

WORK FOR A GOOD ENDING

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Eccl. 7:8

Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: *and* the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit.

A popular saying goes "it is not how you started that matters, but how you finish" as simple as those words are, they are nonetheless very poignant and resonates with the reason for our salvation. Rom. 3:23 says all have sinned and have been cut short of the glory of God, indeed Job 25:4 that anyone born of a woman is born with a faulty composition and cannot be justified with God. Being born into corruption, and of the corruption therefore makes every human being a corrupted version of the perfect image of God. Following on from Rom.3:23, the 23rd verse of 6th Romans told us that death only, is the reward of the sin we were born into, as God had declared in Gen. 2:17, although in Christ Jesus the Lord gave us the gift of eternal life.

Having therefore been given this great gift of a way of escape from eternal damnation, it behoves us as children of Light to continue to make this new life fully manifested as we live in holy awe of Him; that brings us trembling into His presence. Bear in mind that, how you started is not as important as how you will end. Comparing the cases of two Sauls in the scriptures, one started as a king and the other a persecutor of the Church.

When Saul was anointed king over Israel, he was humble, obedient and served God wholeheartedly, however, the glory of his kingship got the better of him and he started misbehaving, therefore, the prophet said to him in 1Sam.15:23 & 28

For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, He hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, *that is* better than thou.

Soon enough, he became a mad king and started consulting mediums, he died in a battle, the enemy took his head to the shrine of their god as a trophy, his headless body was displayed with ignominy by his enemies and he was buried without his head. He started well but ended badly.

Conversely, we were introduced to Saul of Tarsus, in Acts 7:58 where he was the commander of those who stoned Stephen a firebrand Christian to death. He was the enemy number one of the Church, until he was arrested by the Holy Spirit in Acts 9. From that moment onward, he never looked back working out his salvation, even in chains and imprisonments. His name was changed along the line, giving him a new lease of life. And today, the name saint Paul reverberates all over the world. We can safely conclude that he finished well based on his testimony in 2Tim.4:7-8

I have fought an excellent fight. I have finished my full course *with all my might* and I've kept my heart full of faith. There's a crown of righteousness waiting in heaven for me, and I know that my Lord will reward me on his day of righteous judgment. And this crown is not only waiting for me, but for all who love and long for his unveiling.

To finish well or poorly in the race of life is in individual's hand, in fact it you who determine where and how you finish, we are stewards and will ultimately give account of our stewardship at the great white throne of judgement. You have the time now to do your due diligence, working hard so you can finish well, remember, it is the end that justifies the means.