

imply that the Egyptians had already begun to oppress Israel in some degree.

- 3) He reminded his brethren that God would keep his promise to visit them and bring them out of the land of Egypt and back to Canaan (cf., Ge 15:13-14; 28:13; 35:12; 46:3-4; 48:21; Heb 11:22).
- 4) Joseph had faith in God's promises. He strongly believed that God would one day take all of Israel's family back to Canaan and give them that land.
- 5) For a Christian, the future is bright. When a Christian loved one dies, he goes immediately to be with the Lord. (2Cor 5:8) "*We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*" God has also promised to come and take all true Christians out of this world before the Tribulation judgment. (1Thess 4:16-17) "*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*"

Maybe today my Lord will come for me  
Maybe today my Savior I shall see  
Maybe today from sin I shall be free  
Jesus will come and I will go home  
It may be today Frank Garlock

**Conclusion:** For a Christian, death is simply going home to live with the Lord forever. However, saying "Good-bye" to that loved one is never easy. I truly believe that if we will keep the four reminders we have noted this evening in our hearts, they will help to ease the hurt. (Review).

If you are not positive that you have trusted Christ alone to save your soul from judgment, sincerely doing so is the most important way **you** can prepare for death, and the best way **to comfort** your living loved ones after you die.

**Song:** Maybe Today

# The Death of a Loved One

27 February 2022 PM – Genesis 50 – Gen2022 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** Someone has said, "*Life is just the dash between two dates on a tomb stone.*" How true! God alone controls the length of your dash. Jacob's dash was 147 years long. Joseph's dash was 110 years.

When death takes a loved one, no matter how long his or her dash was, it is always painful to say good-bye to him or her.

**Transition:** This evening as we look at the funerals of Jacob and Joseph, I want to point out four reminders that ought to help us when we lose a loved one.

*First reminder*

## 1. Grieving is natural and good (v.1-3)

### a. Joseph Cried

- 1) Grief is normal when a loved one dies.
- 2) Grieving is a good but temporary event that prepares those left behind for the future without the loved one.
- 3) When a loved one passes away, do not be ashamed to grieve. Men especially struggle with this. Somehow, we think that it is not manly to cry. That simply is not true. Many great men in the Bible cried including the greatest of men – Jesus Christ (Jn 11:35). God designed our bodies to cry to release our emotions.
- 4) The Psalmist wrote, (Ps 30:5) "*... weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*"
- 5) We must grieve patiently. "*Broken bones in time get stronger, broken hearts take even longer.*"

### b. Joseph had his father embalmed

- 1) This long process took about 40 days.
- 2) The family and many of the Egyptians mourned for Jacob 70 days. That was an unusually long time to grieve.
- 3) Grieving is more than just crying.
  - a) It is a time to reflect on the loved one's life.
  - b) Grieving is a time to thank God for allowing you to know the loved one.

- c) It is a good time to spend extra time alone with God.
- d) As you grieve, share your sorrow with close friends.
- 4) Remember that sorrow is only temporary. God will give you peace if you will let Him. Accept death as God's will.
- 5) "Life is precious and brief, a gift from God not to be wasted." Warren Wiersbe, "Ministering to the Mourning"

*Second reminder*

## 2. Funerals ought to be settling (v.4-14)

### a. Joseph sought permission to bury his father.

- 1) Burial helps to bring the loss to a settling close. "A funeral is an important step toward helping the mourners accept the reality and finality of the death and the responsibility of dealing with their grief in a mature way." Wiersbe
- 2) Jacob had made Joseph promise to bury him in Canaan.
- 3) Joseph sought and received Pharaoh's permission (v.4-6).

### b. Joseph took Jacob's body to Canaan

- 1) Servants and elders in Egypt all went along (v.7). All of Jacob's family except the children went (v.8). Pharaoh even sent chariots and horsemen along (v.9).
- 2) When they got near to their destination, they stopped and mourned another seven days (v.10-11). Cultural traditions vary, but the funeral brings them to a close.
- 3) They buried Jacob in the cave of the field of Machpelah (v.12-13), and then they all returned to Egypt (v.14).
- 4) Your presence will be more comforting to your grieving friends than your words. (Rom 12:15) "*Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*"

❖ *People sometimes ask me if it matters whether a body is buried or cremated. I do not find a clear answer in the Bible, but what I do find is that burial in a cave or grave was the norm. In addition, baptism is a picture of death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism does not picture cremation. On the other hand, the burning of a body or human bones was considered a curse (e.g., Josh 7:24-26; 1Ki 13:1-2; 2Ch 34:3-5; 2Ki 23:15-20). Only under the rarest circumstances did God's people burn the body of a loved one. When they did, they buried the bones (1Sa 31:8-13). Though the Bible may not condemn cremation,*

*Biblical practice strongly favours burial. At the resurrection, God will find every element of every body whether it turned to dust, or ashes, or was eaten by a creature. God is all-knowing.*

*Third reminder*

## 3. Returning life to normal is needful (v.15-21)

### a. Once you have grieved, get back into a normal schedule as soon as possible.

- 1) It is good to return to a normal routine as soon as possible.
- 2) We ought to do what we can to support and encourage the family. Joseph did this.

### b. Joseph comforted his family (v.21)

- 1) Having returned home, Joseph's brothers fearfully begged his forgiveness (v.15-17). This saddened Joseph.
- 2) They humbly submitted to Joseph (v.18), and Joseph told his brothers not to fear (v.19). He assured them that God knew best when he allowed Joseph to go to Egypt (v.20).
- 3) *Joseph's forgiveness* is a wonderful picture of true biblical forgiveness. He forgave his brothers at least 17 years earlier. He was deeply hurt to think that they still doubted his forgiveness. When we forgive, we ought to do as Joseph and never bring up the forgiven fault again.
- 4) When God forgives us, we must believe and not doubt that he has truly forgiven us. We should not bring it up again. If Satan makes us doubt God, we must claim God's promise. (1 John 1:9) "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"

*Fourth reminder*

## 4. Focussing on the future is consoling (v.22-26)

### a. Dwelling on the present loss is painful

- 1) The death of a loved one hurts us emotionally.
- 2) The permanence of death is also painful.

### b. Dwelling on the future can be calming.

- 1) Joseph prepared for his own death.
- 2) Joseph made his family promise to carry his coffin to Canaan when God visited them. *The wording here may*