

The Bible and Suicide

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The Bible records *Seven Examples of Suicide*, or Self-Murder.

Examples

I. ABIMELECH (Jdg. 9:54): The rebellious son of Gideon murdered his brothers except for Jotham, usurped leadership, and fought at Shechem. Being wounded by a woman's millstone toss, he commanded his armour-bearer to thrust him through with a sword, which he did, killing Abimelech.

II. SAMSON (Jdg. 16:30): During the time of Judges when every man did that which was right in his own eyes (Jdg. 21:25), another suicide occurred, this time by a believer in Jehovah (cf. Heb. 11:32). A servant of the LORD, Samson had great strengths and weakness. As Samson sinned and walked carnally, the LORD judged him with blindness, imprisonment, and mocking. He asked the LORD to strengthen him once again so he could pull down the pillars of Dagon's temple upon himself and thousands of Philistines. The LORD enabled him to have the strength to kill himself!

III. SAUL (I Sam. 31:4): Saul demonstrated through his rebellion against Jehovah that he was an unworthy king. He got involved in the occult with the witch and received Samuel's prophecy of death. In battle against the Philistines he lost his sons and was wounded. He asked his armour-bearer to slay him, but he would not kill Saul. Saul fell on his own sword.

IV. SAUL'S SERVANT (I Sam. 31:5): Saul's armour-bearer could not kill Saul, but he did fall on his own sword.

V. AHITHOPHEL (II Sam. 17:23): He was David's counselor and grandfather of Bathsheba. He betrayed David in favor of Absalom, who ultimately rejected Ahithophel's counsel. Now betrayed by Absalom, he hanged himself.

VI. ZIMRI (I Ki. 16:18): Zimri murdered his king (Elah) and usurped the NK for seven days. The people wanted Omri as king who took the city Tirzah. As Zimri realized that his short reign was over he went into the king's palace and burnt it down upon himself.

VII. JUDAS (Mt. 27:5; Acts 1:18): Judas, one of the twelve apostles, walked with the Lord Jesus for three years and was the church treasurer. Disappointed in the failure for the Lord to set up His Kingdom and enticed by thirty pieces of silver, Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus. Realizing he was condemned, Judas attempted to return the money, was rejected by the religionists, and then attempted to hang himself but fell gushing out his bowels.

Observations

1. All seven had biblical knowledge about the LORD and His will.
2. All had special positional and personal privileges in the truth.
3. At least one was a believer (Samson [Heb. 11:32]). Samson's sin of murder was covered at the cross when he had trusted in the Messiah. Christ died for the past, present, and future sins of repentant sinners!
4. All were self-willed and lusted after the wrong things. James warned about spiritual declension: lust, sin, death (sometimes suicide).
5. Others had the thought of suicide, desiring to die.
 - a. Job: He cursed the day he was born. Ultimately, he repented of his pride (Job 3:1 ff.; 42:6).
 - b. Elijah: He wanted Jehovah to kill him. The LORD gave him food, water, and rest. Then He told him to get up and serve the LORD (I Ki. 19:4 ff.).
 - c. Jeremiah: He called God a liar and a deceiver and cursed the day of his birth. The Lord told him to put away these evil words or he could not serve Jehovah (Jer. 15:18 ff.; 20:7 ff.).

Conclusion

Suicide is the ultimate angry expression of self-will, brought about by sin and hating the consequences of sin. For the Christian, the believer needs to stop walking in the works of the flesh (i.e., murder) and start being filled with the Spirit, producing the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:17-28).