

# 1 Samuel 31

## *The End of Saul*

### 1. 31:1-2 – Death of Saul’s Sons

- a. Ch. 29 – David rejected of Jew and Gentile.
- b. Ch. 30 – David’s city burned, taken captive, David returns and restitutes all.
- c. 31:1 – Israel flees and falls while David mourns the loss of his city.
- d. 2 – Jonathan’s desire in 23:17 (*“I shall be next to thee”*) did not come to pass.
- e. The “tree” of Saul cut down. Israel needs a new tree to bear fruit. 30:26, John 15:1-6
- f. Jonathan (*Gift of God*) Abinadab (*Father’s willingness*) Malchi-shua (*King’s Help*) gone.

### 2. 31:3-6 – Death of Saul

- a. 2 of supposedly 7 suicides in the Bible are in this chapter: Saul and his armorbearer.
- b. 3 – *“sore wounded of the archers”* – A fact that prevents this from being simple suicide.
- c. Suicide = ‘killing yourself’ is self-murder transgressing the law of Exo 20:13, Ro 13:9
- d. Suicide is seeking death not facing death (Sacrifice, risks, in battle, DNR) – 2 Cor 5:4
- e. When facing it, Paul chooses to delay death rather than quicken it – Phi 1:21-22, 3:10
- f. A sin as a last act before judgment is not good, but grace is sufficient – 1Cor 6:11
- g. Dying before thy time, taking your own life, has no true justification – Ecc 7:17
- h. Suicidal thoughts resulting from mental/spiritual disturbance can be helped:  
Feelings of loneliness, overburden, useless, failure, guilt, grief, dark, trauma.
- i. God says: “choose life” – Deu 30:19-20, Prov 8:36, Rom 5:2-4, Christ gives hope.
- j. 4-5 – Saul’s fear manifest in his armorbearer, too. *Compare* 1 Sam 14:6-7, 1Chr 12:18
- k. 6 – Fulfilling Samuel’s final prophecy of 28:19 (and the book) – *“thou and thy sons”*
- l. Saul fell upon his own sword → his own fear, disobedience, failures killed him.
- m. 1 Chron 10:13-14 – *“Saul died for his transgression... against the word of the LORD”*
- n. Saul refused to hear God thru Samuel (prophet), Ahimelech (priest), David (king)

### 3. 31:7-10 – The Body of Saul

- a. 7 – Philistines conquer Jezreel valley (north Israel) David preserves Ziklag (south)
- b. 8-9 – Saul’s body paraded in their pagan temples as a trophy.
- c. *“his head in the temple of Dagon”* – 1 Chron 10:9, where the ark was placed – 1Sa 5:1-5
- d. 10 – Israel had served Ashtaroath many times before – Jdg 2:13, 10:6, 1 Sam 7:4
- e. Samuel’s promise to Israel back in 12:10-15, 24-25 comes true.
- f. Saul becomes a picture of unbelieving religious Israel in his death – Rom 2:23-25

### 4. 31:11-13 – Jabesh Gilead

- a. 11 – *“Jabesh-gilead heard”* Fearless Saul rescued them before – 1 Sam 11:1-3, 6-7, 11-12
- b. 12 – *“valiant men... took the body”* – A rescue to bring an anointed king back to the land
- c. *“and burnt them there”* – A rare account of cremation in the Bible.
- d. 13 – *“buried them ... at Jabesh”* – David takes them back to Benjamin 2 Sam 21:12-14
- e. This begins the historical overlap with the book of Chronicles – 1 Chron 10
- f. 1 Sam began a kingdom, anoints Israel’s king, looking for a better one to come.
- g. David expressed as the man of God’s own heart, the promised one, suffering Christ.
- h. 1 Chron 29:29 calls 1 Samuel the “first acts of David the king” ... the last are in 2 Sam