

I. Introduction and review: We need to face the reality of death.

II. Jacob dies in faith. 47:28-31 49:29-50:13

A. Twice Jacob gives explicit instructions for his burial. 47:29-31 49:29-32

1. Why does he make Joseph swear to fulfill his wishes? 47:29,31 24:2-4 31:53 50:5-6
2. Later, Joseph makes his kinsmen swear the same thing. 50:24-25
3. Why does Jacob insist that he be buried in Canaan? 47:29-30 49:29
4. Jacob expresses his faith in God's covenant promise to bring his family back to Canaan. 48:21 Heb. 11:8-10,13-16,39-40 13:14
5. He joins the other patriarchs in the cave purchased by Abraham for Sarah's burial. 49:29-31 50:12-13 23:1-20 Acts 7:16

B. Jacob dies well. 47:31b 49:33 46:3 37:35 42:38 Ps. 116:15 Heb. 11:21b

C. Jacob is mourned and buried in royal style. 50:1-14

1. Joseph grieves the loss of his father. v. 1
2. Jacob's body is embalmed. v. 2-3a
3. The nation of Egypt mourns for him. v. 3b
4. Why does Joseph need permission from Pharaoh to bury Jacob in Canaan? v. 4-6
5. There is a great funeral procession and further mourning. v. 7-11 I Sam. 31:13
6. Joseph fulfills his promise to bury Jacob with his fathers. v. 12-13
7. Life resumes for those who remain alive. v. 14
8. Jacob's burial is a rehearsal for the Exodus. Ex. 10:29,27 14:9,17-18 15:4-5

D. What happened to Jacob after death? 49:33,29 47:30

1. His soul entered God's presence along with his believing ancestors. Lu. 20:37-38
2. His body sleeps awaiting the resurrection. Job 19:25-26 Isa. 26:19

E. Joseph also dies well. 50:22-26

1. Joseph lives a full and blessed life. v. 22-23 Ps. 128:6 Pr. 17:6
2. He too expresses faith in God's promise to bring them back to Canaan. v. 24 15:14-16 46:4 48:21 He. 11:22 Ex. 3:16-17
3. He also makes his kinsmen swear to bury him in Canaan. v. 24-25
4. Joseph's bones are not returned to Canaan until the Exodus. Ex. 13:19 Josh 24:32

III. Application: Are you ready to face the reality of death?

A. You and those you love will die. Heb. 9:27 Ps. 90:12 Rom. 5:12

B. How should we treat the bodies of our loved ones who pass away?

1. What one believes about the future of the body influences how he treats the dead.
2. Why have Christians (and Jews) traditionally buried their dead?
 - a. Dead bodies are treated with dignity and respect. Ecc. 6:3
 - b. Mistreatment of a dead body is seen as a curse upon that person. Dt. 21:22-23 Josh. 8:29 10:26-27 Isa. 14:20 Ps. 79:3 Jer. 22:19 8:2 16:4-6 II Ki. 9:10,35-36
 - c. The patriarchs expressed faith in the resurrection and honored their loved ones by burying them. Ge. 15:15 23:4,19 25:9-10 27:30 35:8,29 49:31 50:5 II Ki. 13:21 Nu. 20:1 Dt. 10:6 34:6 Josh 24:30-33 Judg. 8:32 Acts 2:29 8:2
 - d. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea honored our Lord Jesus by caring for and burying His body. John 19:38-42 Rom. 6:4 I Co. 15:3-4 Col. 2

3. Is cremation wrong? I Sam. 31:12
 4. We need to distinguish between cultural issues and biblical principles.
 5. We should seek to honor the wishes of our loved ones in their burials. Mt. 7:12
 6. We can help our loved ones by being prepared for the practical aspects of our death. 50:5 Mt. 7:12
 7. It is possible to go too far in honoring the dead. Luke 9:59-60 I Thess. 4:13
- C. Our funerals, like Jacob's, should be a testimony to our faith in God's promises. Preach the gospel which comforts God's people and confronts the lost.
- D. Is it wrong for Christians to grieve? 50:1,3,10 I Th. 4:13,16 Jo. 11:35-36 Ecc. 3:4
- E. When the time to mourn ends, life must go on. 50:14 I Th. 4:13
- F. God's kingdom promises enable us to face death with hope and victory. Ps. 116:15
1. What happens when a believer dies?
 - a. Your soul will immediately be with Lord. Lu. 23:43 Ph. 1:21,23 II Co. 5:8
 - b. Your body will await the resurrection of the dead. II Cor. 4:14 I Th. 4:13-18 I Cor. 15:42-44,51-54 Dan. 12:2 John 5:28-29
 2. Eschatology (biblical prophecy concerning the last things) is very practical! Ps. 16:11 17:15 23:4,6 49:15 73:24 Pr. 14:32 Ro. 8:35-39 II Co. 4:16-18 I Jo. 3:2-3
 3. We look forward to the day in which His kingdom will be established when death and mourning will cease. Rev. 21:4 22:1-4,20 Jo. 14:18 Mt. 28:20

IV. How does our passage point to Christ?

- A. He, like Joseph, wept over the ravages of death. John 11:35-36
- B. God has visited His people, in the coming of Christ, in fulfillment of His promises. 50:24 Luke 1:68
- C. He has conquered death! Isa. 53:10,12
 1. He bore the sting of death for us on the cross. I Cor. 15:55-57
 2. He who died and was buried has been raised. I Co. 15:3-4 Acts 13:29-30, 2:23-24
 3. We are spiritually raised with Christ. Rom. 6: 4-11 II Cor. 5:17 Co. 3:1.
 4. In the last day, we will be glorified like Christ. Phil. 3:20-21

V. Concluding applications. Num. 23:10 Rev. 14:13

- A. The book of Genesis, which begins with life in the garden, ends with two coffins.
- B. Are you ready to face death? John 14:6 11:25-26 I Cor. 15:55f Re. 20:14-15 22:20

Discussion questions

1. Why is Jacob insistent about being buried in Canaan?
2. When and how does Jacob enjoy the fulfillment of God's promises?
3. What does the Old Testament teach about the afterlife of believers?
4. What is the significance of Joseph's coffin remaining with his brethren in Egypt?
5. Give examples of how religion or worldview affects how one treats the dead.
6. Why have Christians and Jews traditionally buried their deceased loved ones?
7. Is cremation a valid option for a Christian?
8. How can our funerals be a testimony to our faith?
9. How much should Christians grieve?
10. How should one apply eschatology (bible prophecy) to his daily life?