**1 Samuel 28** -

Preparations are herein making for that war which will put an end to the life and reign of Saul, and so make way for David to the throne. In this war, I. The Philistines are the aggressors and Achish their king makes David his confidant (1Sa\_28:1, 1Sa\_28:2). II. The Israelites prepare to receive them, and Saul their king makes the devil his privy-counsellor, and thereby fills the measure of his iniquity. Observe, 1. The despairing condition which Saul was in (1Sa\_28:3-6). 2. The application he made to a witch, to bring him up Samuel (1Sa\_28:7-14). 3. His discourse with the apparition (1Sa\_28:15-19). The damp it struck upon him (1Sa\_28:20-25).

(Lev 20:6) And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.

(Deu 18:11) Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

(1Sa 28:3) Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

(1Sa 28:7) Then said Saul 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 Endor.

(2Ch 33:6) And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: also he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger.

(Isa 19:3) And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.

**\Familiar**

fa-mil´yar: Is found as an adjective qualifying “friend” and “spirit.”

(1) Used, in a number of Old Testament passages, of spirits which were supposed to come at the call of one who had power over them. אוב, *'ōbh*, literally, something “hollow”; compare אוב, *'ōbh*, “bottle” (Job\_32:19 the King James Version); because the voice of the spirit might have been supposed to come from the one possessed, as from a bottle, or because of the hollow sound which characterized the utterance, as out of the ground (Isa\_29:4); or, as some have conjectured, akin to אוּב, *'ūbh*, “return” (νεκρόμαντις, *nekrómantis*). Probably called “familiar” because it was regarded as a servant (*famulus*), belonging to the family (*familiaris*), who might be summoned to do the commands of the one possessing it. The practice of consulting familiar spirits was forbidden by the Mosaic law (Lev\_19:31; Lev\_20:6, Lev\_20:27; Deu\_18:11). King Saul put this away early in his reign, but consulted the witch of Endor, who “had a familiar spirit” (1Sa\_28:3, 1Sa\_28:7, 1Sa\_28:8, 1Sa\_28:9; 1Ch\_10:13). King Manasseh fell into the same sin (2Ki\_21:6; 2Ch\_33:6); but Josiah put those who dealt with familiar spirits out of the land (2Ki\_23:24).

It seems probable, however, that the practice prevailed more or less among the people till the exile (Isa\_8:19; Isa\_19:3). See “Divination by the 'Ôb” in *Expository* *Times*, IX, 157; ASTROLOGY, 1; COMMUNION WITH DEMONS.

(2) “Familiars,” “familiar friend,” from ידע, *yādha‛*, “to know,” hence, “acquaintance,” one intimately attached (Job\_19:14); but more frequently of *'ĕnōsh shālōm*, “man of (my or thy) peace,” that is, one to whom the salutation of peace is given (Psa\_41:9; Jer\_20:10; Jer\_38:22; also in Oba\_1:7, rendered “the men that were at peace with thee”).

ISBE

**Familiar Spirit**

Sorcerers or necormancers, who professed to call up the dead to answer questions, were said to have a “familiar spirit” (Deu\_18:11; 2Ki\_21:6; 2Ch\_33:6; Lev\_19:31; Lev\_20:6; Isa\_8:19; Isa\_29:4). Such a person was called by the Hebrews an *'ob*, which properly means a leather bottle; for sorcerers were regarded as vessels containing the inspiring demon. This Hebrew word was equivalent to the pytho of the Greeks, and was used to denote both the person and the spirit which possessed him (Lev\_20:27; 1Sa\_28:8; compare Act\_16:16). The word “familiar” is from the Latin *familiaris*, meaning a “household servant,” and was intended to express the idea that sorcerers had spirits as their servants ready to obey their commands.

EASTON