

1 Samuel 28:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.

Analysis

The woman's terrified cry when she 'saw Samuel' suggests something unexpected occurred. The Hebrew 'watiz'aq beqol gadol' (cried with a loud voice) indicates genuine shock. Her immediate recognition that her client is Saul implies that Samuel's actual appearance (rather than a demonic counterfeit) conveyed information she could not have anticipated. Most interpreters understand this as an exceptional divine intervention where God actually permitted Samuel's appearance, surprising even the medium accustomed to deception.

Historical Context

Scholars debate whether this was truly Samuel or a demonic impersonation. The narrative presents it as Samuel, and the prophecy proves accurate. Most Reformed interpreters see this as a unique divine act, permitting Samuel's appearance to deliver final judgment on Saul.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do you understand this unusual supernatural event within the biblical narrative?
2. What does it suggest when even practitioners of deception encounter something genuine?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּרָא	וְהָאִשָּׁה	אֶת	שְׁמוּאֵל	וַתִּזְעַק	בְּקוֹל	גָּדוֹל
saw	And when the woman	H853	Samuel	she cried	voice	with a loud
H7200	H802		H8050	H2199	H6963	H1419
לֵאמֹר	וְהָאִשָּׁה	אֶל	שְׁאוּל:	לֵאמֹר	לָמָּה	
saying	And when the woman	H413	me for thou art Saul	saying	H4100	
H559	H802		H7586	H559		
רַמִּית נִי	וְאַתָּה	שְׁאוּל:				
Why hast thou deceived	H859	me for thou art Saul				
H7411		H7586				