

GENESIS: Where Grace Begins

The Death of Jacob – Genesis 49:28-50:14

THE DEATH OF JACOB (Genesis 49:29-33)

All these are the twelve tribes of Israel. This is what their father said to them as he blessed them, blessing each with the blessing suitable to him. ²⁹ Then he commanded them and said to them, "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰ in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. ³¹ There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife. There they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah— ³² the field and the cave that is in it were bought from the Hittites." ³³ When Jacob finished commanding his sons, he drew up his feet into the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.

Genesis 49:29-33 ESV

Jacob emphasized two matters in his final words: _____ he was to be buried, and _____ he was to be buried. Jacob obligates all of his sons to bury him in _____.

EXCURSUS ON DEATH (1 Thess. 4:13-18)

I do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Thess. 4:13-18 ESV

What does God want us to know about death according to this passage?

- 1) It's not _____ . (v.13)
- 2) Because death is not the end, we _____ with _____. (vv. 13-14)
- 3) We will be _____ after death. (vv.14-17)
- 4) We should _____ with these truths about death. (v. 18)

Though we have genuine sorrow when Christian friends and relatives die, we also can say with Paul, "O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?...Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Cor. 15:55-57 ESV

Being mindful that death is coming is actually the path to living _____ with _____ and _____.

PREPARATIONS FOR BURIAL (Genesis 50:1-3)

50 Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him and kissed him. ² And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ Forty days were required for it, for that is how many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

Genesis 50:1-3 ESV

Embalming was _____ to Joseph's family. The usual Hebrew custom was to practice same-day burial without embalming. But in this special case, embalming was necessary to prepare Jacob's body for the journey to Canaan. The embalming of Jacob and later Joseph are the only two embalming cases in the Bible.

The seventy days of mourning may have consisted of forty days of embalming and thirty days of Hebrew mourning. Thirty days was the amount of time that Israel would later mourn for Aaron and Moses. The statement that "the Egyptians wept for him seventy days" indicates that national mourning was ordered by Pharaoh as a sign of respect for Joseph. Seventy days was two days short of the mourning for the death of a Pharaoh!

THE BURIAL OF JACOB (Genesis 50:4-14)

⁴ And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, please speak in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ 'My father made me swear, saying, "I am about to die: in my tomb that I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me." Now therefore, let me please go up and bury my father. Then I will return.' " ⁶ And Pharaoh answered, "Go up, and bury your father, as he made you swear." ⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, ⁸ as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company. ¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and grievous lamentation, and he made a mourning for his father seven days. ¹¹ When the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a grievous mourning by the Egyptians." Therefore the place was named Abel-mizraim; it is beyond the Jordan. ¹² Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them, ¹³ for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite to possess as a burying place. ¹⁴ After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

Genesis 50:4-14 ESV

Joseph's conditional statement, "If now I have found favor," is designed to communicate the _____ and _____ of the request. Joseph implies that his stewardship should give him enough standing in Pharaoh's eyes to have his wish granted.

Pharaoh granted Joseph's request. Permission seemed to hinge on Pharaoh's respect for the _____ Joseph made to his _____.

What followed was a grand burial ceremony made up of three groups. First, the _____ of _____ (v.7) Second, _____ (v. 8) Third, the _____ (v. 9)

Jacob's funeral procession was along the same path of Israel's grand _____. Many of the words used here to portray the procession—"servants of Pharaoh," "flocks," "herds," "chariots," "horsemen," and "great company"—occur again in the story of the exodus.

Hebrew mourning was characterized by loud weeping; tearing of clothing; sackcloth, fasting, and going bareheaded and barefooted. To what extent the Egyptians joined in, we do not know. But we do know that the Canaanite observers were amazed at the Egyptians' mourning and named the place Abel-mizraim which means "_____."

Joseph and his brothers, through this burial, declared their _____ in _____ that the promised land would be theirs. As Joseph and his brothers left Hebron to join the procession back to Egypt, they took their last look at the promised land.