

# 1 Samuel 31

Jesus

- David strengthened himself in the LORD
- Scene moves back to Israel the day after Saul consulted the witch

## I. Saul's Final Battle

1 Now the Philistines fought against Israel; and the **men of Israel fled** from before the Philistines, and **fell slain on Mount Gilboa.**

Israel fled/Men shot in the back  
Saul knew this would be bad...

**1 Samuel 28:5** When Saul saw the army of the Philistines, **he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly.**

- Saul had feared this battle for good reason...
- It would be his last

Israel in full retreat back to their own camp!

2 Then the Philistines **followed hard after Saul** and his sons. And the Philistines **killed Jonathan**, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons

- Philistines target the King

**Matthew 26:31** ...**strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.**

- Leaders have a target on their backs

Philistines followed hard after King Saul/Sons: Heirs to the Throne  
Jonathan is killed along w/2 brothers

Saul is literally watching the kingdom being torn from him...  
Prophesied by Samuel In Ch. 15...

**1 Samuel 15:27** ...as Samuel turned around to go away, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. 28 So Samuel said to him, "**The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today**, and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you. 29 And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor relent. For He is not a man, that He should relent."

The LORD means what He says/Says what He means  
Too bad Saul didn't learn this lesson earlier..

3 The **battle became fierce** against Saul. The archers hit him, and he was **severely wounded** by the archers. 4 Then Saul said to his armorbearer, "Draw your sword, and **thrust me through** with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and **abuse** [torture] me."

- No crying out to God?

At the end of his life Saul became so hard in sin that he did not want to repent. Many people put off getting right with God until a later time, assuming they will still want to get right with God then. But that is a **dangerous assumption** because repentance is a gift from God and **if it is here today it should be received today.** [Guzik]

- **Saul hit by the Archers plural;** I.e. More than one arrow

Saul knew well the practice of the Philistines for POW's  
He would know the story of Samson in Judges 16

Eyes gouged out/Chains put on...Samson performed before 3000 Philistines  
Samson called out to the LORD for one last victory/He brought the house down

- Saul is worried about being humiliated/degraded/Tortured
- Satan loves to kick us when we're down/Rub salt in our wounds...

Jesus knew humiliation more than any man...  
Humiliated/Naked on the cross before the watching world. Tortured/Mocked

**Isaiah 52:14** Just as many were astonished at you, So His **appearance was marred more than any man**, And His form more than the sons of men...

**Psalms 22:7** All those who see Me **ridicule Me**; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 8 "He trusted in the Lord, **let Him rescue Him**; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"

**Mockery** was a great part of our Lord's distress. Judas mocked Him in the garden; the chief priests and scribes laughed Him to scorn; Herod saw Him as nothing; the servants and the soldiers jeered at Him, and brutally insulted Him; Pilate and his guards ridiculed His royalty; and on the tree all sorts of horrid jests and hideous taunts were hurled at Him. Ridicule is always hard to bear, **but when we are in intense pain it is so heartless, so cruel, that it cuts us to the quick.** Imagine the Savior crucified, racked with anguish far beyond what any mortal could imagine, and then picture that motley multitude, all wagging their heads or thrusting out the lip in bitterest contempt of one poor suffering victim! [Spurgeon]

Satan has no mercy on us...God will have no mercy for him

**Isaiah 14:11** Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.' 12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!"

Saul is hit/In agony  
He asks his armor bearer to kill him before the Philistines get to him...

**4b ...But his armorbearer would not**, for he was greatly afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it.

Saul fell on his sword...but does not die  
Later 2 Samuel gives rest of story...

- David is met by a man who tells David how Saul actually died.
- The man tells David that **Saul asked him who he was...**

**2 Samuel 1:8** ...So I answered him, 'I am an Amalekite.' 9 He said to me again, 'Please stand over me and kill me, for anguish has come upon me, but my life still remains in me.' 10 So **I stood over him and killed him**, because I was sure that he could not live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them here to my lord." ...**14** So David said to him, "How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?" 15 Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go near, and execute him!" And he struck him so that he died. 16 So David said to him, "Your blood is on your own head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, '**I have killed the Lord's anointed.**' "

- David would not kill Saul even when tempted...

**1 Samuel 26:9** But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy Saul; for who can stretch out his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" 10 David said furthermore, "As the Lord lives, the Lord shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and perish. 11 The **Lord forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed.**

What David would not do...an Amalekite did  
Saul was killed by an Amalekite

**Galatians 6:8** For he who sows to his flesh will of the **flesh reap corruption**, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

5 And when his armorbearer saw [*thought*] that **Saul was dead**, he also fell on his sword, and died with him. 6 So Saul, his three sons, his armorbearer, and all his men died together that same day.

- Q. Can a person commit suicide and still be saved?
- Q. Would a saved person even commit suicide?

The armorbearers last act was to break the command "Do not Murder" Yet...  
The Law plays no part in Salvation other than leading us to Jesus  
IOWs the law does not save us nor keep us saved...

**Romans 3:20** ...by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for **by the law is the knowledge of sin.**

**Galatians 3:24** Therefore the **law was our tutor to bring us to Christ**, that we might be justified by faith.

There is only one mortal sin...Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit  
Disregarding the Holy Spirit's offer to accept Christ

**Matthew 10:22** ...you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But **he who endures to the end will be saved.**

Those who endure will be saved...If you are saved you will endure

- **No simple answers:**

1. Samson brought the house down on himself. Yet c.f. Heb 11
2. Psychotropic drugs are causing an exponential increase suicides
3. "Doctor" assisted suicides on the rise/More accepted but that's meaningless

Endurance does not save us...If we are *saved* we will endure?

Saved: Born again by the Spirit of God. First water then Spirit of Love/Life/Light

- **Jonah/Elijah/Paul** all desired death at one point...**but endured through the pain...**

**2 Corinthians 1:9** Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, 10 **who delivered** us from so great a death, and **does deliver** us; in whom we trust that **He will still deliver** us...

Important: Death seals our destiny  
Immediately after death is Eternal Judgment

**Hebrews 9:27** ...it is appointed for men to die once, **but after this the judgment...**

Problem: A person can taste God's goodness/Think their saved/Yet not be saved  
Seem to seek God for a while then fall away

Hope/Endurance are good [not perfect] indicators of **true conversion**

**Suicide** ...let it never be glorified as heroic. It is the last resort of the man who dare not stand up to life. [Morgan]

Those who choose suicide (for whatever reason) should remember that death is not the end, but a doorway into an eternal existence. Sad to say, some who find the pain of dying intolerable will awaken in a realm that is even more terrible than earth could ever be. We should welcome death from the hand of God, but not force the hand that brings it. [Lutzer]

...Suicide is often the ultimate evidence of a heart that rejects the lordship of Jesus Christ, because it is an act where the sinner is taking his life into his own hands completely rather than submitting to God's will for it. Surely many of those who have taken their lives will hear those horrifying words from the Lord Jesus at the judgment – "I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness". So though it may be possible for a true believer to commit suicide, we believe that is an unusual occurrence. Someone considering suicide should be challenged above all to examine himself to see whether he is in the faith [2 Corinthians 13:5]. [McArther]

I have suffered many times from severe sickness and frightful mental depression seeking almost to despair. Almost every year I've been laid aside for a season, for flesh and blood cannot bear the strain, at least such flesh and blood as mine. I believe, however, the affliction was necessary to me and has answered beneficial ends... Glory be to God for the furnace, the hammer and the file. Heaven shall be all the fuller of bliss because we have been filled with anguish here below; and earth shall be better tilled because of our training in the school of adversity. [Spurgeon]

Self-destruction, if done by a man in his senses, is a daring defiance of God... [Spurgeon]

**How does God view suicide:** Suicide is sin; it is the sin of self-murder. Yet, we are wrong if we regard it as the unforgivable sin, and anyone who does commit suicide has given in to the lies and deceptions of Satan, whose purpose is to kill and destroy. [Guzik]

- Given in to lies/deception? *Where was the Spirit of Truth?*
- **Hard questions:** When we don't know we trust in God's mercy/move on...

Saul, sons, men all die. David will be king.

7 And when the men of Israel who were on the other side of the valley, and those who were on the other side of the Jordan, saw that the men of Israel had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they **forsook the cities and fled**; and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.

Israel now split in half as the Philistines take the middle

8 So it happened the next day, when the **Philistines came to strip the slain**, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa.

**Mount Gilboa:** It. Swollen Heap  
Place Saul chose to consult a witch the day before

Philistines swoop in like vultures to strip the slain clean including Saul...

9 And they **cut off Saul's head** and **stripped off his armor**, and **sent word throughout** the land of the Philistines, to **proclaim it in the temple** of their idols and among the people. 10 Then they put his armor in the temple of the **Ashtoreths**, and they **fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan**.

You can go to the ruins of Beth Shan today, as the foundations to the city sit high on a hill overlooking the Roman ruins destroyed in an earthquake. It was high on that hill that the Philistines hung the decapitated corpse of King Saul in the ultimate humiliation. [Guzik]

- **Humiliation:** What Saul feared
  1. Cut off his head
  2. Stripped off his armor
  3. Proclaimed Victory over Israel's God

The Philistines fastened Saul's lifeless/headless body to the wall of Beth Shan  
Lit. House of Ease in Israelite territory they just conquered

Here is your king Israel!

**Proverbs 11:2** When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble *is* wisdom.

**Proverbs 18:12** Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor *is* humility.

When we fail to be who God calls us to be because we failed to utilize the resources He freely provides...we give our enemies reason to mock. [NJC]

**Luke 14:27** ...whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is **not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him**, 30 saying, '**This man began to build and was not able to finish**'? ...**33** So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. 34 "Salt is good; but if the **salt has lost its flavor**, how shall it be seasoned? 35 It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

**Matthew 5:13** You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

- We can only be who God created us to be by walking in His Spirit not the flesh

**1 Corinthians 3:3** ...for you are still carnal. For where *there are* envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and **behaving like mere men**?

We have the ability through Jesus/His Spirit to not only endure but finish well  
IOWs God is not glorified when we give up!

**Jude 24** Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to **present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy**, 25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

Nehemiah's Wall 2.5 miles long/39 ft high/8.2 feet thick  
Built while his enemies watched/taunted in just 52 days

**2 Timothy 4:7** **I have fought** the good fight, **I have finished** the race, **I have kept** the faith.

11 Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, 12 all the valiant men arose and **traveled all night**, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan; and they came to Jabesh and burned them there. 13 Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

- **Saul's 1<sup>st</sup> Battle:** Saul rescued Jabesh-Gilead

**1 Samuel 11:13** ...Saul proclaimed, "Not a man shall be put to death this day, for today **the Lord has accomplished salvation in Israel.**"

Saul's first battle was a victory  
Saul's last battle utter defeat

**1 Chronicles 10:13** So Saul died for his **unfaithfulness** which he had committed against the Lord, because he **did not keep the word** of the Lord, and also because he **consulted a medium** for guidance. 14 But **he did not inquire of the Lord; therefore He killed him**, and turned the kingdom over to David the son of Jesse.

Ultimately the LORD killed Saul

- **Saul:** Complicated man
  1. **Chosen** by God
  2. **Loved** by Samuel
  3. **Respected** by David
  4. **Judged** by God: Jealousy, Rebellion, Witchcraft

God is not mocked  
That which a man sows he will also reap

## II. Finishing Well

Anyone can start. What does it look like to finish well in God's eyes?  
How can we be ready for Jesus coming?

**1 Corinthians 9:24** Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore **I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.** 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

- **Be Intentional:** Run to win. As for me and my house WE WILL... Faces like flint
- **Be Temperate:** Self-control. Self-governing yielding to the control of the Spirit

**Temperate:** As athletes preparing themselves for the games, abstaining from unwholesome food, wine, and sexual indulgence

- **Be Confident:** Not doubleminded. Praying/Living w/expectation
- **Be Warriors:** Landing punches in Spiritual Warfare. Disciplined/Trained by hardships
- **Be Disciplined:** Killing our flesh by yielding to the Spirit

Paul's Swan Song:

Paul's last Words of Wisdom to us before He departs

**Philippians 2:14** Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. 17 Yes, and if **I am being poured out as a drink offering** on the sacrifice and service of your faith, **I am glad** and rejoice with you all.

- Zero complaining [murmuring]
- Zero disputing: Self rationalization. Hesitation. IOWs Our hearts arguing w/God's Word
- Blameless/Harmless in a guilty/hurtful world
- Faultless: Honest in a crooked world
- Shining in a dark world
- Hold out the Word of Life
- Serve Sacrificially...**don't give up**

**Philippians 3:12b ...I press on,** that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and **reaching forward to those things which are ahead,** 14 I **press toward the goal** for the prize of the **upward call** of God in Christ Jesus **...20** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

- Press on to fulfill God's purpose
- Forget the old life/Press forward to the new
- Live in constant expectation of God's daily intervention

**2 Timothy 4:6** For I am already being **poured out as a drink offering,** and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have **fought the good fight,** I have **finished the race,** I have **kept the faith.** 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also **to all who have loved His appearing.**

- **Fight the fight:** Engage in daily Spiritual warfare. Don't give up
- **Finish the race:** Nurture your personal walk of righteousness/holiness/love
- **Keep the Faith...don't fall out of love with Jesus**

**Matthew 24:12** ...because lawlessness will abound, **the love of many will grow cold.** 13 But **he who endures to the end shall be saved.** 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

**Luke 18:8b** ...when the Son of Man comes, **will He really find faith on the earth?**

IOWs Will you continue to love as David in the face of fierce provocation?  
God will deal with our enemies. We will keep the faith

- Faith to be ready
- Faith to keep watching
- Faith to finish well by loving much as David...

Finally to hear the Son of David Jesus Christ say...Well done good and faithful servant Enter in to the Joy of your Master