this woman has risked her life by bringing up Samuel's spirit to Saul. Furthermore, everything that came out of this is bad news. I.e., Saul is not going to be a happy camper when he comes to. This woman tries to get to Saul to preserve her own life. She does not want Saul to shoot the messenger.

1 Samuel 28:21b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
râ`âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
bâchal (בָּחַל) [pronounced baw-KHAHL]	<i>to be overwhelmed, to be confounded; to tremble, to be terrified; to suddenly perish, to suddenly be destroyed</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #926 BDB #96
m ^e `ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced m ^e -ODE]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

⁵² Robert Gordon, *I & II Samuel A Commentary*; Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI; ©1986; p. 196.

Translation: ...and she could see that he was greatly overwhelmed... She can look at Saul and see that he has been completely overwhelmed by what has been said. I have previously discussed physically what occurred here; that Samuel spoke directly to Saul so that Saul could hear his audible voice; however, there is no reason to think that she could not hear his voice as well (we really don't know about that). As I said, since this verse tells us that she goes in to Saul, which makes it sound like maybe she left the room? In any case, she knows what has happened; or, at the very least, she can tell how troubled Saul is. However, her true concern is going to be for herself. She has just made herself vulnerable to Saul, as he is the king, and she is a spiritist, which he declared illegal.

1Samuel 28:21c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾāmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e</i>]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i>]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
shâmaʿ (שָׁמְעָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
shiph ^e châh (שִׁפְחָהּ) [pronounced <i>shif-KHAW</i>]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6963 BDB #876

Translation: ...and she said to him, "Look, your handmaid has listened to [and obeyed] your voice;... Some psychics might be concerned with comforting their marks, making them feel better about themselves and their lives and their destinies. This brings in the repeat business. Not much she could do here for Saul. He was going to die; he feared death; and he was not going to be calmed. He was not going to be a repeat customer. However,

there is a good chance that King Saul would shoot the messenger for the content of the message. This woman tries to reason with Saul. “Listen to me: I listened to your request and I obeyed that which you asked me; I did what you asked me to do.” This woman needs to calm Saul, as she does not want him to execute her.

1Samuel 28:21d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
sîym (סִיַּם) [pronounced <i>seem</i>]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) [pronounced <i>NEH-fesh</i>]	<i>soul, life, living being, desire</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #5315 BDB #659
bê (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
kaph (כַּף) [pronounced <i>kaf</i>]	<i>palm, hollow or flat of the hand, sole of the foot; bowl, spoon</i>	feminine singular noun with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #3709 BDB #496

These nouns are tied together because of the fact that they are concave.

Translation: ...furthermore [lit., *and*], *I placed my soul in your hand* [lit., *my palm*]... When this woman agreed to check out the other spirits for Saul, to bring up whom he had asked for, she was taking her life in her own hand. Now, here, I would have expected, “I have placed my soul in your hand.” However, it reads, “*I have placed my soul in my palm.*” The idea is, she has risked her life to do for Saul what he has asked for. Now she is going to ask for some consideration. Obviously, when dealing with Saul, any action is going to involve risk. Had she refused to act as a psychic, Saul may have killed her; if she agreed and the outcome was negative to Saul, then he might kill her as well.

1Samuel 28:21e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâma' (שָׁמָעַ) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAHG</i>]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033

1Samuel 28:21e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾêth (את) [pronounced ayth]	generally untranslated	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
dâbâr (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAWR]	words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	that, which, when, who	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
dâbar (דָּבָר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
ʾel (אֶל) [pronounced e]	unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 1 st person singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39

Translation: ...when [lit, and] I [listened to and] obeyed the words you said to me. Not only did she listen to what Saul asked her to do, but she acquiesced to his request. Exactly what he asked for, she delivered. At the time, she did not know who he was; but apparently, this was her business, so she wanted to make a little cash. Now she is in a tight spot; she has just delivered some bad news to Saul; and he killed and/or removed all of the psychics from Israel. He has fallen over; there is no telling what he might do when he gets up. This woman may or may not know how unpredictable Saul can be; but she knows that he has the power to execute her and she has just broken the law in front of him.

Realize, also, that this woman cannot simply run away. She is at her own house and Saul's two aides are there (who are not mentioned at all). For all we know, they are at the front door and window of her home standing guard (however, at least one of them is probably right there observing everything and the other is stationed at the outside door). Her only option at this point in time is to try to placate Saul as she gauges his reaction.

I should point out one observation here: we do not know whether the woman or Saul's servants heard Samuel's voice. As discussed earlier, it appears that Saul and Samuel spoke directly to one another. There is nothing which tells us whether the woman could hear what was spoken or whether Saul's servants could hear either—there are no clues one way or the other. Whereas, we can state with reasonable confidence that Samuel really was raised, temporarily, from the dead, and that he did speak to Saul, we do not know who heard. We only have the very slightest clue that the woman went in to Saul, implying that she was in another room, at least for a time.

And now listen please also you in a voice of your maid and I might place to your faces a morsel of bread; and eat and he is to you strength when you go in the way.”

1Samuel
28:22

Therefore, also please listen to the voice of your handmaid that [lit., *and*] I may place before you a little bread [lit., *a fragment of bread*]. Eat [it] and it will be strength to you when you go along the way [or, *on (your) journey*].”

Finally, please listen to me and allow my to place before you a little bread. Eat it and it will give you strength on your journey.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And now listen please also you in a voice of your maid and I might place to your faces a morsel of bread; and eat and he is to you strength when you go in the way.”

eptuagint And now listen, I pray you, to the voice of your handmaid, and I will set before you a morsel of bread and eat and you will be strengthened, for you will be going on your way.”

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Now please listen to me. Let me get you a little something to eat. It will give you strength for your walk back to camp.”

The Message It's your turn to do what I tell you: Let me give you some food. Eat it. It will give you strength so you can get on your way.”

NLT Now do what I say, and let me give you something to eat so you can regain your strength for the trip back.”

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Now please listen to me. I will serve you something to eat. Eat it so that you will have strength when you leave.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Young's Updated LT And now, hearken, I pray you, also you, to the voice of your maid-servant, and I set before you a morsel of bread, and eat, and there is in your power when you go in the way.”

What is the gist of this verse? The woman now wants Saul to eat something so that he has enough strength to go on his way and fulfill his destiny.

1Samuel 28:22a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (i) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

1Samuel 28:22a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿattâh (עַתָּה) [pronounced ʿah-tawh]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773
When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w ^e + the adverb ʿattâh mean <i>and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore</i> . Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.			
shâmaʿ (שָׁמַע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
nâʾ (נָא) [pronounced naw]	<i>please, I pray you, I respectfully implore (ask, or request of) you, I urge you</i>	particle of entreaty	Strong's #4994 BDB #609
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced ah-taw]	<i>you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6963 BDB #876
shiph ^e châh (שִׁפְחָה) [pronounced shif-KHAW]	<i>maid, maid-servant, household servant</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8198 BDB #1046

Translation: [Therefore, also please listen to the voice of your handmaid...](#) My first thought was, this woman is only interested in saving her own skin. However, she also desires for Saul to be as well as one can be, given the circumstances. She almost mothers him here. At least one other exegete, Matthew Henry, is a lot more skeptical than I at this point (he refers to her as a *wretched comforter* at this point⁵³). Although the evidence is sketchy, it appears to me (and to Josephus and to Keil and Delitzsch) that this woman is showing genuine concern. She, as we have discussed, is probably not a true witch, being extremely frightened when Samuel appeared—so there is no reason to assume that she lacks any sense of humanity.

By the way, so that you are not confused by this point, even though this woman is a spiritist and even though she has certainly rejected God, this does not make her inhuman; this does not make her incapable of compassion.

⁵³ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:20–25.

I have suggested that she soothes Saul in order to protect herself (which is a possibility); however, she may soothe Saul simply because he needs it. There is no reason to impute a lack of compassion to an unbeliever.

1Samuel 28:22b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sîym (סׁיַם) [pronounced <i>seem</i>]	<i>to put, to place, to set, to make</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect; with the voluntative hê	Strong's #7760 BDB #962
The hê at the end, it is called a voluntative hê and the verb itself is known as a cohortative and is often translated with the additional word <i>let, may, might, ought, should</i> .			
lâmed (ל) (pronounced <i>l</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>before you, before your face, in your presence, in your sight, in front of you</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in Your judgment</i> .			
path (פַּת) [pronounced <i>path</i>]	<i>a fragment, a morsel, a piece [of bread]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #6595 BDB #837
lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced <i>LEH-khem</i>]	literally means <i>bread</i> ; used more generally for <i>food</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3899 BDB #536

Translation: ...that [lit., and] I may place before you a little bread [lit., a fragment of bread]... She is going to place before him a little bread (which possibly could refer to whatever food she has around—given that there is more of a meal put together than simply bread would support this notion). Even though the woman says *a fragment of bread*, this does not mean that she plans to be parsimonious in preparing a meal for Saul. The idea she is conveying is, *this will be no trouble at all; I have a few things right here in my refrigerator*.

The use of the articles in the first portion of this verse and the voluntative hê here means that she does this very politely, respectfully and tentatively. She does not want to anger Saul, and this approach appears to be the only logical approach that she can take. It is as though placing the bread before him is beneficial to her more than it is to him—which, obviously, it is not. This is simply a deferential approach to the situation.

Gill does make a good point here: this woman really does not want the king to die in her house. Being that she is a psychic and that the king dies in her house at the worst possible time, she would probably be executed. However, that does not necessarily mean that this thought is first and foremost on her mind. There is no reason to assign the lowest motivation to the thinking of an unbeliever. Many are altruistic and have good intentions, as well as moral actions.

1Samuel 28:22c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾâkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i>]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #398 BDB #37
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
kôach (כֹּחַ) [pronounced <i>KOE-ahkh</i>]	<i>strength, power, ability</i>	masculine singular substantive	Strong's #3581 BDB #470

Translation: [Eat \[it\] and it will be strength to you...](#) She asks to be able to place food before him. She suggests that he eat *it* for strength. *It* refers back to the bread that she is going to set in front of him; we might better render this as, *this will give you strength*.

1Samuel 28:22d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
derek ^e (דֶּרֶךְ) [pronounced <i>DEH-rek^e</i>]	<i>way, distance, road, journey, manner, course</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article; pausal form	Strong's #1870 BDB #202

With the bêyth preposition, this means *in the way, along the way [road], near the road, by the way, on [your] journey*.

Translation: [...when you go along the way \[or, on \(your\) journey\].](#)" Saul obviously has to leave; he must lead his troops; and therefore, he has a place to travel to. So he will need strength when he goes, and the bread will give

him strength for this journey. The use of *derek*^e does not refer, necessarily to a specific road or way, even with the definite article. The idea is, Saul has a journey, a destiny, a way to go; and that is what this refers to.

And so he is unwilling and so he says, "I will not eat." And so break through his servants and also the woman; and so, he listens [and obeys] to their voices and so he rises from the ground and so he sits in the couch.

1 Samuel
28:23

However [lit., *and*], he was unwilling and he said, "I will not eat." But [lit., *and*] his servants along with the woman break through [his mindset] and he listened to their voices. Therefore [lit., *and*] gets up from off the ground and then sits against the couch.

However, Saul was unwilling to eat. His servants and the woman urged him until he finally listened to them. Therefore, he got up from off the ground and sat on a nearby couch.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And so he is unwilling and so he says, "I will not eat." And so break through his servants and also the woman; and so, he listens [and obeys] to their voices and so he rises from the ground and so he sits in the couch.
Peshitta	But he refused and said, I will not eat." But his servants together with the woman begged him; and he listened to their voices. So he arose from the ground and sat upon the bed.
Septuagint	But he would not eat; so his servants and the woman constrained him, and he listened to their voice, and rose up from the ground, and sat upon a bench.
Significant differences:	Not really. Saul's words are missing from the Septuagint; but no real information is lost.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"No, I won't eat!" But his officers and the woman kept on urging Saul, until he finally agreed. He got up off the floor and sat on the bed.
REB	He refused to eat anything, but when his servants joined the woman in pressing him, he yielded, rose from the ground, and sat on the couch. [in pressing: probably reading; compare Greek; Hebrew, in breaking out on].
TEV	Now please do what I ask. Let me fix you some food. You must eat so that you will be strong enough to travel."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	But he refused. "I don't want to eat," he said. Nevertheless, his officers and the woman kept urging him until he listened to them. So he got up from the ground and sat on the bed.
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Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	He refused and said, "I will not eat." But his servants, together with the woman, urged him, and he listened to their words. So he arose from the earth and sat on the bed.
HCSB	He refused, saying, "I won't eat," but when his servants and the woman urged him, he listened to them. He got up off the ground and sat on the bed.

Young's Updated LT

And he refuses, and says, "I do not eat;" and his servants urge on him, and also the woman, and he hearkens to their voice, and rises from the earth, and sits on the bed.

What is the gist of this verse? Saul refused to eat at first; however, his own servants and the woman urge him to. He finally acquiesces and gets up off the ground and sits on the bed (or sofa).

1Samuel 28:23a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâ`ên (אָנֵן) [pronounced <i>maw-AIN</i>]	<i>to refuse, to be unwilling; to cease, to leave off</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #3985 BDB #549

Translation: *However* [lit., *and*], *he was unwilling...* At first the woman suggested that Saul eat something. He has collapsed right there onto her floor, and part of the reason is that he has not eaten. When the woman first suggests this, he remains unwilling. He does not want to eat. No doubt that Saul is fairly despondent in a number of ways at this point.

1Samuel 28:23b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
`amar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MARH</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lô` (לֹא or לֹא־) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
`akal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i>]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	1 st person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37

Translation: *...and he said, "I will not eat."* Saul clearly states that he is not interested in food. For over a day, food has not interested Saul. He has been too upset; about all he can say is, "I'm not hungry." What he says is left out of the Septuagint.

1Samuel 28:23c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

1Samuel 28:23c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pârats (פָּרָצַ) [pronounced paw-RATS]	<i>to break, to break down, to destroy; to break apart, to scatter [disperse, separate, spread abroad]; to break forth upon, to produce by breaking through; to act violently; to break through [negative volition, a bad attitude, mindset, or whatever]</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6555 BDB #829
ʿebed (עַבְדָּ) [pronounced ĠE ^b -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
gam (גַּם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>also, furthermore, in addition to, even, moreover</i>	adverb	Strong's #1571 BDB #168

Together, the wâw conjunction and the gam particle might mean *together with, along with, joined with, and, furthermore, and furthermore.*

Translation: *But [lit., and] his servants along with the woman break through [his mindset]...* This is an interesting use of the verb *pârats*; they are breaking through Saul's mindset; he is despondent and is about to just lay down and die right there. They break through this and essentially what is going to happen here is a last meal. As you have no doubt noticed, most translators went with some form of the verb *to urge*.

1Samuel 28:23d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâmaʿ (שָׁמַעַ) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>to listen, to hear, to listen intently, to listen and obey, to listen and act upon, to listen and give heed to, to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and take note of, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
qôwl (קוֹל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>sound, voice, noise; loud noise, thundering</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6963 BDB #876

Translation: ...and he listened to their voices. Saul listens to what they have to say. He's fairly despondent at this point; however, he is willing to listen. Laying [sitting?] there on the floor and listening to them is possibly an indication of despondency. However, he is not so far gone as to be unable to hear what they are saying to him.

1Samuel 28:23e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קוּם) [pronounced koom]	to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	from, off, away from, out from, out of, from off; on account of, since, above, than, so that not, above, beyond, more than	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	earth (all or a portion thereof), land	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

Translation: ...Therefore [lit., and] gets up from off the ground... Saul had collapsed upon the ground and now he is encouraged enough to get up. So he gets himself upright. I see these people as helping Saul to his feet, even though this sounds more like he got up on his own.

1Samuel 28:23f			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יָשָׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH ^B V]	to remain, to stay, to inhabit, to sit, to dwell	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
ʿel (עַל) [pronounced e/]	unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mittâh (מִטָּה) [pronounced mit-TAW]	couch, bed	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4296 BDB #641

Translation: ...and then sits against the couch. This is the word used for a couch as well as a bed. I have known people who have lived in efficiency apartments; i.e., the bedroom is equivalent to the living room.. Oft times, their limited floor space allows for a couch or a bed, so that one essentially functions as both. According to Barnes, this is a bench which runs along the wall, and furnished with cushions (Keil and Delitzsch concur with this description).⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:23. Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:23–24.

I have been expecting what is coming up. I knew that there would be Saul's last meal. I must admit that one of the things which comes to mind, as I first read over a passage like this is, what is it doing in the Bible? Why do we need to know that this woman is going to feed Saul; and why do we need to know the details which we are given? I ask these questions at a point at which I do not know the answers; furthermore, when I ask myself questions like these, I have no idea if I will come across the answers or not. This is a question which just occurs to me, and if I cannot solve this mystery, then I hope someone else will come along and figure it out (and tell me).

And to the woman a calf of the stall in the house. And so she hastens and so she slaughters him and so she takes flour and so she kneads [it] and so she bakes him, unleavened bread.

1 Samuel
28:24

And the woman owned [lit., and to the woman] a calf [raised in a] stall [lit., a house]. She quickly [lit., hastened and] slaughtered it. She also took flour and kneaded [it] and baked [some] unleavened bread.

This woman owned a calf which she quickly slaughtered. She also took flour and kneaded it, and then baked some sweet unleavened bread.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text	And to the woman a calf of the stall in the house. And so she hastens and so she slaughters him and so she takes flour and so she kneads [it] and so she bakes him, unleavened bread.
Septuagint	And the woman had a fat heifer in the house; and she hastened and killed it; and she took meal and kneaded it and baked unleavened cakes.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Right away the woman killed a calf that she had been fattening up. She cooked part of the meat and baked some thin bread.
The Message	The woman moved swiftly. She butchered a grain-fed calf she had, and took some flour, kneaded it, and baked some flat bread.
NLT	The woman had been fattening a calf, so she hurried out and killed it. She kneaded dough and baked unleavened bread.
TEV	The woman quickly killed a calf which she had been fattening. Then she took some flour, prepared it, and baked some bread without yeast.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>God's Word</i> TM	The woman immediately butchered a fattened calf that she owned. She took flour, kneaded it, and baked some unleavened bread.
JPS (Tanakh)	The woman had a stall-fed calf in the house; she hastily slaughtered it, and took flour and kneaded it, and baked some unleavened cakes.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV	Now the woman had a fattened calf in the house, and she quickly killed it, and she took flour and kneaded it and baked unleavened bread of it.
<i>Young's Updated LT</i>	And the woman has a calf of the stall in the house, and she haves and slaughters it, and takes flour, and kneads, and bakes it unleavened things...

What is the gist of this verse? The woman had been fattening a calf. She slaughters the calf and also bakes some bread without yeast.

1Samuel 28:24a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾishshâh (הַשְּׂחָה) [pronounced eesh-SHAWH]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
ʿêgel (עֵגֶל) [pronounced ĠAY-gel]	<i>calf</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5695 BDB #722
mar ^e bêq (מַרְבֵּק) [pronounced mah ^r -BAYK]	<i>a stall (for animals)</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4770 BDB #918
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

Translation: *And the woman owned* [lit., *and to the woman*] *a calf* [raised in a] *stall* [lit., *a house*]. Generally speaking, a psychic is out to make a little money; sometimes, she is strictly conning the people for all she can; and sometimes, she is simply acting as an inexpensive psychiatrist or as a relationship counselor. However, what happened this day was different than any other day. King Saul comes to her front door; also, she really does raise someone from the dead. Finally, instead of sending Saul away semi-satisfied to possibly return as a repeat customer, she has caused him so much stress that he has collapsed right there in front of her.

Due to all of these exigent circumstances, the woman decides to have a meal. She is going to feed Saul, and it is going to actually be a great meal. It is his last meal and it is a meal *which is a sacrifice on his behalf*.

Now recall what she said to him: "Here, I can get you a little morsel of bread." But she is going to put together much more than that.

Clarke gives us a little cultural background here: *The ancients used great despatch in their cookery. In hot countries they could not keep flesh meat by them any length of time; hence they generally kept young animals, such as calves, lambs, and kids, ready for slaughter; and when there was occasion, one of them was killed, and dressed immediately.*⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:24.

1Samuel 28:24b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâhar (מָהַר) [pronounced <i>maw-HAHR</i>]	<i>to hasten, to hurry, to make haste; its transitive use is to prepare quickly, to bring quickly, to do quickly</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #4116 BDB #554
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
zâbach (זָבַח) [pronounced <i>zaw^b-VAHKH</i>]	<i>to slaughter [usually an animal for sacrifice]</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2076 BDB #256

Translation: ...[She quickly](#) [lit., *hastened and*] [slaughtered it](#). Saul is right there and he has agreed to eat a meal with her; she cannot just let this go all day. She cannot play cards with Saul all day, and finally say, "Say, buddy, why don't I throw a steak on the grill." This all requires some preparation. A meal of that sort in that day required pretty much a full day's preparation.

We do not have the normal verb here for *to kill*; we have a verb primarily used of a person slaughtering an animal for a sacrifice (Ex. 3:18 5:3, 8, 17 8:8, 25–28 etc.). In fact, zâbach occurs 26 times in Scripture prior to this verse; and *every single time* it is a reference to an animal being sacrificed before God (representing Jesus Christ dying for our sins). Obviously, the sacrifice here also represents our Savior, Jesus Christ, Who went to the cross, without spot and without blemish and died for our sins. Specifically, Jesus Christ Who died for Saul's sins. In this final meal of his on earth, Saul has God's grace and sacrifice illustrated for him. This is a calf which has been prepared long before Saul got there. The calf is slaughtered on his behalf that he may eat.

In this final meal of his on earth, Saul has God's grace and sacrifice illustrated for him.

Now, when you read through this passage, in your 1 year program to read through the Bible, this verse probably meant nothing to you. It might as well read, *and the woman had pizza delivered and they all ate and then Saul went on his way*. This meant nothing to you; it had absolutely no significance to you. However, this verse is important and fraught with meaning.

1Samuel 28:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced <i>law-KAHKH</i>]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

1Samuel 28:24c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kemach (קֶמַח) [pronounced KEH-mahkh]	flour, meal	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7058 BDB #887

Translation: *She also took flour...* This will be a complete meal. She also makes bread. The completeness of this meal indicates to us that when the woman offered to place *bread* before Saul, this meant that she was going to prepare a meal for him. We have a similar colloquialism in the English, with Biblical origins: when we say we are going to *break bread* with someone, that means that we are going to enjoy a meal with that person. There may or may not be any bread present.

1Samuel 28:24d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lûwsh (לוּשׁ) [pronounced loosh]	to knead [dough]	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3888 BDB #534

Translation: *...and kneaded [it]...* She has to work with the meal and liquid in order to get the proper consistency. It is possible that her food processor might have been on the blink.

I want you to notice: Saul does not deserve this meal. The calf was set aside for him a long time ago; the woman did not just fatten up that evening. There is great preparation involved, but Saul will merely eat what is there for him.

1Samuel 28:24e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, then	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâphâh (אָפָה) [pronounced aw-FAW]	to bake, to cook	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect; with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #644 BDB #66
matstsâh (מַצָּה) [pronounced mahts-TSAWH]	unfermented bread, unleavened bread, unleavened cakes; sweet unleavened bread	feminine plural noun	Strong's #4682 BDB #595

Translation: *...and baked [some] unleavened bread.* The kind of bread she makes is unleavened bread. Leaven speaks of corruption and perversion, so unleavened bread is bread which has not been corrupted or perverted. The unleavened bread speaks of the uncorrupted gospel, which was the main course that Saul was being fed. Throughout the Law, unleavened bread is used in conjunction with the various sacrifices.

Earlier, I mentioned that, a quick read of this meal that Saul is served appears to be an excessive and unnecessary detail. Now it seems clear that the meal is speaking of Saul's salvation. The calf is Jesus Christ, who was slaughtered for Saul's sins; the unleavened bread is the uncorrupted gospel message. The fact that Saul and his men ate this meal indicates that they were saved—that is what God the Holy Spirit means for us to understand here. They are also under discipline and they would die the next day in battle, but they are saved.

Clarke again gives us the cultural background: *There was not time to bake leavened bread; that would have taken considerable time, in order that the leaven might leaven the whole lump.*⁵⁶

There are some unanswered questions: first, how do we know that this is what Saul ate for his last meal? The most reasonable explanation is that Saul's steps were retraced and this woman was interviewed. Most likely, one of the men accompanying Saul survived the battle and later recalled these details—in fact, one of these men probably recorded this entire incident.

To be frank with you, the explanation I hate to hear (which I see given in many passages) is that God the Holy Spirit made this information available to the human writer supernaturally. Although I did not specifically read this explanation for this passage, I have read it in various other places concerning other passages and the historical information found in those passages, and such an approach makes me cringe.

Why God the Holy Spirit does not Generally Reveal Historical Facts Otherwise Unknown to the Human Author

1. Let me deal with the most obvious aspect of this topic first: can God the Holy Spirit make historical facts known to human authors that they otherwise have no ability to know? Of course, God the Holy Spirit is God; and as God, He is omnipotent. Therefore, the Holy Spirit clearly has the ability to do this. God the Holy Spirit could have dictated each and every word in the Bible to the human authors and we could have those exact words available to us today—if God had chosen for His plan to function this way.
2. Now, there is dictated material in Scripture: some of the prophetic material found in the prophets appears to be dictated to the prophets (although, I hesitate to even make this statement). The reason I hesitate to make this statement is, these prophets all had their own personalities, their own vocabularies, their own points of view, their own background, and these things play a part in their messages. That is, even though Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel all speak for the same Jehovah Elohim, and even though their messages are consistent from a doctrinal standpoint, these men all have their own personalities and vocabulary which comes through in their messages.
3. One of the few authors who records dictated material from God is Moses, and he was extremely careful to make note when he was writing the words of God and when he was giving narrative. The book of Deuteronomy, the sermons of Moses before the children of Israel entered into the land, were a doctrinal breakthrough for Moses. This book represents the few times that Moses spoke to the children of Israel face to face, giving them doctrinal information, in his own vocabulary and according to his own personality. The books of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers have a great deal of dictated material in them, and Moses is very careful to note when this occurred (see, for instance, Ex. 34:10a Lev. 1:1 Num. 14:11a).
4. What we do not find in Scripture is the discovery of an old manuscript written on plates of gold, in a language which can only be deciphered by wearing magic glasses. We do have instances where God's Word has been neglected and an old manuscript is discovered—but it is invariably Scripture recorded by a human author and it is written in the language of that day (or very nearly, anyway), that anyone could simply pick up and read.
5. What we find again and again and again in Scripture is the human factor. The vocabularies and personalities of the authors is found again and again as an integral part of Holy Writ. The vocabularies and personalities of the human authors is not simply interwoven into Scripture, but is found in the very words and sentence structure of God's Word.
6. The written Word of God is very much a precursor to the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ. In our understanding of Jesus Christ, we must never ever lose sight of the fact that He was fully human, subject

⁵⁶ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 1Sam. 28:24.

Why God the Holy Spirit does not Generally Reveal Historical Facts Otherwise Unknown to the Human Author

to the same lusts and temptations which we all face. Even though Jesus lacked an old sin nature, this does not mean that He did not face temptation. In fact, He faced many temptations which we do not face, simply because, as the God-man, Jesus could have done things that we could not have done. Have you ever been mercilessly picked on by a bully? Now, let's say you had the power to stop it and to make the bully feel pain? Would you do it? Of course you would! In a heartbeat. That bully would get a taste of his own medicine so quick, he would barely know what hit him (of course, you'd want him to know what hit him). Jesus Christ received the ultimate in human abuse, greater than any abuse heaped upon any man by a bully. Jesus Christ could have at any point, stopped them. Furthermore, He could have inflicted pain upon them as they had never known before. However, He did not. So, you see, Jesus not only faced temptations which we face, He faced temptations which we will never face. I have faced bullies many times—those who used their authority or the law to act as bullies, and certainly, if I could have instantaneously given them a taste of their own medicine, I would have. But that temptation was not open to me—I could think it, but I could not do it. Luckily, God takes care of vengeance, and I could rest in that fact (while I was in fellowship, anyway). However, I digress.

7. The definition of the inspiration of Scripture: *God supernaturally directed the writers of Scripture so that, without waiving their human intelligence, their individuality, their literary style, their personal feelings, or any other human factor, His own complete coherent message to man was recorded in perfect accuracy, the very words of scripture bearing the authority of divine authorship.**
8. Scripture presents to us that which is at once, the very words of God the Holy Spirit, and yet, are the very words of man. Whereas, we can seem to separate those words in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers (we really cannot, but Moses attempted to do that for us); it is in the book of Deuteronomy that Moses first began to grasp the concept of the inspiration of Scripture when he stood up before the people of Israel and taught the truth, in accordance with his own individuality, his own vocabulary, his own human intelligence, Moses spoke to his congregation the very words of God.
9. Here is the point: for the most part, God's Word was not dictated to man. Therefore, it would be completely out of keeping with the concept of inspiration for various historical facts to have been directly dictated by God the Holy Spirit to the human author.
10. In other words, there is no reason to think that a few old Bible guys sat up late writing history, just making it up as they went along, expecting God the Holy Spirit to get everything right.
11. In other words, no one simply sat down and said, "Hey, I think Saul should have a holy meal before he dies, so this is what is on the menu." And then the menu just happens to match that which Saul actually ate.
12. This leads us to another observation: the historical records which we find in Scripture are, for the most part, records of an eyewitness, records from an interview with an eyewitness, or information which is contained in a document which, at some point, had an eyewitness report.
13. When we watch the news on television, we get a better understanding when the news is presented by one who is actually present at the unfolding of the newsworthy events as a camera records these event. This is why news reporting agencies from all over the world, send their own people to record newsworthy events—to have the perspective of an eyewitness.
14. What we have in the Bible is the guarantee of God the Holy Spirit that the record of these events is accurate.
15. However, to preserve the very character of Scripture—that is, to preserve the very human authorship of Scripture—the historical information which we find in the Bible may be traced back to an actual witness of that event.
16. Therefore, there is no reason at any time to suppose an historical event found in the Bible was magically given to the author by God the Holy Spirit.**

For more information on this topic, see the **Doctrine of the Inspiration of Scripture** first introduced in the introduction to Deuteronomy (I may have placed it in the book of Genesis).

*Slightly paraphrased from Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*; Abridged Edition; Victor Books, ©1984, Vol. I, p. 71. By the way, to those who were raised up spiritually in Berachah Church: you don't think Bob made up from scratch everything that he taught, do you?

** When it comes to prophecy of future events, that is another story. However, much of the time, we still find an eyewitness to the events as they occurred. John, on the Isle of Patmos, observed future events which he could only describe with this 1st century A.D. vocabulary. John also observed what appears to be visions which symbolize the events which would occur in the future. Although I have not studied this extensively, it occurs to me that there are aspects to the angelic conflict which take place during the last days, which partly take place on earth and partly take place in a different realm. The visions which John experienced may have been such that, what was occurring in a different realm was shown to him so that he had to record, from a human perspective, using a 1st century A.D. vocabulary, a description of that occurring on an ethereal realm. Paul, by the way, was almost speechless after having been caught up to the third heaven (2Cor. 12:1–6).

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From this passage, we actually learn two very diverse truths. We first understand more clearly the human element in the writing of Scripture. With the exception of Moses in three specific books, we do not generally find dictated Scripture. We find, particularly in the historical narratives, information recorded by an eyewitness or from one who has culled the information from eyewitness accounts. In general, we should not expect to find information recorded in these accounts simply passed on directly from God the Holy Spirit to the author. In this situation, in other words, God the Holy Spirit did not directly communicate to the human author, whispering, "By the way, Saul ate veal and unleavened bread for his last meal." 2Peter 1:16: **For we did not follow cleverly contrived myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; instead, we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.** Or Luke 1:1–4: **Many have undertaken to compile a narrative about the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as the original eyewitnesses and servants of the word handed them down to us. It also seemed good to me, since I have carefully investigated everything from the very first, to write to you in orderly sequence, most honorable Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things about which you have been instructed.** My point is, the human authors of Scripture did not just *make stuff up*; nor did God the Holy Spirit whisper into their ear about this or that event. **All Scripture is God-breathed**, but it is also fully by the hand of man.

Now, allow me a tangent here: the biggest problem in theology is believers holding tightly to this or that concept, and ruling out all other mitigating factors. One of the most common debates down through history is God's absolute sovereignty (hyper-Calvinism) vs. man's free will (Arminianism). In the former, God makes every single choice that is made, including who will be saved and who will be lost. If we find ourselves among the elect, we are damned lucky, as our free will did not enter into this choice. On the other side, man's free will is seen as the end-all, be-all factor. We are saved by our free will and we maintain our salvation by our free will; if we choose to continually disobey God through our free will, we can lose this so great salvation. In fact, we might lose and regain our salvation several times in our life by means of our own free will. The key is, the answer should be found somewhere in between these two concepts.

Our view of Scripture and our view of Jesus Christ should be similarly tempered. God's Word is God-breathed, but it is also the word of man. Jesus Christ is God; but He is also a man. The problem with the book of Mormon is, unlike the Bible, there is no human factor involved (even assuming that the story is accurate, which it is not). There is a supernatural aspect to the writing of this book that completely goes beyond any human function (the person who wrote the book of Mormon wore rose-colored glasses and was able to read the *reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics* which were found on leaves of gold. All of this is a supernatural function. The Bible, on the other hand, when translated into another language, comes from a language which is real, which is used, which man has used, which appears in all other sorts of documents. The manuscripts used that are in the original language still exist, for the most part, and their preservation has aspects of human volition and divine intervention. The book of Mormon was written on some scroll or book which is gold, which book is not and has never been available to others to read or examine; which language does not exist, and which translation into English could not be done

by a scholar in the two languages. The entire book of Mormon is built upon completely and wholly supernatural phenomena (and this is assuming that their folklore is accurate in the first place).

People completely confuse the character of Jesus Christ. Some cults, e.g., the Jehovah Witnesses, call Jesus a man and not God because there are things which Jesus says which indicates that His humanity is inferior to God. However, this is being one-sided and ignoring the many times that Jesus affirms His deity. Remember how I mentioned how a previous exegete began with a false premise and then was continually having to go back and explain and re-explain this or that passage in order to make it all fit together? This is what Jehovah Witnesses do. They begin with the false premise that Jesus is not God, and then they have to continually explain and reexplain this and that passage which says that Jesus is God. Furthermore, where they cannot explain away a passage, then they translate it incorrectly, in order to explain it away (e.g., calling Jesus *a god*, a translation which they do not consistently hold to in their own Bible—that is, the passage where Jesus is clearly called God—John 1:1—is translated *a god* instead of *God* based upon phoney Greek principles; and there are dozen of passages which follow, where the Greek is exactly the same, where the Jehovah Witness Bible reads *God*, because that suits their theology at that point).

The point I am trying to make is, you cannot take an extreme position, when Scripture itself modifies or mitigates against taking that extreme position. We cannot fervently hold to hyper-Calvinism in the face of so many passages which deal with man's free will; we cannot fervently hold to Jesus being only a man in the face of so many passages where He (and others) indicate otherwise. When this occurs, we need to find the truth, which is often somewhere in between the extremes.

I have gone far afield, so let's return to this specific passage at hand. Secondly, and very importantly, is the significance of this meal. Saul, without any human strength, and without deserving this, ate a calf which was slain on his behalf—this calf represents his Savior, Jehovah Elohim, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Who was slain on Saul's behalf. Saul also ate the unleavened bread, which represents the pure, unadulterated doctrine of God's Word—here, specifically, the gospel.

Saul was a loser, plagued by mental illness and plagued by literal demons. He was a man who rejected the truth of God's Word as presented to him by Samuel. Saul was eaten up by jealousy and with mental attitude sins, none of which did he attempt to restrain. Saul is a man about to die the sin unto death; he is under great discipline. But, do not lose sight of the fact that this loser ate the slain calf and the unleavened bread; that God raised up Samuel to speak to him the final judgment of his mortal life—but that, nevertheless, tomorrow, he and his sons would be with Samuel.

As one who has made many mistakes, it is comforting to find that even a loser like Saul, a believer who has turned away from God time and time again, to the point of being disciplined with the sin unto death, still could eat from the slain Savior and sample the unadulterated doctrine of God, and find himself, after a life of mistakes, at Abraham's side in the afterlife. It is the encouragement that we all need.

I might also point out that Abraham prepared the same thing for Jesus Christ and the two angels, prior to being told that he would become the father of Isaac (Gen. 18:1–10). The meal, of course, again refers to Abraham's salvation through Christ's death on the cross, which was the basis for the grace given him.

And so she brings near to faces of Saul and to faces of his servants. And so they eat and so they rise up and so they go into the night the that.

1Samuel
28:25

So she brings [this meal] near to Saul and his servants. Then they ate, and arose and went out into that night.

She brought this meal before Saul and his servants, which they ate. Then they arose and went out into the night.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Masoretic Text And so she brings near to faces of Saul and to faces of his servants. And so they eat and so they rise up and so they go into the night the that.

Septuagint And she brought [the meal] before Saul and before his servants; and they ate. Then they rose up and departed that night.

Significant differences: None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV Then she served the food to Saul and his officers, who ate and left before daylight.
NLT She brought the meal to Saul and his men, and they ate it. Then they went out into the night.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

God's Word™ Then she served it to Saul and his officers. They ate and left that same night.
JPS (Tanakh) She set this before Saul and his courtiers, and they ate. Then they rose and left the same night.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

ESV ...and she put it before Saul and his servants, and they ate. Then they rose and went away that night.

HCSB She served it to Saul and his servants, and they ate. Afterwards, they got up and left that night.

Young's Updated LT ...and brings near before Saul, and before his servants, and they eat, and rise, and go on, during that night.

What is the gist of this verse? Saul and his servants eat the meal presented to them; then they left that same night.

1 Samuel 28:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, and then, then, and</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
nâgash (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GASH</i>]	<i>to bring near, to bring here; to cause to draw near, to cause to approach</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #5066 BDB #620
lâmed (לְ) (pronounced <i>le</i>)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

1Samuel 28:25a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Together, they mean <i>before you, before your face, in your presence, in your sight, in front of you</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in Your judgment</i> .			
Shâ`ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i>]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) (pronounced l ^e)	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, they mean <i>before you, before your face, in your presence, in your sight, in front of you</i> . When used with God, it can take on the more figurative meaning <i>in Your judgment</i> .			
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>Ē^b-ved</i>]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

Translation: *So she brings [this meal] near to Saul and his servants.* As I mentioned, the word used to slaughter the animal is actually the word used for sacrificing an animal. Here, where this woman *brings* the meal *near* to Saul, this word meaning *to bring near* refers to bringing a sacrifice near to God (not physically nearer to God, but to the altar, for instance). Nâgash is also used to come near to God or to some object of holiness (Ex. 19:22 20:21 24:2 28:43 30:30 Deut. 21:5⁵⁷). We find this verb used again and again just for that purpose: to bring a sacrifice before God. So again, when I first read these last few sentences of this chapter in the English, I wondered, *why does God the Holy Spirit include this information about what Saul had for dinner?* However, what we see is, Samuel has told Saul that he and his sons would be with him the next day (in paradise, would be the implication I would take). An animal is sacrificed, just as Jesus Christ is sacrificed for our sins. The animal is brought near, which indicates positive volition. God brings the gospel to us, but we must draw near in positive volition (Mark 11:1 Luke 15:1 24:15). And, of course, they will eat, which is often used to represent faith in the gospels.

Let me add one more thing: this is why a pastor should have some working knowledge of the Hebrew, if not a thorough background in the language. The words found here—*to slaughter, to bring near*—are words typically associated with sacrifices offered to God on behalf of a man's sins. A pastor who knows the Hebrew will recognize this and be able to explain to his congregation just what these final few verses are actually about.

⁵⁷ There are a number of places where this verb is only used to *come near* to something or someone.

1Samuel 28:25b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
ʾâkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i>]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37

Translation: *Then they ate...* As mentioned, eating is representative of faith in Jesus Christ. We find this throughout the New Testament (Mark 14:22 John 6:26, 31, 49–53, 58 1Cor. 11:24). I believe that Saul was a believer, a believer who fell, and fell and long ways. However, all of this speaks of his salvation and the salvation of his sons. Certainly, this means that Saul and his two servants actually ate the meat and bread served to them.

1Samuel 28:25c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qûwm (קָוַם) [pronounced <i>koom</i>]	<i>to stand, to rise up, to get up; to establish, to establish a vow, to cause a vow to stand, to confirm or to fulfill a vow</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6965 BDB #877

Translation: *...and arose...* After eating, they had the strength to get up and to follow their destiny. Saul really has no choice here. He must lead his soldiers to war and face death. At this point in time, this is apparently God's will for Saul.

1Samuel 28:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i>]	<i>and so, then</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, in the presence of, upon, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
lay ^e lâh (לַיְלָה) [pronounced <i>LAY-law</i>]	<i>night; nightly, at night, in the night, during the night</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3915 BDB #538

1 Samuel 28:25d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	that	masculine singular, demonstrative pronoun (with a definite article)	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

Translation: ...and went out into that night. Saul and his two servants, filled and strengthened, went out into the night to meet with their destiny. What appears to be the case is, Saul traveled to Nob and arrived there at night. We are not told, but I would suspect it would have been, say, 9 pm. Meeting the woman and then speaking to Samuel would have taken another hour; then Saul collapsed. Now, even though the woman prepared a full meal for Saul and his two servants, we would estimate this would have been done within 3–4 hours. After an hour for the meal, Saul would have left—2 or 3 in the morning—which, of course, would still be considered *that night*. The distance that Saul had to travel is variously given as 6–10 miles (which can be covered in a couple of hours).

O. V. Gerlach comments: *Saul was too hardened in his sin to express any grief or pain, either on his own account or because of the fate of his sons and his people. In stolid desperation he went to meet his fate. This was the terrible end of a man whom the Spirit of God had once taken possession of and turned into another man, and whom he had endowed with gifts to be the leader of the people of God.*⁵⁸

God pronounced sentence over Saul a long time ago—my estimation would be perhaps 10 years previous. God's grace allowed Saul a relatively long life as king. God did not just pronounce sentence and then take Saul out of this life. Because of God's graciousness, there is always time between the sentencing and the carrying out of His sentence. You will note that our court system is the same way—in fact, sometimes too much that way.

There were two reasons that God killed Saul: because Saul did not obey God's direct order to kill all the Amalekites and to burn all of their possessions; and because Saul went to a spiritist (1Chron. 10:13). So, just in case you read this chapter, and think to yourself, *so what that Saul went to a spiritist; big deal—God was going to take him out anyway*. You might say that this is the straw that broke the camel's back. This is the act of Saul which resulted in the end of his life; this is the act which caused Saul to see the deaths of his sons first, before he killed himself. And just so you know: you and I—we answer to this same God.

⁵⁸ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; 1Sam. 28:25.