

Samuel at Endor for Saul's Bema

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Introduction

My earliest recollection of writing a research paper was one dealing with the supposed summoning of Samuel from the dead by the witch at Endor:

⁷ Then Saul said to his servants, "Seek for me a woman who is a medium, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "Behold, there is a woman who is a medium at Endor." ⁸ Then Saul disguised himself by putting on other clothes, and went, he and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night; and he said, "Conjure up for me, please, and bring up for me whom I shall name to you." ⁹ But the woman said to him, "Behold, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off those who are mediums and spiritists from the land. Why are you then laying a snare for my life to bring about my death?" ¹⁰ And Saul vowed to her by the LORD, saying, "As the LORD lives, there shall no punishment come upon you for this thing."

¹¹ Then the woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" And he said, "Bring up Samuel for me." ¹² When **the woman saw Samuel**, she cried out with a loud voice; and the woman spoke to Saul, saying, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul." ¹³ And the king said to her, "Do not be afraid; but what do you see?" And the woman said to Saul, "**I see a divine being [god] coming up out of the earth.**" ¹⁴ And he said to her, "What is his form?" And she said, "**An old man is coming up**, and he is wrapped with a robe." And **Saul knew that it was Samuel**, and he bowed with his face to the ground and **did homage [worshipped him]**. ¹⁵ Then **Samuel said to Saul**, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?" And Saul answered, "I am greatly distressed; for the Philistines are waging war against me, and God has departed from me and answers me no more, either through prophets or by dreams; therefore I have called you, that you may make known to me what I should do."

¹⁶ And **Samuel said**, "Why then do you ask me, since the LORD has departed from you and has become your adversary?" ¹⁷ "And the LORD has done accordingly as He spoke through me; for the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, to David." ¹⁸ "As you did not obey the LORD and did not execute His fierce wrath on Amalek, so the LORD has done this thing to you this day." ¹⁹ "Moreover the LORD will also give over Israel along with you into the hands of the Philistines, therefore tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. Indeed the LORD will give over the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines!" ²⁰ Then Saul immediately fell full length upon the ground and was very afraid because of **the words of Samuel**; also there was no strength in him, for he had eaten no food all day and all night. (1Sam 28:7-20)

I was only in junior high or high school at the time I wrote that research paper and took the position that a demon was impersonating Samuel. After all, several problematic questions arise if one accepts the authenticity of the account: (1) Would God actually allow Samuel to return at the beckoning of a witch? (2) Would God allow the dead to return and talk with the living regardless of the circumstances? (3) Was Samuel actually a divine being or god? (4) Why would Samuel not rebuke Saul from worshipping him? (5) Would Samuel actually be an old man in his postmortem form?

Fast forward some forty years later, and now I have several reasons to rethink that youthful reckoning. These questions are certainly not insurmountable. The biblical record takes it for granted that it was Samuel who came up, positively affirming five times that it was Samuel. The biblical writer seems to believe that it was Samuel and seems to expect us to accept this exceptional occasion as authentic.

Commentators Affirm Divinity of the Apparition

Various standard commentators take the text at face value, accepting the fact that it was indeed Samuel who came forth. NIBC provides a nice summation:

The church fathers believed that a demon impersonated Samuel and appeared to Saul. Others have thought that the medium was a fraud who tricked Saul into thinking that he saw Samuel. It seems best to follow the early view that this was a genuine appearance of Samuel which God Himself brought about. Several points favor this interpretation: (1) The medium was surprised (v. 12). (2) Saul identified the figure as Samuel (v. 14). (3) The message Samuel spoke was clearly from God (vv. 16–19). (4) The text says that the figure

was Samuel (vv. 12, 15, 16). There is no inherent difficulty with God bringing back the spirit of Samuel from Heaven and allowing him to appear to Saul, in spite of the woman's evil profession.¹

My youthful objections to this conclusion have been superseded by scholarly reflection on the theological implications of the text regarding its affirmation of Samuel's deity, which dovetails into an assessment that I have made regarding faithful believers in two of my books (DOLF, MMP5).²

- Klein (WBC) affirms Samuel's authenticity and deity:

Perhaps, as Beuken suggests, Samuel beats the woman at her own game by coming up as a prophet of the living God before she could conjure up a dead ghost. In any case, when the woman saw Samuel, she screamed and immediately recognized Saul. Disguise or no disguise, prohibition of necromancy or not, there could be only one person who would want to see Samuel in these troubled times. For the second time (v 12; cf. v 9) she asked Saul *why* he was treating her in this way. Even the witch rejected the anointed king. The king tried to reassure her by telling her not to be afraid even though his own fear and his trembling heart had brought him to this extreme action. "What do you see?" he asked (cf. Yahweh's questions of Amos in his visions, Amos 7:8; 8:2). The woman expected an ancestral spirit or a ghost, but she saw a divine being (v 13). These gods were coming up from the underworld. The king pressed on, forcing the woman to lay out the worst news on the table. The erect (or old) man was wrapped in a robe (v 14), the standard garb of Samuel (1 Sam 2:19; 15:27). That was enough to convince Saul, and he fell flat on the ground in subservience to the word of the prophet.³

- Tsumura (NICOT) likewise affirms Samuel's authenticity and deity:

This suggests that something about Samuel's appearance surprised the woman. Something unexpected might have happened outside her control after Saul asked her to bring up Samuel in v. 11b. One might surmise that some unknown thing happened before she *shouted in a loud voice* (v. 12a) and before she turned to Saul again in v. 12b.

This was certainly an extraordinary event for her. It may be that the ordinary divining powers were not employed this time. Or, rather a power stronger than her divining powers might have been at work in bringing up the spirit of Samuel. Even if the spirit was brought up by her actions (see v. 15: "you disturbed me"), it might not have appeared or acted like the spirit(s) of the dead, like *'ōb* or *repā'im*, which she was comfortable handling as a necromancer.

It should be noted that Samuel's "coming up from the underworld" is "presented as an actual event, not a dream or a vision, even though dreams are explicitly mentioned by Saul."

... The term *'ēlōhīm* (pl.: lit., "gods"), translated as "a divine being" (NRSV; NASB; JPS) or "a spirit" (NIV), takes here a plural predicate *'ōlīm* ("coming up": part., m.pl.). So, it means "gods" or "divine beings" who are far from being on par with Yahweh.⁴

... We are not told how Samuel appeared, but, as Beuken holds, there is no question that it is Samuel himself who speaks here. In his speech in vv. 16–19 Samuel uses the divine name, Yahweh, seven times, while Saul said "God" once. The author certainly intends us to believe it is really Samuel — only he would have been able to give that message — and we have to assume that God permitted the witch to call Samuel up in this case even though he might not normally have allowed it.⁵

- Bergen (NAC) accepts Samuel's authenticity but attributes his deity to pagan belief:

¹ Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1999), 381.

² DOLF = *Degress of Love and Forgiveness*. MMP5 = *Misthological Models Part 5*.

³ Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, vol. 10, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1983), 271–272.

⁴ David Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 623–624.

⁵ David Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), 627.

Questions naturally arise at this point: Did the medium actually make contact with a living spirit-being, and if so, was it really the prophet Samuel? While this matter is not likely to be settled to everyone's satisfaction, the following observations can be made. First, the plain statement of the Hebrew text is that she did in fact see Samuel. Second, the medium reacted to Samuel's appearance as though it was a genuine—and terrifying—experience: she “cried out at the top of her voice.” Her strong reaction also suggests that Samuel's appearance was unexpected; perhaps this was the first time she had ever actually succeeded in contacting the dead. Third, the speeches attributed to Samuel contained allusions to a prior interchange between the two, allusions that would have been appropriate only for the real Samuel to have made. Fourth, Samuel's role and message as a prophet, so much a part of his ministry in life, was unchanged in his encounter with Saul here.

Indeed, a straightforward reading of the biblical account suggests the possibility that mediums may possess the capacity to contact dead persons and establish lines of communication between the living and the dead. This view is not explicitly rejected elsewhere in Scripture; the Torah prohibits necromancy not because it is a hoax but because it promotes reliance on supernatural guidance from some source other than the Lord.

An alternative reading of this passage suggests that it was not the skill of the medium but rather a unique act of God that brought Saul into contact with Samuel. The medium did not possess the capacity to disturb a dead saint; but God, as “a sign of his grace,” permitted Saul to have one last encounter with the prophet who had played such a determinative role in the king's career.

28:12–14 With the appearance of Samuel the medium came to understand that her customer was actually King Saul. Undaunted by the fact that his deception had been discovered, Saul asked the woman not to fear, but to continue with her task. The fact that he asked the medium what she could see suggests that Saul himself was prevented from viewing the spirit, though he was able to speak with the prophet directly. The woman claimed that she saw “gods arising from the earth” (v. 13; NIV, “a spirit coming up out of the ground”), perhaps from a pit in the room dug for the purpose of necromancy. The NIV's rendering of the woman's response masks the fact that the subject is *'ēlōhîm*, a word normally used to refer to a divine being and that the subject's verb is plural, a situation that regularly occurs in the MT when a pagan god is the referent. In the present instance it seems reasonable to conclude that the medium's words reflected a pagan belief that Samuel had become a “god”—a spirit-being possessing capabilities beyond those of mortals—following his death. The writer, wishing to demonstrate linguistically that she was speaking heretically, employed a plural verb form with the subject *'ēlōhîm*.⁶

- Although Lange is skeptical of Samuel's authenticity, he is astute to note the grammatical singularity:

She answers: I see Elohim ascending out of the earth.—The word “Elohim” signifies here not a plurality of appearances (Gods, Sept., Vulg., Syr., Arab.—or spiritual beings, ghosts, Tremell.—or several devils, one of whom took the form of Samuel, S. Schmid—or angels, Chald., Theod.), but, despite the [Heb.] Plu. predicate (אֲלֵהִים, “ascending,” by attraction from the Plu. subst.), a single appearance, as is evident from the Sing. pronoun, “his form,” a spiritual appearance belonging to the region of the super-terrestrial, the superhuman, a fear- and terror-producing spiritual appearance.⁷

At the very least, this supernatural being is superhuman. More precisely, he is a *divine being* (NAS), an *elohim*, that is, a *god*. Lange rejects the plural of the KJV: “And the woman said unto Saul, I saw *gods* ascending out of the earth.” A singular god is entailed: “And the woman said unto Saul, I see *a god* coming up out of the earth” (ASV, so also BBE, CJB, DBY, ERV, GWN, JPS, NET, NLT, RSV). Angels can be called *elohim/gods*, of course. Did Samuel look like an angel? If so, he did not act like an angel in that he allows something that angelic gods would not permit. He allows himself to be worshipped! Could this godlike Samuel actually be a god for whom worship was truly appropriate?

⁶ Robert D. Bergen, [1, 2 Samuel](#), vol. 7, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 266–268.

⁷ John Peter Lange et al., [A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: 1 & 2 Samuel](#) (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 332.

Divine Being

Saul's response to this godlike Samuel is glossed over by commentators. For example, Bergen simply remarks, "Saul bowed down and prostrated himself with his face to the ground."⁸ Baldwin, though, adds a significant acknowledgment: "Moreover, Saul knew intuitively that his request had been granted, and **he prostrated himself before Samuel as if before the Lord.**"⁹ Guess what prostrating yourself before a divine being *as if before the Lord* is normally called? **Worship!** This Hebrew word (*shachah*), used by the biblical writer to describe Saul's response, is used over 80 times in the OT to denote *worship* (per the NAS), which is its most prevalent usage. The Greek word used (*proskuneo*, LXX) is the same word used in Revelation, where an angel forbids it in relation to himself: "And I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to *worship* at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. And he said to me, 'Do not do that'" (Rev 22:8-9). The angel forbade John to *proskuneo/worship* him. Amazingly, though, Samuel did not forbid Saul from worshipping him as a divine being. Why?

If this godlike being really was Samuel, as is frequently affirmed by commentators, then it is strange that they do not follow through on the significance of Samuel's not rebuking Saul for bowing to him in what is apparently an act of worship of a divine being. Samuel rebuked Saul, to be sure, but not for worshipping him! This observation supports my contention that overcomers will be worshipped. In DOLF, in a section entitled, *Worship the Queen*, I argued:

A very interesting promise is made by Jesus to overcomers in Rev 3:9 that may have some bearing on our understanding of the Goddess status of the Queen. Many translations render *proskuneo* in this verse along the lines of: *bow down, prostrate, give homage, do obeisance*. The NAS is typical of this approach: "Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews, and are not, but lie— behold, I will make them to come and *bow down* at your feet, and to know that I have loved you." Overcomers are promised that this group of human beings will bow down before them. Many other translations, however, provide a much stronger rendering (ASV; BBE; ERV; GNV; KJV; NKJ; PNT; RWB; TNT; WEB). The NKJ is typical of this alternate approach: "I will make them come and **worship before your feet**, and to know that I have loved you." This bowing down is a form of worship. That a group of human beings would be forced to worship glorified overcomers in Revelation is astonishing since twice John is told not to bow down in worship before an angel:

- And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev 19:10)."
- And I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to **worship at the feet** of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹ And he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book; worship God" (Rev 22:8-9).

John is instructed to worship God rather than the angel. No surprise there. This is consistent with our expectations. Ever since the Ten Commandments, humans have been instructed to worship God alone, no other god or goddess. Twenty-three of the twenty-four times *proskuneo* is used in Revelation, NAS renders it consistently as *worship*, as we would expect. Yet in Rev 3:9, NAS is inconsistent and renders it as *bow down*. Why? Because there is a conflict in our expectations. Which expectation should triumph, the expectation to render *proskuneo* as *worship* or the expectation that we should only worship God? Could *proskuneo* actually mean worship? NICNT does not believe so: "To come and worship is simply an Oriental metaphor that in this context involves no more than the acknowledgment that the church is the object of Christ's love and that with his return their faith in him will be vindicated." WBC likewise concludes: "This is an allusion to Isa 60:14, 'all who despised you shall bow down at your feet,' and perhaps also to Isa 49:23, 'They shall bow down before you and lick the dust of your feet.'" Phillips suggests other possible background texts, such as this one: "Joseph found it true in his day. There came a day when the sun and the moon and the eleven stars bowed down to him" (JPCS). In the case of Joseph, even the members of his family would be forced to bow down before him and acknowledge his regality. Such commentators believe that simple bowing is imposed. On the other hand, Barnes (BNNT) hedges his bets:

⁸ Robert D. Bergen, [1, 2 Samuel](#), vol. 7, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 268.

⁹ Joyce G. Baldwin, [1 and 2 Samuel: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 8, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 170–171.

So far as the word is concerned, it may refer either to spiritual homage, that is, the worship of God; or it may mean respect as shown to superiors. If it is used here in the sense of divine worship properly so called, it means that they would be constrained to come and worship “before them,” or in their very presence; if it is used in the more general signification, it means that they would be constrained to show them honor and respect. The latter is the probable meaning; that is, that they would be constrained to acknowledge that they were the children of God, or that God regarded them with his favor. It does not mean necessarily that they would themselves be converted to Christ, but that, as they had been accustomed to revile and oppose those who were true Christians, they would be constrained to come and render them the respect due to those who were sincerely endeavoring to serve their Maker.

Commentators who acknowledge that this passage is describing actual *worship* at the feet of the Bride are on the right track.¹⁰ The fact that this promise is made to overcomers in the book of Revelations suggests that their opponents will be forced to acknowledge the regality of overcomers in a way that is normally reserved for God alone and thus is inappropriate to render even to angels. However, because overcomers will be a higher order of being than angels and co-rulers with Christ, it does not appear to be out of character for overcomers to be worshipped as Gods and Goddesses. As I stated in DLOF:

One day every created being will have to bow *at the name of Jesus* and acknowledge that He is Lord (Phil 2:9-11). The worship that everyone, including the Bride, will—willingly or unwillingly—render to Jesus will be shared by Jesus with the Bride. Those who oppose the Bride will be forced to come and bow down at Her feet and pay Her homage as a divine being. Opponents will be constrained to show these Gods and Goddesses the honor and respect due to such divine beings, to acknowledge that they are the divine Bride of Christ. This type of worship for those running the race is inappropriate now, for they are mere mortals (Acts 10:25-26). But once they have won the race and become a race of immortal Gods and Goddesses, this type of worship will be entirely appropriate for them then. In fact, at least in certain cases, it will be demanded. Christ will necessarily be worshipped as God. His Bride will necessarily be worshipped as a Goddess. Christ will demand it. This worship accorded to the Bride at Christ’s demand is yet more proof of Her superior divine nature and stature among the *elohim*.

Joseph was second only to the supreme ruler—Pharaoh—who exalted Joseph to the fullest extent possible. Pharaoh even forced all others to bow the knee to Joseph (Gen 41:42-43). Joseph’s wife, Asenath, is named in Scripture (Gen 41:45). She went from being the daughter of a priest to become the wife of the second highest ruler of the land. Talk about a change in status! Typologically, Asenath represents the Bride of Christ. The focus in Scripture is on Joseph, as it should be, because he represents Christ, and the typological focus of the wedding in Ps 45 is accordingly on the Groom who represents Christ. The NT fills in more details about Christ’s Bride. From it, we learn that Christ will share His nature, glory, and throne with His Bride! Overcomers will sit on His throne (Rev 3:21) and be co-glorified with Him (Rom 8:17). These facts alone should have led commentators to deduce that the worships ascribed to overcomers in Rev 3:9 is more than a mere homage to human beings. Overcomers cannot be co-glorified with Christ if He alone receives divine homage. Overcomers must share in the divine homage paid to Him if they are to be co-glorified with Him. Some believe that Joseph’s wife sat with him at his side and thus shared in some degree in his glory. This deduction is very reasonable. What is unreasonable is for commentators to fail to deduce that because Jesus’ Bride is co-glorified with Him as His co-ruler, she must be co-worshipped with Him, at least to some degree.

Pharaoh’s *great royal wife/principle wife/queen* would appear before crowds and was pictured “enthroned on a dais decorated with all of Egypt’s enemies bound, literally under the king.”¹¹ Pharaohs made monuments of their wives for good reason: “There is no question that a revered, respected and

¹⁰ Oliver B. Greene, *The Revelation: Verse by Verse Study* (Greenville, SC: The Gospel Hour, 1963), 124. Theodore H. Epp, *Practical Studies in Revelation*, vol. 1 (Lincoln, Nebraska: Back to the Bible Broadcast, 1969), 168.

¹¹ See “Pharaoh’s Mudbrick Palace.” Available at <https://thetorah.com/pharaohs-mudbrick-palace/>. Accessed 2/3/2018.

occasionally worshipped wife brought nothing but glory to her husband.”¹² To dishonor Pharaoh’s wife would be to dishonor Pharaoh. Since Joseph was to be treated as Pharaoh, surely Joseph’s wife was to be honored as Pharaoh’s wife. To do otherwise would be to dishonor Joseph. This is not rocket science. If a king has a queen whom he dearly loves and who sits with him on his throne, then it does not take a genius to figure out that if you dishonor her, you dishonor him. If he shares his throne with her, his honor with her, his rulership with her, and expects you to bow at His feet, then he will expect you to bow before her feet. Would you really want to risk your life by not bowing before her? **Overcomers will be honored with worship; to do otherwise would be a dishonor to Christ. Since overcomers will be worshipped, we may deduce that they are Gods and Goddesses—a higher rank of divine beings than angelic gods and goddesses.** Inversely, we may appropriately reason that since overcomers are a higher rank of divine beings than angelic gods and goddesses, overcomers may be worshipped. The probability of the latter deduction gives way to virtual certainty in the face of the previous deduction. Would you really want to bet your misthological life by refusing to acknowledge that deduction? Refusing to honor the Queen exegetically, might result in the displeasure of the King misthologically.

In MMP5, I made further extrapolations regarding the divinity and worship of overcomers, suggesting that they are 6D *elohim*, as opposed to lower-ranking 4D *elohim*, such as angels. Regardless of speculations regarding dimensionality, deductions regarding the regality of overcomers are certain. And the implications of Rev 3:9 are that bridal believers will be worshipped. Did God know that Saul would bow in worship if He allowed Samuel to come? Yes. Yet God permitted it. And Samuel did not rebuke Saul, just as God foreknew would happen. God may have had multiple reasons for allowing Samuel to come back. One reason could be so that we would properly deduce that postmortem faithful believers will be worshipped by unfaithful believers. God may have intended for 1Sam 28:14 to be an early typological signpost, pointing to the eschatological misthological worship promised in Rev 3:9.

Old Man

When I shared my initial draft of this article with my friend, Keith Call, he inquired as to why Samuel appeared as an old man. My response was based on my belief in God’s middle knowledge and on the insights I have gained from research regarding NDEs (near death experiences). During my research for MMP4 and MMP5, I observed that a standard proposition of NDEs is that we will not be old in Heaven, even during the interim period. Most NDE affirmations would say, for example, that upon death, the elderly return to the prime of their life and appear to be around thirty years old. Therefore, the appearance of Samuel as an old man would seem problematic to such NDEs. Even so, in reading that type of NDE genre, one occasionally encounters affirmations that postmortem believers can vary the age of their appearance as they desire according to the circumstances.

For example, suppose postmortem grandparents are meeting one of their grandchildren in Heaven during the grandchild’s NDE. The grandchild has only known them as Grammie and Poppie. Rather than appear in a youthful form that their grandchild would not recognize, they may choose to appear to their grandchild in a vibrant, healthy, older form as Grammie and Poppie. Their appearance can be varied to match that attained during life.

Similarly, knowing that Saul would ask about Samuel’s appearance as confirmation of Samuel’s identity, God may have advised Samuel to appear in the form of an old man when he went up to meet Saul. Samuel’s youthful vigor would remain intact despite his outward appearance, of course. Still, the outward appearance as an old man would give the confirmation that Saul needed so that he would accept the authenticity of Samuel’s visit. Keith responded:

This makes sense to me. If we examine the abilities of demons (the dispossessed spirits of the Nephilim), they seem to possess the ability to imitate voices and appearances. However, as my former theology professor, Dr. Fred Dickason, observed, they often don’t get the details right. For example, one might manifest but not display the folds of skin in the ear or the right color of eyes. But they can do it. If this is so for them as fallen beings, perhaps this is even more evident for glorified humans.¹³

Good point. Angels can vary their appearance (2Cor 11:14). Surely, overcomers will be like angels in that regard and can do so as suits the situation. For that matter, perhaps one of the reasons that the disciples had trouble recognizing Jesus after His resurrection was that He varied His voice and appearance slightly (Lk 24:16-31; Jn 20:14-16; 21:3-7). In

¹² See Jimmy Dunn, “Ramesses II: Anatomy of a Pharaoh His Family: (Specifically, his Women).” Available at <http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/ramesses2familygirls.htm>. Accessed 2/3/2019. Some Egyptian queens even had to rule as Pharaoh on occasion. See “Royal Women in Ancient Egypt.” Available at http://www.womenintheancientworld.com/royal_women.htm. Accessed 2/3/2018.

¹³ Personal correspondence, 8/16/2022.

any event, I believe that overcomers can vary their appearance, their apparent age, their clothing, their radiance, and even their form (wings versus no wings, for example). The appearance of Samuel as a god who looked like an old man and who could accept worship is no obstacle to my more mature reflection these forty-some years later. Samuel's authentic appearance to Saul is no more problematic than Moses and Elijah's appearance to Jesus (Mt 17:3).

Conclusion

Worshipping angels is inappropriate. However, we know from Rev 3:9 that the worship of postmortem faithful believers by unfaithful believers is appropriate and will take place on occasion. Indeed, Christ will require it. We can also infer from 1Sam 28:14 that a foretaste of that type of worship has been recorded as a typological signpost pointing to this future fulfillment. Even in his intermediate state, Samuel apparently appeared as a god and was worshipped as a god. In contrast to an angelic god who rejected such worship, Samuel took this worship in stride without rebuking Saul for rendering such worship. Instead, Samuel's rebuke is focused on Saul being stripped of regality: "And the Lord has done accordingly as He spoke through me; for the Lord has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, to David" (1Sam 28:17).

Typologically, this passage is a picture of Saul's Bema. Samuel's pronouncement of judgment on Saul prefigures the Judgement Seat of Christ, where unfaithful believers will be stripped of their provisional regality by a pronouncement that results in their being cast into the outer darkness. They will lose the regality that could have been theirs otherwise, and they will be placed in a location of confinement.¹⁴ At the same time, they will be forced to worship those faithful believers whom they have mistreated. Faithful believers will be worshipped as Gods and Goddesses by those who mistreated them.

The LXE renders 1Sam 28:14 as: "And Saul knew that this was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the earth, and *did obeisance to him*" (προσεκύνησεν αὐτῷ). BBE says: "He gave him honour." In view of the immediate context and theological implications, a better translation would be: "And Saul knew that it was Samuel, and he bowed with his face to the ground and worshipped him" (1Sam 28:14; TM). It cannot be accidental or incidental that Saul's worship of Samuel as a god was allowed by God. For those who can follow the breadcrumbs, the trail is not that hard to follow. For those who are slow to follow, the birds of the air will have little difficulty removing the breadcrumbs from their path so that they can proceed along, oblivious to the regality that could be theirs if they were to follow the breadcrumbs to their proper conclusion.

¹⁴ Samuel likewise tells Saul: "Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me" (1Sam 28:19). Thus, Saul would die and join Samuel in the confinements of Sheol, consequently in Paradise but outside of the Heavenly City, thereby plausibly foreshadowing the misthological death that unfaithful believers will experience at the Bema resulting in their living in Paradise outside the Heavenly City. See MMP4 and MMP5 for pictures of the heavenly paradise outside the Heavenly City. For further discussion of presumptive rewards, see MMP5.