

Is There A Saul In Your Life?

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1 Samuel 16:13-14 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him.

- I. Saul was the person who had the most effect on David's life other than his parents who had taught him about God.
 - A. David was the youngest son of Jesse, and someone had taken great care with his heart and mind to train him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
 - B. The first part of David's life was under the gentle care of those who loved him and taught him about God, about keeping sheep, and about music and the harp.
 - C. The second part of David's life was under the cruel hatred and persecution of a madman that was determined to destroy and kill him.
 1. His heart was tried long and hard by this man.
 2. His faith in God was tested to the maximum by this man.
 3. His good character and morals were tried hard by this man named Saul.
 4. Saul was the major factor in his life for many years as he was put through the fire before he was ready to be the king.
 - D. David's trial was special because of his place in God's plan for humanity, but his trial is not uncommon to men – anyone who is God's servant is going to have a Saul in their life to some extent.
 1. Someone who has professed to love you, but now hates you.
 2. Someone who has appeared to be your friend, but is now your avowed enemy.
 3. Someone who hates you without any real reason other than the fantasies created by their madness.
 4. Someone who suspects everything you say and do as some kind of trick or scheme against them.
 5. Someone whose life's purpose has become to destroy you and paint you as evil in the sight of others.
 6. Someone who, when you talk to them face to face, will be emotional and even weep and tell you how much you mean to them, but always turn and try to destroy you as soon as you are gone from them.
 - E. Let's look at Saul today and see if you recognize him in your life.
 1. Do you have a Saul in your life?
 2. Are YOU the Saul in someone else's life?
- II. The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul.
 - A. This is both a sad and shocking statement.
 1. The greatest disaster that can happen to anyone is when God abandons them, and abandons them for good.
 2. It is very clearly something that God does, but most people refuse to believe as a reality.

3. Most people think they can live any way, think any way, treat God with arrogance and disdain and never lose his favor or be out of his reach.
 4. People who God abandons like this are called “reprobates” in the Bible; the word means “rejected.”
 5. God does not do this lightly, quickly, or until there is no alternative.
 6. God abandoned Saul because he was never going to be any different and because his self-will was never going to be surrendered to God.
- B. The Spirit of the Lord left Saul because his heart was not a suitable dwelling place for God.
1. God was not really welcome there because Saul’s heart was all about Saul.
 2. God was not willing to play second fiddle in Saul’s life, or anyone else’s life.
 3. God was not, and never is, willing to submit to the reproof, reproach, and rejection of a self-styled little god-man who thinks he knows better than God himself.
 4. There comes a point where God will reject him and abandon him for good, and leave him to his own devices.
- C. Saul wanted the benefits, the guidance, the protection, and the blessing of God upon him, but he did not value the presence of the Spirit of God upon him, and would not be led by Him.
- D. Saul so offended God that God not only departed from him, abandoned him, rejected him, but then sent an evil spirit to trouble him.
- E. Saul did not know what to do in the first place, he was always seeking direction from Samuel and others.
1. He was indecisive, without direction, and unsure of himself.
 2. But now his heart is totally darkened and he is afraid because he has no idea what to do or what is going to happen.
 3. He has no vision for the future and is living in fear and suspicion of everything and everyone.
- F. When God abandons a man’s soul and leaves him to his own fears and the devils of hell, that man is in the worst trouble he can be in.
- G. There is nothing left in his mind but trouble, and the evil (troubling) spirit makes sure to keep his mind focused on those troubles.
- H. Since all his thoughts are on his troubles, whether real or imagined, he is suspicious of everyone around him – he trusts no one.
- I. An evil spirit that troubles a person will make him hate and be distrusting of everyone – everyone becomes his enemy – so beware of people who do not know what to do with their troubles.
- J. So his sense of being alone and abandoned is magnified and his fears and insecurities overwhelm his mind until he becomes a madman.
- III. What is to be done for a person who has lost their way and has a troubled soul and is bouncing back and forth between madness and sanity?
- A. If you look to the world, your case is hopeless – they have nothing to cure and can only offer things to soothe your pain by temporarily getting your mind off your trouble.
 - B. Saul’s counselors prescribed all they knew how to do – they said music would fix his troubled heart.
 1. And this was the only advice, and the only thing ever done by others to help Saul in his madness.

- C. But music did not cure Saul's madness – it never does. It only pacified and calmed him for a time.
 1. This is how the world still deals with its troubled hearts – most will turn to music first.
 2. This is also how modern religion still tries to deal with the madness that sin brings.
 - D. Music has a wonderful power over a person's spirit. Saul felt its influence, and his spirit was "refreshed," but he remained the same character; his soul was in no way the better for it.
 1. It is very difficult to tell the difference between natural feelings and religious excitement, between genuine spiritual worship and mere sensuous delight, when observing the effect of music on other people.
 2. What is really going on in the heart when someone is being moved by music?
 3. Generally, no more is going on with them than went on with Saul – it got his mind off his troubles as long as the music was playing, but it did nothing to permanently and effectively change his heart.
 - E. Music did not convert the soul of Saul. Neither did it quicken his spirit. It simply brought him within reach of God and his promises, but he never reached beyond the music.
 1. David's music was not the music of the popular culture of the time – it was the music of his soul which God had given him.
 2. It was music that spoke only of God and his promises and his faithfulness, and all that is wonderful about God.
 3. This kind of music helped Saul by bringing light to his darkness, but he never reached out and embraced it for himself.
 4. He viewed it as something else being done for him by someone else to satisfy him and pamper him.
 5. He could see the goodness of God and for a moment he could imagine that it applied to him, but when the music stopped his ugly soul resumed its place on the throne of his heart.
- IV. So Saul was a madman because the Spirit of the Lord departed from him.
- A. Outwardly, he appeared more religious than most; he sacrificed, he prophesied, he sought God's counsel through others.
 - B. But Saul never knew what he was about, and he never had a personal knowledge and relationship with God.
 - C. He did the outward things to convince others that he was honoring God, but in practice he did what he wanted and what he thought best, in spite of the clear commands of God that he knew.
- V. If you serve the Lord with your life you are going to have encounters with people like Saul in your life.
- A. At first, they will appear to be true servants of God – even though they are troubled by an evil spirit.
 - B. At first, they will love you dearly. (v. 21-22)
 - C. At first, they will tell you what a blessing you are to their life.
 - D. At first, they will take you into their closest circle and treat you like family.
 - E. But all this will only last as long as you are a benefit to them, and make them look good.

- F. If someone else notices you, or praises you for anything, or gives you credit for anything, you will find yourself dodging their spears, and their schemes against you.
 - G. For a long time you may find it difficult to believe that they really do hate you and they really do want to destroy you.
 - H. You will make every excuse for them and allow them the benefit of the doubt until it becomes too obvious to deny any longer.
 - I. Then you will struggle with the question of “why?”
 - 1. Why can they not see that I mean them no harm and that I am their friend?
 - 2. Why do they hate me and consider me their enemy when I have never had any evil intention toward them and have never done them wrong?
 - J. You must eventually come to the conclusion that they are mad and you are not dealing with a rational mind, but with a mind that has been abandoned by God and taken completely over by selfishness, which has turned to delusion and fantasy.
 - K. You have to embrace the fact that God put them in your life and you in theirs.
 - 1. So there is a purpose and maybe many purposes.
 - 2. The situation is by divine providence and therefore meant for your good, and most likely for the good of many – if you endure the trial and stand true to God and truth and remain truly humble before God.
 - L. You may have to spend a big part of your life running from this mad person.
 - M. But you will learn to be very careful what you say and who you associate with because of their focus on you and their determination to trap you and do you harm.
 - N. You will learn to rely on God for your defense against the spears thrown at you and the lies told about you, and the snares that are laid for you.
 - O. Most of all, you will learn what it would be like for you if God ever abandoned you, and you resolve NOT to do what this madman has done, and NOT to be what he is.
 - P. God is teaching David and preparing him for the throne and it takes this kind of abuse to make a good man’s heart and mind unshakeable in the ways of righteousness and truth.
 - Q. We all need a close-up view of a godless and insane soul to help us be truly committed to the ways of God.
- VI. So, do you have a Saul in your life, or are you a Saul in someone else’s life?
- A. Are you someone’s blessing or are you someone’s trial?
 - B. This matter can be very confusing and hard to discern when only looking at the outward circumstances and individual acts of people.
 - C. There were times when Saul acted like David and there were times when David did things that made him appear to be like Saul – but only to the casual observer.
 - D. To those who were close enough to really know David and Saul there was a drastic difference in their characters.
 - E. Look closely, and get to know these two men well.
 - F. Take time to observe where trouble drove each of them and you have the answer to knowing who is who in your life also.
 - G. If trouble drives you insane you have a heart like Saul’s.
 - H. If trouble drives you to God on your knees, you are most likely going through the same process as David.