

In the Darkest Hour, Heroes Are Born

1 Samuel 31:1-13

Introduction: In 1 Samuel 29 and 30 David comes through his refiner's fire with flying colors. His life is now characterized by five marks of maturity. But whenever we exit God's refiner's fire, we need to remember that others may still remain in it. But even in their darkest hour, they can still display heroism. The essence of heroism in the refiner's fire is doing right because out of convictions that are founded on God.

1. *FIRST BOOKEND – Jonathan is a hero because he serves sacrificially out of his godly convictions. 1 Samuel 31:1-2 (2 Samuel. 1:19-27)*

- A. The context: For the past several chapters, Philistia and Israel have been preparing for battle. 31:1
- B. The question: What is Jonathan going to do? 31:2
- C. The issue: Jonathan is a hero in his refiner's fire.

2. *THE TRAGIC CONTRAST – Saul is the anti-hero because he has only served himself. 1 Samuel 31:3-10 (1 Chronicles. 10:13-14)*

- A. Saul's death on the battlefield is everything he feared *and more*. 31:3
- B. The lesson in Saul's death: When life is all about serving yourself, you enter a spiritual paralysis.

3. *SECOND BOOKEND – The people of Jabesh-Gilead are heroes because they serve sacrificially out of godly convictions. 1 Samuel 31:11-13*

- A. The people of Jabesh-Gilead had been saved from mutilation and death by Saul. 1 Samuel 11:1-11
- B. The people of Jabesh-Gilead show their appreciation. 31:11-13
- C. The significance of what they did: They act with humble integrity even in terribly tragic times.