

SAUL SEEKS A WITCH'S HELP

I Samuel 28, 31

Lesson Memory Verse: James 1:22 "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Lesson Aim: We should obey God's Word and do what He says or else He will have to punish us.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Let me tell you a story about a young boy named Jonny who lived in a small city. There was a college in the city that was building many buildings. Jonny and his friend Gary liked to go and play on the buildings after the men went home from work. There were signs all around that told people not to go into the buildings, but that didn't stop Jonny and Gary. One day in the middle of winter, the boys sneaked over to one of the biggest buildings and climbed inside. Up and up they went through the skeleton of girders and steel beams until they came to the very top, 14 stores high. Jonny said, "Look, I can see the whole town from here!" All of the cars and people looked very small from atop the great building. "I bet you can't hit a car with a snowball," dared Gary. So Jonny made a ball out of the sticky snow and as the next car went by far below, Jonny sent the snowball sailing through the air. SMACK! It landed hard and the car pulled over. A man got out and went into a nearby house. "Oh – oh," said Jonny. "Look what you made me do. We'd better get out of here." So quickly the boys made their way down the stairs that led out of the building, but when they got down, the policemen were waiting outside. Soon Jonny and Gary found themselves at the Police Station and Jonny's dad came down to bring him home. Jonny felt so bad that he soon began to shed great tears and told his dad what He'd done. When Jonny and his dad got home, his father told him that he was going to receive a spanking for his disobedience. "But Dad," said Jonny, "I have had so many bad things happen to me already." Jonny's dad then explained to him that the bad things that had happened to him were the results of his sin and he still had to take the punishment for it.

In today's story we will see that Saul refused to confess his sin to God and tried to hide his sin. As a result he had to take the punishment for his sin.

HE (for Authority): James 1:22 says, "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." If a person knows what is right to do and doesn't do it, he is deceiving himself. That means he is deceiving himself. Saul found that even though he was king of all Israel, he was deceiving himself by his sin. As a result his life was filled with unhappiness and fears. Even though a person is a born-again Christian, he can expect his life to be filled with unhappiness and fear, if he continues to disobey God's Word. Are you filled with unhappiness and fear because of your sin? You may deceive yourself (fool yourself) and think that you can get away with your sins, but God sees all that you do. He knows that your sins will lead you into more serious trouble later in your life. So He will punish you now to keep you from more sins and greater punishment when you are older. He loves you and He does not want you to think that you can sin and not be punished.

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. This lesson tells us about the growth and results of sin in Saul's life. (This outline may be used by the teacher to help remember the main parts of the lesson but is not to be taught to the children.)

I. Saul Denied (28:1-6)

Saul had sinned against David many times. God showed him that he was wrong and he would stop sinning against David for a little while, but he always returned to his sin. (Remind the students of Saul's attempts to kill David.) Near the end of his life, God denied his prayer for help and would no longer speak to him and encourage him. As the great armies of the Philistines gathered to attack Israel, Saul became very afraid.

WE: If we hold on to sin, God will not help us either. The Holy Spirit will no longer help us to understand the Bible when we hear it or read it. Then when enemies come into our lives, God will not help us and we will be afraid of them (Isaiah 59:1, 2; 2 Peter 1:9, 10).

II. Saul Disguised (28:7-14)

When Saul could not hear from God, he decided to go to the witch at Endor to get a message from her. He knew this was sinful, because he had killed witches for their sinful practice. To hide his sin, he disguised himself so he did not look like the king of Israel. He knew the witch would not admit she was a witch, if he came to her dressed as the king of Israel. He thought he could hide his sin by putting on different clothes and hiding his face.

WE: We are foolish to try to hide our sin. God sees everything that we do and knows all about us (Hebrews 4:13). He will let others know who we are and what we have done. We are very foolish if we try to disguise ourselves or cover up our sin (Proverbs 28:13).

III. Saul Distressed (28:15-25)

“And Saul answered, I am sore distressed.” Saul was saying that he did not know what to do. He was now in the middle of much sin and was coming to the end of his life. The Philistines were ready to attack his country and without God’s help he would surely lose the battle and be killed (v. 19).

WE: We will learn sooner or later that sin will work this way in our lives, too. It will not only make us very unhappy, but it will make us afraid, when we are in trouble. We will learn no one will come to help us.

IV. Saul Destroyed (Chapter 31)

Saul had become so stubborn and disobedient that the Lord allowed him to be destroyed by the Philistines. Saul’s sin not only caused his own death, but also the death of many of his soldiers and even Jonathan his own son (who was a good man).

WE: We will discover that our sin will not only hurt us, but also other people and especially those that we love. Not only will our sin make us unhappy and useless for God, but it will also hurt those who are our friends.

BE (for Action): Saul found that when he failed to obey God’s Word, his life was full of trouble and fear. He fooled himself, but not God. Are you like Saul? Is there any sin in your life which you are trying to hide and making you unhappy and fearful?

(Give an invitation to the children. Ask them to bow their heads and ask, “Is there anyone who will raise their hand and admit to God that they have sin in their life that they need to confess?” Tell the children that they may stay after class and talk to you if they are really serious and want to get right with God.)