

Samuel vs demon

Over the past year, I have spent many hours studying 1Samuel 28. I had convinced myself that it really was Samuel talking to Saul; mainly because of the scriptures I had found contained within the book of 1Samuel which supports this idea.

I was discussing my 'proofs' with the guys at church, and realised that they firmly believed the 'spirit' to be a demon. After explaining my reasons, I still could not get them to see what I saw, so I asked them for the scriptures which motivated their interpretation.

A week later they came back to me with 1) the definition of a familiar spirit and 2) quotes from the KJV Bible; their main reasons why they say the spirit was a demon.

1) Dictionary

familiar spirit - (noun) a supernatural spirit or demon supposed to attend on or serve a person.

2) 1 Samuel 28

6 And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

7 Then Saul said unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor.

13 And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.

14 And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.

These are good reasons, but I still thought my understanding was correct. I too believe that mediums are to be avoided, but I feel this point had distracted them from the main issue. I had promised them to look at the scriptures again, so I tried to see the scriptures from their viewpoint. My NKJV Bible stated verse 13 a little differently.

13 And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid. What did you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth."

Looking at my 'e-sword' program, I studied the actual Hebrew words used.

1Sa 28:13 And the king⁴⁴²⁸ said⁵⁵⁹ unto her, Be not⁴⁰⁸ afraid.³³⁷² for³⁵⁸⁸ what⁴¹⁰⁰ sawest⁷²⁰⁰ thou? And the woman⁸⁰² said⁵⁵⁹ unto⁴¹³ Saul,⁷⁵⁸⁶ I saw⁷²⁰⁰ gods⁴³⁰ ascending⁵⁹²⁷ out of⁴⁴⁸⁰ the earth.⁷⁷⁶

So the Hebrew word was H430 = *elohim*. In the Hebrew text this version of elohim is spelt with five characters; Aleph, Lâmed, Hê, Yôwd and Çâmek. I wasn't familiar with this Hebrew word, so I looked up its meanings in the Hebrew concordance. There are a number of different words grouped under each H-number of the concordance, hence the

varied meanings. The spelling of a particular word in the original Hebrew text is critical to acquiring its true meaning!!! As H430 could also mean 'false gods', 'Baal' or 'angels'.

H430

elohim

pronounced *el-o-heem*

Plural of H433; *gods* in the ordinary sense; but specifically used (in the plural thus, especially with the article) of the supreme *God*, occasionally applied by way of deference to *magistrates*, and sometimes as a superlative: - angels, X exceeding, God (gods) (-dess, -ly), X (very) great, judges, X mighty.

Okay, so the reference seems to be leaning towards 'a divine spirit'. I decided to search where else this word is used, to get a better understanding of its meaning. I was shocked by the number of results, here are the first five all from Genesis Chapter 1.

- (Gen 1:1) In the beginning⁷²²⁵ God⁴³⁰ created^{1254 (853)} the heaven⁸⁰⁶⁴ and the earth.⁷⁷⁶
(Gen 1:2) And the earth⁷⁷⁶ was¹⁹⁶¹ without form,⁸⁴¹⁴ and void,⁹²² and darkness²⁸²² was upon⁵⁹²¹ the face⁶⁴⁴⁰ of the deep.⁸⁴¹⁵ And the Spirit⁷³⁰⁷ of God⁴³⁰ moved⁷³⁶³ upon⁵⁹²¹ the face⁶⁴⁴⁰ of the waters.⁴³²⁵
(Gen 1:3) And God⁴³⁰ said,⁵⁵⁹ Let there be¹⁹⁶¹ light.²¹⁶ and there was¹⁹⁶¹ light.²¹⁶
(Gen 1:4) And God⁴³⁰ saw^{7200 (853)} the light,²¹⁶ that³⁵⁸⁸ it was good.²⁸⁹⁶ and God⁴³⁰ divided^{914, 996} the light²¹⁶ from⁹⁹⁶ the darkness.²⁸²²
(Gen 1:5) And God⁴³⁰ called⁷¹²¹ the light²¹⁶ Day,³¹¹⁷ and the darkness²⁸²² he called⁷¹²¹ Night.³⁹¹⁵ And the evening⁶¹⁵³ and the morning¹²⁴² were¹⁹⁶¹ the first²⁵⁹ day.³¹¹⁷

In the Hebrew text, the spelling of 'elohim' in Gen 1:1 is the same as the spelling of the word used in 1Sa 28:13. If this isn't proof that the spirit that spoke to Saul was a righteous spirit, Samuel and not a demon, then I really don't know! Now besides my original reasons, this has to be indisputable proof!

When I looked at my NKJV Bible again later, I discovered it actually had 'saw a spirit' ^a and looking at the bottom of the page, I discovered '28:13 ^a Hebrew *elohim*'. I had to laugh at myself, I had been studying the text 'so hard' and yet I hadn't even checked the internal text references! I also had to laugh when I discovered that in my Hebrew - KJV Bible, the account of Samuel and Saul is on page 666!

This was a good lesson for me to learn. I thought I knew this text well, because I had studied the whole book. But I hadn't even checked all the internal references properly! In future, I will read the verse, the chapter, the whole book, and if it comes down to particular words; I will go back to the original Hebrew or Greek for the true meanings.

There is no shortcut to understanding scripture. One has to make the investment of personal time spent carefully researching, otherwise we may end up looking like fools when the whole truth is revealed!

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The e-sword program can be downloaded for free from : www.e-sword.net