**Suicide**

**General references**

Amo\_9:2; Rev\_9:6Revelation 9:6

(6) And2532 in1722 those1565 days2250 shall men444 seek2212 death,2288 and2532 shall not3756 find2147 it;846 and2532 shall desire1937 to die,599 and2532 death2288 shall flee5343 from575 them.846

(Barnes) **And in those days shall men seek death ... -** See the notes on Rev\_9:5. It is very easy to conceive of such a state of things as is here described, and, indeed, this has not been very uncommon in the world. It is a state where the distress is so great that people would consider death a relief, and where they anxiously look to the time when they may be released from their sufferings by death. In the case before us it is not intimated that they would lay violent hands on themselves, or that they would take any positive measures to end their sufferings; and this, perhaps, may be a circumstance of some importance to show that the persons referred to were servants of God. When it is said that “they would seek death,” it can only be meant that they would look out for it - or desire it - as the end of their sorrows. This is descriptive, as we shall see, of a particular period of the world; but the language is beautifully applicable to what occurs in all ages and in all lands.

There is always a great number of sufferers who are looking forward to death as a relief. In cells and dungeons; on beds of pain and languishing; in scenes of poverty and want; in blighted hopes and disappointed affections, how many are there who would be glad to die, and who have no hope of an end of suffering but in the grave! A few, by the pistol, by the halter, by poison, or by drowning, seek thus to end their woes. A large part look forward to death as a release, when, if the reality were known, death would furnish no such relief, for there are deeper and longer woes beyond the grave than there are this side of it. Compare the notes on Job\_3:20-22. But to a portion death will be a relief. It will be an end of sufferings. They will find peace in the grave, and are assured they shall suffer no more. Such bear their trials with patience, for the end of all sorrow to them is near, and death will come to release their spirits from the suffering clay, and to bear them in triumph to a world where a pang shall never be felt, and a tear never shed.

**Temptation to:**

**Of Jesus**

Mat\_4:5-6; Luk\_4:9-11

**Of the Philippian jailer**

Act\_16:27 Acts 16:27

(27) And1161 the3588 keeper of the prison1200 awaking out of his sleep,1096, 1853 and2532 seeing1492 the3588 prison5438 doors2374 open,455 he drew out4685 his sword,3162 and would3195 have killed337 himself,1438 supposing3543 that the3588 prisoners1198 had been fled.1628

(Barnes) **Would have killed himself -** This was done in the midst of agitation and alarm. He supposed that the prisoners had fled. He presumed that their escape would be charged on him. It was customary to hold a jailor responsible for the safe keeping of prisoners, and to subject him to the punishment due them if he suffered them to escape. See Act\_12:19. It should be added that it was common and approved among the Greeks and Romans for a man to commit suicide when he was encompassed with dangers from which he could not escape. Thus, Cato was guilty of self-murder in Utica; and thus, at this very place - Philippi - Brutus and Cassius, and many of their friends, fell on their own swords, and ended their lives by suicide. The custom was thus sanctioned by the authority and example of the great; and we are not to wonder that the jailor, in a moment of alarm, should also attempt to destroy his own life. It is not one of the least benefits of Christianity that it has proclaimed the evil of self-murder, and has done so much to drive it from the world.

*See Death, Desired*

**Instances of:**

**Samson**

Jdg\_16:29-30 Judges 16:29-31

(29) And Samson8123 took hold3943 of (853) the two8147 middle8432 pillars5982 upon5921 which834 the house1004 stood,3559 and on5921 which it was borne up,5564 of the one259 with his right hand,3225 and of the other259 with his left.8040

(30) And Samson8123 said,559 Let me5315 die4191 with5973 the Philistines.6430 And he bowed5186 himself with *all* *his* might;3581 and the house1004 fell5307 upon5921 the lords,5633 and upon5921 all3605 the people5971 that834 *were* therein. So the dead4191 which834 he slew4191 at his death4194 were1961 more7227 than *they* which4480, 834 he slew4191 in his life.2416

(31) Then his brethren251 and all3605 the house1004 of his father1 came down,3381 and took5375 him, and brought *him* up,5927 and buried6912 him between996 Zorah6881 and Eshtaol847 in the burial place6913 of Manoah4495 his father.1 And he1931 judged8199 (853) Israel3478 twenty6242 years.8141

(Barnes) “All the house of his father,” in connection with “his brethren,” must mean the whole tribe of Dan, aiding his nearer relations. The Danites, taking advantage of the consternation of the Philistines, and of the death of their lords and chief men, went down in force to Gaza, and recovered the body of their great captain and judge, and buried him in his father’s sepulchre.

**Saul and his armor-bearer**

1Sa\_31:4-5; 1Ch\_10:4-5 1 Chronicles 10:4-5

(4) Then said559 Saul7586 to413 his armorbearer,5375, 3627 Draw8025 thy sword,2719 and thrust me through1856 therewith; lest6435 these428 uncircumcised6189 come935 and abuse5953 me. But his armorbearer5375, 3627 would14 not;3808 for3588 he was sore afraid.3372, 3966 So Saul7586 took3947 (853) a sword,2719 and fell5307 upon5921 it.

(5) And when his armorbearer5375, 3627 saw7200 that3588 Saul7586 was dead,4191 he1931 fell5307 likewise1571 on5921 the sword,2719 and died.4191

**Ahithophel**

2Sa\_17:23 2 Samuel 17:23

(23) And when Ahithophel302 saw7200 that3588 his counsel6098 was not3808 followed,6213 he saddled2280 *his* (853) ass,2543 and arose,6965 and got1980 him home to413 his house,1004 to413 his city,5892 and put6680, 413 his household1004 in order, and hanged himself,2614 and died,4191 and was buried6912 in the sepulcher6913 of his father.1

(Barnes) **To his city -** To Giloh (marginal reference). Ahithophel was probably influenced by deep mortification at the slight put upon him by rejecting his counsel. He is a memorable example of the impotence of worldly wisdom. Compare the marginal reference.

**Zimri**

1Ki\_16:18 1 Kings 16:18

(18) And it came to pass,1961 when Zimri2174 saw7200 that3588 the city5892 was taken,3920 that he went935 into413 the palace759 of the king's4428 house,1004 and burnt8313 (853) the king's4428 house1004 over5921 him with fire,784 and died,4191

(Barnes) **The palace of the king’s house -** The tower of the king’s house. A particular part of the palace - either the “harem,” or, more probably, the keep or citadel, a tower stronger and loftier than the rest of the palace.

Zimri’s desperate act has been repeated more than once. That the last king of Assyria, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, thus destroyed himself, is almost the only “fact” which we know concerning him.

**Judas**

Mat\_27:5; Matthew 27:5

(5) And2532 he cast down4496 the3588 pieces of silver694 in1722 the3588 temple,3485 and departed,402 and2532 went565 and hanged519 himself.

(Barnes) **And he cast down ... -** This was an evidence of his remorse of conscience for his crime. His ill-gotten gain now did him no good. It would not produce relief to his agonized mind. He “attempted,” therefore, to obtain relief by throwing back the price of treason; but he attempted it in vain. The consciousness of guilt was fastened to his soul; and Judas found, as all will find, that to cast away or abandon ill-gotten wealth will not alleviate a guilty conscience.

**In the temple -** It is not quite certain what part of the temple is here meant. Some have thought that it was the place where the Sanhedrin were accustomed to sit; others, the treasury; others, the part where the priests offered sacrifice. It is probable that Judas cared little or thought little to what particular part of the temple he went. In his deep remorse he hurried to the temple, and probably cast the money down in the most convenient spot, and fled to some place where he might take his life.

**And went and hanged himself -** The word used in the original, here, has given rise to much discussion, whether it means that he was suffocated or strangled by his great grief, or whether he took his life by suspending himself. It is acknowledged on all hands, however, that the latter is its most usual meaning, and it is certainly the most obvious meaning. Peter says, in giving an account of the death of Jesus Act\_1:18, that Judas, “falling headlong, burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.” There has been supposed to be some difficulty in reconciling these two accounts, but there is really no necessary difference. Both accounts are true. Matthew records the mode in which Judas attempted his death by hanging. Peter speaks of the result. Judas probably passed out of the temple in great haste and perturbation of mind. He sought a place where he might perpetrate this crime.

He would not, probably, be very careful about the fitness or the means he used. In his anguish, his haste, his desire to die, he seized upon a rope and suspended himself; and it is not at all remarkable, or indeed unusual, that the rope might prove too weak and break. Falling headlong - that is, on his face - he burst asunder, and in awful horrors died - a double death, with double pains and double horrors - the reward of his aggravated guilt. The explanation here suggested will be rendered more probable if it be supposed that he hung himself near some precipitous valley. “Interpreters have suggested,” says Professor Hackett (*Illustrations of Scripture*, pp. 275, 276), “that Judas may have hung himself on a tree near a precipice over the valley of Hinnom, and that, the limb or rope breaking, he fell to the bottom, and was dashed to pieces by the fall. For myself, I felt, as I stood in this valley and looked up to the rocky terraces which hang over it, that the proposed explanation was a perfectly natural one. I was more than ever satisfied with it. I measured the precipitous, almost perpendicular walls in different places, and found the height to be, variously, 40, 36, 33, 30, and 25 feet. Trees still grow quite near the edge of these rocks, and, no doubt, in former times were still more numerous in the same place. A rocky pavement exists, also, at the bottom of the ledges, and hence on that account, too, a person who should fall from above would be liable to be crushed and mangled as well as killed. The traitor may have struck, in his fall, upon some pointed rock, which entered the body and caused ‘his bowels to gush out.’”

Act\_1:18 Acts 1:18

(18) Now3767 this man3778 (3303) purchased2932 a field5564 with1537 the3588 reward3408 of iniquity;93 and2532 falling1096 headlong,4248 he burst asunder2997 in the midst,3319 and2532 all3956 his846 bowels4698 gushed out.1632

(Barnes) **Now this man ... -** The money which was given for betraying the Lord Jesus was thrown down in the temple, and the field was purchased with it by the Jewish priests. See Mat\_27:5, Mat\_27:10, and the notes on that place. A man is said often to do a thing when he furnishes means for doing it. Compare Mat\_27:60, “And laid it (the body of Jesus) in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock.” That is, had caused to be hewn out. Joh\_4:1, “when, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus “made and baptized” more disciples than John.” Through his disciples, for Jesus himself baptized not, Joh\_4:2. The same principle is recognized in law in the well-known maxim, “Qui facit per alium, facit per se.”

**The reward of iniquity -** The price which he had for that deed of stupendous wickedness - the betraying of the Lord Jesus.

**And falling headlong -** The word here rendered “headlong” - πρηνής prēnēs (Latin “pronus,” whence our English word “prone”) - means properly “bent forward, head-foremost”; and the idea is, that his position in hanging himself was such that when the cord broke he fell headlong, or fell forward on his face. This can easily be supposed if he threw himself from a rock or elevated place. He first hanged himself, and then fell and was burst asunder. See the notes on Mat\_27:5.