

1 Samuel 28:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

Saul's threefold inquiry reveals the complete shutdown of divine communication. 'Dreams, Urim, and prophets' represented the three recognized channels of divine revelation in Israel. Dreams communicated directly to individuals; the Urim (priestly divination through the breastplate) operated through official religious channels; prophets spoke God's word through inspired individuals. The emphatic negative 'lo 'anahu YHWH' (the LORD did not answer him) marks divine silence as judgment. God's refusal to communicate leaves Saul spiritually abandoned.

Historical Context

The Urim and Thummim were sacred lots carried in the high priest's breastplate for divine guidance. After the massacre at Nob, only Abiathar survived of the priests, and he had fled to David with the ephod. Saul may have lacked even the physical means for priestly inquiry.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. When has God's silence felt like judgment in your experience?
2. What happens when all legitimate channels of guidance seem closed?

Interlinear Text

וַשָּׂא ל	וְשָׂא ל	יְהוָה	וְלֹא	עָנָה הוּא	יְהוָה	גַּם
enquired	And when Saul	of the LORD	H3808	answered	of the LORD	H1571
H7592	H7586	H3068		H6030	H3068	
וְהָיָה כִּי יִדְבָּר אֵלָיו בְּחֵלֶם וְלֹא בְּאֹרִיִּם וְלֹא בְּנְבִיאִים׃						
him not neither by dreams	H1571	nor by Urim	H1571	nor by prophets		
H2472		H224		H5030		

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 12:6 (Prophecy): And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

1 Samuel 14:37 (Parallel theme): And Saul asked counsel of God, Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel? But he answered him not that day.

Numbers 27:21 (References Lord): And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, both he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.

Lamentations 2:9 (Prophecy): Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars: her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the LORD.

Matthew 1:20 (References Lord): But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of

David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

John 9:31 (Parallel theme): Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

James 4:3 (Parallel theme): Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Jeremiah 23:28 (Prophecy): The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

Exodus 28:30 (References Lord): And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

Deuteronomy 33:8 (Parallel theme): And of Levi he said, Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;