

IS CREMATION CHRISTIAN?

TOPIC: The Biblical way of disposing of a Christian's body

TEXT: *Ecclesiastes 6:3: If a man begat an hundred children, and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that he have no burial; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.*

INTRODUCTION

There is something very precious about the body of a child of God. Our bodies are the temple of the Living God, and they are not our own after we are saved. If we defile this body, we are in trouble with God. The Lord said this:

1 Corinthians 3:16-17:

16 Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

17 If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is Holy, which temple ye are.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20:

19 What? know ye not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

The following are questions that have come to me often for an answer:

Are our bodies ever our own to do with as we please, even in death?

Am I free to follow any form of burial?

Why has burial rather than cremation been so long the mode of putting away the bodies of our loved ones?

What does the Bible have to say on these questions?



According to Biblical standards, it was a GREAT DISHONOR — even a curse

— for a body to have NO BURIAL. This curse was demanded by the Lord only in the case of King Jehoiakim who was a wicked king of Judah. In **Jeremiah** we read:

Jeremiah 22:19a: He shall be BURIED with the BURIAL of an ass.

What is meant by this comment? This statement means that there will be NO BURIAL at all, says the Jewish historian, Josephus. Jehoiakim's body was cast out by the king of Babylon and lay exposed and unburied some distance from the gate of Jerusalem.

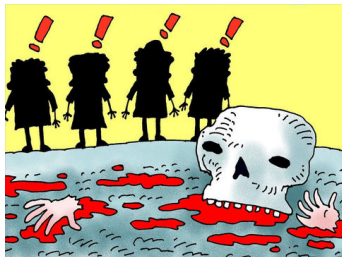
Such a curse was placed by God upon Jezebel, telling the whole land of Israel how God felt toward this person whose sins were deserving of the worst kind of dishonor. This is the prophecy given by God in **2 Kings** against her:

2 Kings 9:10a: And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her.

2 Kings 9:34-35:

³⁴ And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her [Jezebel]: for she is a king's daughter.

³⁵ And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands.



This is the second Bible prophecy of JUDGMENT on another person who forsook the LORD. She died before her time and also did not have a proper burial. All that remained of her body after being thrown out the watchtower window was her skull, her feet, and the palms of her hands. The rest of her body became dog meat. This is the fulfillment of the prophecy given by God to Elijah some 15 years beforehand.

The third NO BURIAL Judgment prophecy which I must bring to your attention is found in **Jeremiah** which reads as follows:

Jeremiah 8:1-2:

¹ At that time, saith the LORD, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves:

² And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of Heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have

sought, and whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth.

From this reference, you can verily see that anything less than burial of the body is definitely out of the Will of God. It will be more evident when we now come to the other form of Judgment Prophecy which deals with the burning of the transgressors.

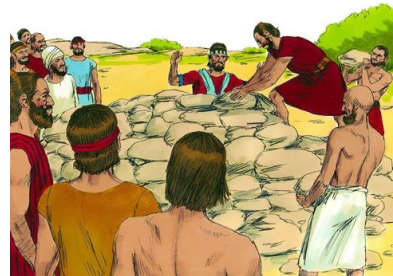
CREMATION IS A FORM OF CONDEMNATION

Joshua 7:24-26:

24 And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.

25 And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of His anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.



2 Kings 23:19-20:

19 And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel.

20 And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

Amos 6:7-10a:

7 Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.

8 The Lord GOD hath sworn by Himself, saith the LORD the God of Hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his palaces: therefore will I deliver up the city with all that is therein.

9 And it shall come to pass, if there remain ten men in one house, that they shall die.

10a And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to

bring out the bones out of the house,

CREMATION IS A FORM OF JUDGMENT

Genesis 19:23-25:

23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of Heaven;

25 And He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.



Leviticus 10:1-2:

1 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which He commanded them not.

2 And there went out FIRE FROM THE LORD, AND DEVOURED THEM, and they died before the LORD.

Here it is brought out very plainly that God cremated the inhabitants of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for their nine sins of wickedness, the worst of which was homosexual vices. In the case of the two backslidden priests in the tabernacle who rebelled against the Commandments of the Lord, they were also cremated as a form of JUDGMENT. When King Saul departed from following the Lord, his doom and JUDGMENT was prophesied by Samuel.



1 Samuel 15:22-23:

22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 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.

Saul was also cremated as recorded in **1 Samuel:**

1 Samuel 31:12: All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.

These scriptures do not place any approval on the matter of cremation from a Christian standpoint. In each of the following cases which we shall bring to your attention for consideration, you will see once and again that in every case it is a dishonor to have the bodies of our loved ones to be so disposed of through cremation.

CREMATION IS A DISHONOR TO THE BODY OF A SAINT OF GOD

This fact will be brought out when we hear the words of the Prophet Amos.

Amos 2:1-2:

1 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will NOT turn away the punishment thereof; BECAUSE HE BURNETH THE BONES OF THE KING OF EDOM INTO LIME:

2 But I will send a fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the palaces of Kirioth; and Moab shall die with tumult, with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

The Almighty God, Whose eyes are in every place, beholds all of our conduct. There is nothing that escapes His all-seeing eyes. He saw the king of Moab taking the body of the king of Edom and cremate it. It provoked the Lord to anger and God said, *“I will send a fire upon Moab that shall devour the palaces thereof”*. To put into modern English, God is telling the world, *‘You burned one man into lime with fire, and I will use fire also and burn your place or your palaces down to the ground.’*



Someone may give a rebuttal in the defense of cremation by saying, *‘God looks at the motive more than the act itself.’* The motive of the king of Moab is not given here, but the ACT is. God looks at both the act and the motive. Judging from all other Bible references regarding the use of cremation, which reference must have a direct bearing on this passage of Scripture? We will soon be made to realize God is dead set against it.

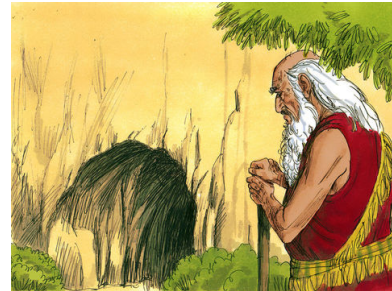
After preaching the Word of God for these many years, I am now much better acquainted with people’s motives. Having questioned many people down throughout the years, we have learned that some have used cremation as an attempt to escape the resurrection of the dead and of the GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT. Be their efforts so cunning and crafty, I want you to know that God can and will raise not only from the dead those who have been cremated, but also those who have been eaten up of lions, or whales, or sharks, or blown to bits by war bombs.

I am also aware of the fact that some have requested their deceased relatives’

bodies to be cremated so they can cover up some evidence as to the true cause of their death — to name one thing such as poisoning.

Whether we turn to the Old Testament or the New, we find out that God goes to great lengths to describe the proper way to dispose of our dead. We can read in Genesis concerning the decease of Abraham as prophesied by the Lord Himself in this language:

Genesis 15:15: And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.



The Lord devotes one whole chapter to the subject of Burial. It concerns the death and internment of Sarah. She was to be buried and not cremated.

Genesis 23:19: And after this, Abraham BURIED Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan.

BURIAL IS THE SCRIPTURAL WAY TO DISPOSE OF OUR DEAD LOVED ONES BODIES

Jeremiah 16:4, 6

4 They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they BE BURIED; but they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of Heaven, and for the beasts of the earth.

6 Both the great and the small shall die in this land: THEY SHALL NOT BE BURIED, neither shall men lament for them, nor cut themselves, nor make themselves bald for them. [For a further reference see 25:33]

These Scriptures tell me that we must treat our loved ones in death with the dignity and honor of Christian burial. Cremation is a dishonor to the deceased. Failure to bury our relatives by letting them bleach in the sun is considered a disgrace and a punishment.

Cremation is a dishonor to the deceased.

I would like to call to your attention the manner in which our Lord Jesus was laid to rest. Jesus was buried by Joseph of Arimathaea in his newly hewn out tomb in a large rock near the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus prophecies of His burial in Matthew:

Matthew 26:12-13:

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on My body, she did it for

My burial.

13 Verily, I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Much space is devoted in our Bible to the death and burial of other persons with whom we are all familiar, such as Lazarus and the Martyr Stephen who were buried as recorded in **John** chapter eleven and **Acts** chapter eight. The following is a list of Scriptures in which you will find that BURIAL OF THE DECEASED WAS COMMANDED BY ALMIGHTY GOD.

Genesis 25:9-10:

9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre;

10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth; there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

Genesis 35:8, 19, 29:

8 But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak; and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth.

19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

29 And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Genesis 47:29-30:

29 And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt:

30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying place, and he said, I will do as thou hast said.

Genesis 50:5-7:

5 My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have dug for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me not go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again.

6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.

7 And Joseph went to bury his father: and with him went up all the



servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt.

Numbers 11:34: And he called the name of the place Kibroth-hattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted.

Numbers 20:1: Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

Deuteronomy 10:6: And the children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera: there Aaron died, and there he was buried: and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.

Deuteronomy 21:23: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; [for he that is hanged is accursed of God] that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Joshua 24:30-33

³⁰ And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timhath-serah, which is in the Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash.

³¹ And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD that He had done for Israel.

³² And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamon the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

³³ And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in Mount Ephraim.

Judges 2:9: And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the Mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

Judges 8:32: And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Judges 10:2-5:

² And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

3 And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.

4 And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havothjair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead.

5 And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.

Judges 12:7, 10, 12, 15:

7 And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

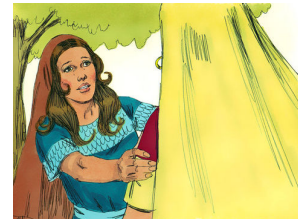
10 Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Bethlehem.

12 And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in the country of Zebulun.

15 And Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Aijalonin Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the mount of the Analekites.

Judges 16:31: Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burying place of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

Ruth 1:17: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.



1 Samuel 25:1: And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

1 Samuel 28:3: Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.

1 Samuel 31:13: And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

2 Samuel 2:32: And they took up Asahel, and buried him in the sepulchre of his father, which was in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men went all night, and they came to Hebron at break of day.

2 Samuel 3:32: And they buried Abner in Hebron: and the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept.

2 Samuel 17:23: And when Ahithopel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.

2 Samuel 19:37: Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and my mother. But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee.

2 Samuel 21:14: And the bones of Saul and Jonathan his son buried they in the country of Benjamin in Zelah, in the sepulcher of Kish his father: and they performed all that the king commanded. And after that God was intreated for the land.

2 Kings 8:24: And Joram slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 10:35: And Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 12:21: For Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 13:9: And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 13:13: And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne; and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

2 Kings 13:20: And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.

2 Kings 15:7: So Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 15:38: And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 16:20: And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 21:18: And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 21:26: And he was buried in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

2 Kings 23:30: And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

2 Chronicles 9:31: And Solomon slept with his fathers, and he was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

2 Chronicles 12:16: And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David: And Abijah his son reigned in his stead.

2 Chronicles 14:1: So Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years.

2 Chronicles 16:14: And they buried him in his own sepulchers, which he had made for himself in the city of David, and laid him in the bed which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices prepared by the apothecaries' art: and they made a very great burning for him.

2 Chronicles 21:1: Now Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David. And Jehoram his son reigned in his stead.

2 Chronicles 21:20: Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years, and departed without being desired. Howbeit they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.



2 Chronicles 22:9: And he sought Ahaziah: and they caught him, [for he was hid in Samaria], and brought him to Jehu: and when they had slain him, they buried him: Because, said they, he is the son of Jehosaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart. So the house of Ahaziah had no power to keep still the kingdom.

2 Chronicles 24:16: And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house.

2 Chronicles 24:25: *And when they were departed from him, [for they left him in great diseases], his own servants conspired against him for the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and slew him on his bed, and he died: and they buried him in the city of David, but they buried him not in the sepulchre of the kings.*

2 Chronicles 25:28: *And they brought him upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.*

2 Chronicles 26:23: *So Uzziah slept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the field of the burial which belonged to the kings; for they said, He is a leper: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.*

2 Chronicles 27:9: *And Jotham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.*

2 Chronicles 32:33: *And Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and was buried in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did him honour at his death. And Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.*

2 Chronicles 35:24: *His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.*

Job 27:15: *Those that remain of him shall be buried in death: and his widows shall not weep.*

Ecclesiastes 8:10: *And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity.*

Jeremiah 20:6: *And thou Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity: and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lies.*

Ezekiel 39:11-15:

¹¹ *And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog.*

¹² *And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land.*

13 Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the LORD God.

14 And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search.

15 And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog.

Hosea 9:6: For, lo, they are gone because of destruction: Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them: the pleasant places for their silver, nettles shall possess them: thorns shall be in their tabernacles.

Matthew 8:21-22:

21 And another of His disciples said unto Him, "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my Father."

22 But Jesus said unto him, "Follow Me; and let the dead bury their dead."

Matthew 14:12: And His disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

Matthew 27:7-10:

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken of Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, Whom they of the children of Israel did value;

10 And gave them [30 pieces of silver] for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed Me.

Mark 14:8: She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint My body to the burying.



Luke 16:22: And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

John 19:40: Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

Acts 5:6-10:

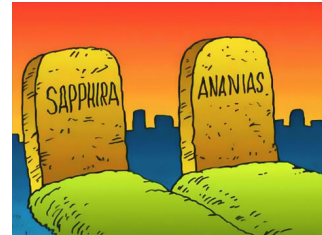
6 And the young man arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

9 Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry you out.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.



1 Corinthians 15:4: And that He was buried, and that He arose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

To sum up all these references, did you ever notice when Joseph died in Egypt, he did not wish for his remains to be left there? Before his death, he made all his relatives take an oath, promising to carry his body back to the land of Israel. His family embalmed him and put him in a coffin. Then, nearly 400 years later, we read:

Exodus 13:19: Moses took up the bones of Joseph . . .

What makes the difference where bones are laid away, or how, you may ask? It does make a lot of discussion, and it provides a lot of room for wonder when we see the children of Israel carrying the body of Joseph for 40 years around and around throughout the wilderness in that bulky coffin. It would have been so much easier to have carried an urn in their baggage with Joseph's ashes in it. His final internment was witnessed by Joshua with considerable space again devoted to the event.

Joshua 24:32-33:

32 And the BONES of JOSEPH, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, BURIED THEY IN SHECHEM in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

33 And Eleazar the son of Aaron died...and they BURIED him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas, his son which was given him in Mount Ephram.

Nearly as many verses are devoted to the death of Jacob and his burial in the

fiftieth chapter of Genesis as were to Sarah in the 23rd chapter of the same Book. Joseph had requested a leave of absence from his very important post as vice president of Egypt. He was next to Pharaoh in power and command in the courts of that land. Yet, he asks leave to carry his father's body all the way back to the Holy Land for its burial. It was in a cave of the field of Machpelah.

GOD ALMIGHTY TURNS TO GRAVE DIGGER

Would you imagine the Lord of Heaven giving special attention to one of His most beloved servants and prophets concerning his burial? Moses was God's most intimate friend whom He knew face to face.

Deuteronomy 34:10: And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face.

The whole scene is recorded in the 34th chapter of **Deuteronomy**, and the special treatment God gave to His great and unique prophet stirred up the wrath and jealousy of the devil. God has not heard the end of it from satan. The devil fussed, and fumed, and wrangled over this funeral service. Even Michael was drawn into the debate as it is recorded in **Jude 9**.

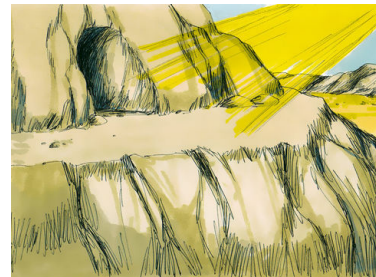
Jude 9: Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said: The Lord rebuke thee.

I would like to ask you this question: Why did God BURY MOSES? God could have disposed of Moses' body in Mt. Pisgah in some other way. Yet, God chose to BURY HIS PROPHET, this faithful old saint, because this is the way God wants things to be done. This is the honorable way of taking care of the remains of saints of the Lord. This is the record of the event:

Deuteronomy 34:5-6:

⁵ So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the Word of the LORD.

⁶ And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor.



IT IS THE EMPHATIC WAY THAT THE BIBLE SETS FORTH THE FACT OF HIS CONCERN FOR THE PROPER WAY OF DISPOSING OF THE REMAINS OF OUR LOVED ONES IN DEATH.

I would like for you to view again the text of this study which is found in:

Ecclesiastes 6:3: If a man begat an hundred children, and lived

many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also that HE HAVE NO BURIAL; I say, that an untimely birth is better than he.

It cannot be more plain, clear, and simple as to how we are to treat our people in death. For emphasis, and to impress on us more strongly the MUST in our BURIAL OF OUR DECEASED, God uses the negative or opposite approach to bear this out. It is recorded in:

Isaiah 14:19-20:

19 But thou are CAST OUT OF THY GRAVE like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcass trodden under feet.

20 Thou shalt not be joined with them IN BURIAL, BECAUSE thou hast destroyed thy land, and slain thy people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.

Here we have recorded the proper way of burial of the deceased, yet God commanded the bodies to be exhumed — brought out of their graves — because they did not deserve a decent saintly burial. This punishment came upon those who were already resting in the cemetery.

WHAT IS THE LORD TRYING TO TELL US THAT IS SO IMPORTANT IN BURIAL?

In the Book of Romans, we find the key to the importance of burial. It concerns one word in particular — “PLANTED”.

Romans 6:4-5:

4 Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 If we have been PLANTED together in the likeness of His [Christ's] death, we shall be also in the likeness of His Resurrection.

. . . burial symbolizes the planting of a seed.

Right here the Word of God is telling us that: burial symbolizes the planting of a seed. As in the springtime, we see the new resurrection of all the plant life, so will it be in the resurrection of the dead. We are leaving a testimony to the world that we are believers in The Resurrection, else we would not plant our loved ones in the earth. Our death-stricken loved ones are going to come out of there when Jesus comes again. For, in the resurrection morning . . .

John 5:28-29:

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,

29 And come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.

God expects all of His children to bear witness to the FACT of the resurrection by leaving unimpeachable testimony behind that we are expecting to come out of the ground. For anyone who passes by our graveside or that of our loved ones and beholds the grave marker, it will be a continual reminder to them that we have planted that body there expecting it to come forth in the same manner as a farmer plants his fields. We will see our loved ones come forth with an incorruptible body. This resurrection truth is done away with and made void if the body is not planted. This is the reason why God insists on our burying the body instead of cremating it.

The FACT OF THE RESURRECTION, however, cannot be destroyed by any attempt of the unsaved to prevent their bodies from the earth to the Judgment. Many of the ungodly have tried to make void the fact of the future life, but all their efforts are in vain. **DEATH DOES NOT END IT ALL. We all have a spirit which can never die, and therefore we are going to live as long as God lives, and He can never die. The Scriptural proof of this is found in:**

Death does not end it all.

Matthew 27:52-53:

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the SAINTS which slept arose,

53 And came out of the graves after His [Christ's] Resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many.

Revelation 20:11-15:

11 And I saw a Great White Throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the Heaven fled away; And there was found no place for them.



12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the Books were opened: and Another Book was opened, which is the BOOK OF LIFE: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and the death and Hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the Second Death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the BOOK OF LIFE was cast into the Lake of Fire.

1 Corinthians 15:50-52:

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51 Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep [die] but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the Last Trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

CONCLUSION: A dear minister friend of mine was being pressured into buying some cemetery lots by an aggressive salesman. The preacher was not broke, but he was badly stretched as far as finances were concerned. So he told the gentleman that he would have to take care of this when the time came. So the man asked my preacher brother if he had Burial Insurance, and much like ministers like to answer in a comical way, he said, "No, but I have Blessed Insurance and that is much better." To which the salesman responded, "*That won't put you six feet under.*" To this, the preacher responded, "*No, but it will surely take me up and out of there.*"

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