

THE CHARACTERS AND DRAMA OF

1 SAMUEL

[PART 63]

THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH

Reading: 1 Samuel 31:1 - 13

Introduction

- 1 Samuel begins with the birth of a miracle child whose name forms the title of this OT book.
- Samuel would be instrumental in Israel becoming ruled by a monarch.
- The first king named Saul begins his reign as a hero but quickly nose dives to zero.
- His divinely named successor begins as a shepherd boy, slayer of giants, soldier and song writer.
- The first king is on a broad road to hell and the next king is on a road to heaven.

1 Massacre At Gilboa

- God had told Saul of his end for his wickedness and now He keeps His word on that count.
- David had just secured a victory over the Amalekites but now Saul is about to endure a defeat.
- This chapter records the horrors of this day in just about every verse.
- Death... slaughter... Israel forsaking their cities and running... corpses abused... bodies stripped... credit for the victory accredited to heathen deities... corpses pinned to walls.
- [Romans 6:23] ***"The wages of sin is death."***
- That is as true today as it was 3000 years ago.

2 What About Infinite Grace And Mercy?

- We should be uncomfortable when we hear people speak of *'infinite grace and mercy.'*
- What unconverted soul does not take this as a licence to sin again and again?
- It is regarded almost as a *'get out of jail free card.'*
- **FACT:** There is no such phrase in the Bible.
- The God who grants grace and mercy is *'infinite'* but not the grace and mercy he grants to the penitent.
- There is a time when God offers such grace and mercy but also a time when He stops offering it.
- [Genesis 6:3] Ask the people of Noah's day.
- Consider [Isaiah 55:6].
- [Romans 1:26] There is a time when God *'gives people over to their sins.'*
- This was the case with Saul.
- Saul was oblivious to the fact that he was about to run out of track and crash.

3 What About Suicide?

- [Vs 4] Saul commits suicide.
- Other Biblical cases were Ahithophel in [2Samuel] and Judas Iscariot in the gospel story.
- In the UK 18 - 20 die as a result of suicide every day.
- It is the leading cause of death in men under 50 years of age.
- It is the act of intentionally causing ones own death.
- It is not the unpardonable sin but it is a sin.
- The suggestion/voice to end one's life is that of the *'stranger'* (Satan). Don't listen to him.
- If you are having suicidal thoughts talk to someone.
- Ring a friend, pastor or ring the Samaritans on 116 123 (free number).

4 One Good Turn Deserves Another

- The mutilated bodies of Saul and his sons are pinned to the walls of Bethshan.
- During the night men from Jabesh Gilead make the 25 mile trek to recover the bodies. Why?
- Back in [Chapter 11] at the start of his reign Saul had saved them from the Ammonites.
- They remembered that act of bravery and kindness and they believed one good turn (even from years ago) deserved another.
- Don't forget the acts of kindness others have showed you.

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