

Euthanasia

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Euthanasia is defined as "*the act of causing death painlessly, so as to end suffering.*" It has also been called "**mercy killing**" or "**assisted suicide**". The morality of such an act is debated in our society. Some feel it is alright if a doctor does it. Some argue it is the loving thing to do. We can surmise what God thinks about it in the case of Saul's death.

Saul's actual death is recorded in the last chapter of 1 Samuel as we studied in our adult Bible class on Sunday. 1 Sam. 31:3 *And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers. 4 Then 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.*

Saul **commanded** his armourbearer to assist him in killing himself. He **wanted** to die. He was **wounded** and **dying**. He was **afraid of the abuse** the Philistines would inflict upon him if he was found alive. None of these reasons justified a "mercy killing". We are told the armourbearer was *afraid*. I suspect he was afraid to lift his hand against God's anointed. This was the disposition that David displayed (1 Sam. 24:6, 26:9). David felt he could not be justified in killing Saul even though Saul was trying to kill him. God would deal with Saul.

About three days later a man showed up at David's house with a different story about the death of Saul. This is the first time David learned that Saul and Jonathan were dead. Some see this text as a Bible contradiction. Actually it is an example of lying. We need to read our Bibles with the awareness of who is talking. The Bible records words from Satan. Obviously we are not supposed to believe or obey them. Statements in the Bible

need to be taken in their context. This includes who is doing the speaking and why they are saying what they are saying.

2 Sam 1:1-6 *And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. 7 And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. 8 And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. 9 And he said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and **slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.** 10 So I stood upon him, and slew him, because **I was sure that he could not live** after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.*

The man brought articles from Saul's body to enhance the believability of his lie. He must have felt David would be grateful that his rival was dead and that he would reward the man for assisting in his suicide. But we find a different reaction.

14 *And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD's anointed? 15 And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. 16 And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD's anointed.*

Although the man lied, he was killed for having killed Saul. His own false testimony brought his destruction. Saul's body must have been discovered by this Amalekite before the Philistines arrived. Thus he fabricated his story and retrieved the articles to support it. Just because a person wants to die, tells us to kill them, is suffering, is afraid of more suffering, we believe they are dying, and they believe they are not dying quick enough; We are not justified in killing. We may see it as merciful, but this text suggests God sees it as sin.

