

1 Samuel 31

The death of Saul

King James Version (KJV)

31 Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. (They are in full retreat and getting killed while doing it)

²And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchishua, Saul's sons. (Saul probably saw his sons die; they would have been fighting side-by-side) 1Samuel-14:49 (Abinadab is called Ishui)

³And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers.

⁴Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through, and abuse me. But his armourbearer would not; for he was sore afraid. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. (Killing the king would have been a death sentence for him)

⁵And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him.

⁶So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together. (In Chronicles, it is written that all of Saul's house died that day. Only the sons that were with Saul died, but Ishbosheth was at home. Also a son of Jonathan, Meshobosheth, wasn't there. Also, Abner, Saul's general and his cousin, survived the battle)

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

⁸And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in mount Gilboa. (They were collecting the spoils)

⁹And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people. (To prove that they had killed Saul)

¹⁰ And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan. (Bethshan = house of rest; this was one of the cities that God told the Israelites to wipe out the Canaanites that lived there. The Israelites didn't do it, and so this city remained allied with the Philistines) (Ashteroth was a form for Ishtar – queen of heaven - from which Easter came from)

(It is also written in 1Chronicles that Saul's skull was mounted in the house of Dagon; an idol fish god of the Philistines)

¹¹ And when the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul; (These were the people that Saul had helped against Nahash and the Amorites. Nahash means serpent)

¹² All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there. (First record of cremation in the Bible) Ecclesiastes-12:6-7 (Once we die, the flesh returns to the earth. Cremation or burial is ok)

¹³ And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days. (They did this in gratitude and as a show of respect for Saul and his house)