



The Book of Genesis 05/30/2014

Lesson Number 81



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot m(1992); ALT=Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED=Amplified Bible (1965), ABP=Apostolic Bible Polygot with Greek Interlinear (2003); ASV=American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), BRENT=Brenton's English Septuagint; CEB=Common English Bible (2011); CEV=Contemporary English Version (1995); DRA=Douay-Rheims (1899), EMTV=English Majority Text (2002); ERV=English Revised Version (1885), ETRV=Easy to Read (1999), ESV=English Stand Version (2001), GENEVA=Geneva Bible (1599), GNB=Good News (1966), GSNT=Goodspeed (1923), GWN=God's Word (1995), IE=International English (1973), ISV=International Standard Version (1967), JPS=Jewish Publication Society (1917), JUB=Jubilee Bible (2003); KJV=King James Version (1611), LITV=Literary Translation of the Bible (1976), LIVING=Living Bible (1971), MESSAGE=The Message (1993), MKJV=Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY=Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD=Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB=New American Bible (2002), NASB=New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU=New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB=New International Bible, NIV=New International Version (1984), NJB=New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV=New King James Version (1979), NLT=New Living Translation (1996), NRSV=New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS=J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT=Bishop's New Testament (1959), RSV=Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK=JPS Tanakh (1985), WEB=Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH=Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS=William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE=Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE=Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT=Young's Literal Translation (1862)

GREEK LEXICON LEGEND

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = Barclay-Newman, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF THE BEGINNING OF ALL THINGS: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, MANKIND, SIN, THE FIRST CHOSEN AND BLESSED NATION, THE FIRST CURSE, THE FIRST PROMISE, AND THE FIRST FAITH.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

JOSEPH BURIES JACOB

Gen 50:1 "And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. ² And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days. ⁴ And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me 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 up 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, ⁸ And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company. ¹⁰ And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. ¹¹ And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan. ¹² And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: ¹³ For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre. ¹⁴ And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

..... Genesis 50:1-14

INTRODUCTION

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

As soon as Jacob gave up the ghost, Joseph fell on his face, wept,

and kissed him. He had lived his first seventeen years with him, and his last seventeen years as well. He

commanded the physicians to embalm Jacob, and they did. After forty days, the Egyptians mourned for Jacob 70

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days. After that, Joseph requested that Pharaoh allow him to bury Jacob in Canaan, as he had requested, and permission was granted. Joseph journeyed to Canaan with an impressive entourage. All the house of Jacob went up with him, with only the little ones, and their flocks and herds excepted. Chariots, horsemen, and a *“very great company”* also went with him. After arriving at the threshing floor, they mourned for seven more days. The Canaanites *“saw the mourning,”* and were impressed. Because of this, they gave the place a special name: *“Abelmizraim.”* Jacob’s sons buried him where he had requested, and then the host returned to Canaan.

JACOB’S LIFE

1. Struggle in the womb with Esau.
2. Birth sequence, #2.
3. Loved by mother.
4. Father preferred Esau.
5. Know nothing of first 25 years.
6. Incident of purchasing birthright.
7. Incident of pretending to be Esau.
8. Flight into Padanaram.
9. **Has a vision of God, and a ladder.**
10. **God confirms His covenant with Jacob.**
11. Laban gives him Leah instead Rachel.
12. Has to work fourteen years for Rachel.

13. Endures multiple hardships.
14. Laban changes wages ten times.
15. Tells Laban he has no flocks of his own.
16. Laban agrees on the means of Jacob obtaining flocks.
17. His herds miraculous increased.
18. **An angel calls his attention to growth of flocks.**
19. **The Lord tells him to return to Canaan.**
20. **The Lord tells him again to return to the land of his kindred.**
21. Consults with his wives, and they agree it is the Lord.
22. Takes his household and flocks and leaves.
23. **Confronts some angels on the way.**
24. Confronts an angry Laban who pursues him.
25. Laban agrees to let him leave.
26. Prepares to confront Esau.
27. **Wrestles with an angel.**
28. **Name is changed from Jacob to Israel.**
29. Has a pleasant meeting with Esau.
30. Purchases a plot of ground in Canaan.
31. His daughter Dinah is molested.
32. His sons Levi and Simeon retaliate for Dinah’s abuse.
33. **The Lord tells Jacob to return to Bethel.**
34. **God appears again to Jacob, blessed him, and confirms his name had been changed to Israel.**
35. In their journey home, Rachel died near Bethlehem.
36. His firstborn son, Reuben lays with his concubine.
37. Joseph, Rachel’s firstborn, becomes his favorite son.
38. Hears Joseph’s dreams about the family bowing to him.
39. Grieves over the loss of Joseph, whom he supposed was slain.
40. Endures a famine in Canaan.
41. Sends to Egypt for grain, not knowing Joseph is the ruler.
42. Is grieved by the demand that Simeon go with brothers back to Egypt.
43. Hears that Joseph is alive, and has told him

46. Meets pharaoh and blesses him.
47. Dwells in Egypt, in Goshen, for 13 years.
48. When about to die, blesses his sons.
49. Commands his burial to be in Canaan.
50. Gives a double portion to Joseph.
51. Dies.

Over a period of one hundred and forty-seven years, God, or some of His angels, confronted Joseph eleven times. Jacob lived for one hundred and forty seven years, which is, reckoning on a 30 day lunar month basis, was 52,920 days. Eleven appearances during that period of time, calculating on an average basis, is one appearance every 4,810th days – every 687th week, or every 160th month.

Tell, how does that compare with life in Christ Jesus, under the New Covenant? Ponder what is available.

- We have been called *“into the fellowship”* of God’s Son (1 Cor 1:9).
- We have been called into *“the communion of the Holy Spirit”* (2 Cor 13:4).
- We have continual access to the throne of all grace (Heb 4:15-16).
- We can be *“led by the Spirit”* continually (Rom 8:13-14).
- We are being taught by Jesus (Eph 4:20-21)
- Jesus is giving us an understanding (1 John 5:20).
- We can *“walk in the light”* (1 John 1:7).

Yet, in spite of these very real and attainable benefits, Jacob was more consistent in his life than many professing *“Christians.”* After shaping

As a general rule, those who profess identity with the God Jacob worshiped are living for a different reason than those patriarchs of old.

- to come there.
44. **God tells Jacob to go to Egypt, and He will be with him, and that he would see Joseph.**
45. Meets Joseph and is filled with joy.

his life around the few promises that he received from God, in his dying moments those promises remained clear in his mind, and he charged his sons while recollecting them.

Our generation is also responsible for keeping the promises of God before the saints – as the patriarchs of old kept them alive before the Jews. These were not the things they shared with the heathen, but with those who were among God's people.

Jacob had the same faith possessed by his father Isaac, and his grandfather Abraham. However, in the years that stand between the

contemporary church and him, something very tragic has taken place. **As a general rule, those who profess identity with the God Jacob worshiped**

are living for a different reason than those patriarchs of old. Even though they have *"better promises"* (Heb 8:6), they are not compelled by them as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were by the promises given to them. Whereas, in the Divine economy, those patriarchs were behind us in Divine benefits and direction, now we have a situation where men profess that they know God, but in their works they deny Him (Tit 1:16). May the record of these patriarchs stir within us an unquenchable desire to live by faith, shaping our lives around the *"better promises"* we have received, and doing so consistently.

JOSEPH'S REACTION TO JACOB'S DEATH

Gen 50:1 *"And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him."* Other versions read, *"Joseph threw himself upon his father and wept over him and kissed him,"* ^{NIV} *"Joseph fell across his father's body, wept over him, and kissed him,"* ^{CEB} *"leaning over his father's face, wept and kissed him,"* ^{CSB} and *"hugged his father's face. He wept over him and kissed him."* ^{NET}

Just as the Lord had told Jacob, Joseph no doubt closed his eyes (Gen 46:4 ^{NIV}). Now, however, as the last glance is cast toward Jacob, a flood of blessed memories no doubt flooded the mind of Joseph, together with thanksgiving for the last seventeen years being spent with his beloved father.

But more is involved here than natural affection. The last of the three *"fathers"* had now been carried away. **The promises delivered to them were not affirmed to anyone else.** God had reminded Isaac of what was promised to Abraham (Gen 26:3-4), and Isaac had reminded Jacob of the same (Gen 48:3-4). Jacob had also told his sons of the Divine commitment to multiply them, give them their own country, and bless the world through the Seed of Abraham. **Now, it was up to his sons to**

remember these promises, and keep them alive. Some time after this, when Joseph is preparing to die, he reminded the children of Israel *"God will surely visit you"* (Gen 50:25).

What God promised Abraham was not abandoned, but kept alive by himself and his children.

- ➡ Abraham's seed would be *"a stranger in a land that is not theirs"* (Gen 15:13a).
- ➡ They would be afflicted four hundred years (Gen 15:13b).
- ➡ God would judge that nation, and Israel would come out with great substance (Gen 15:14).
- ➡ They would come out in the fourth generation, when the iniquity of the Amorites was full (Gen 15:16).
- ➡ All families of the earth would be blessed in Abraham (Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14).

Now, the last man to hear these promises from Almighty God has left the earth, and a kind of void is created by his absence. The faithful will pass this word along, but the fact that it will be done without Jacob is, at this time,

a great burden. And so Joseph *"wept over him and kissed him."*

A WORD TO OUR GENERATION

Our generation is also responsible for keeping the promises of God before the saints – as the patriarchs of old kept them alive before the Jews. These were not the things they shared with the heathen, but with those who were among God's people. Similarly, there are matters we must keep before people in general, and the saints in particular.

- ➡ Universal death is the result of sin (Rom 5:12).
- ➡ God is our Helper (Psa 46:1; Heb 4:16).
- ➡ Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God (Rom 8:35-39).
- ➡ Jesus is interceding for us (Heb 7:25).
- ➡ Every temptation comes with a way of escape (1 Cor 10:13).
- ➡ After we have suffered for as while, God will perfect us (1 Pet 5:10).
- ➡ The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth (Isa 11:9; Hab 2:14).

- ➔ Jesus will return in glory (Lk 21:27).
- ➔ Satan, the beast, and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:10).
- ➔ The earth is going to be destroyed by fire (2 Pet 3:10-12).
- ➔ The dead are going to be raised incorruptible (John 5:28-29; 1 Cor 15:52).
- ➔ Faithful stewards will be praised by

God (1 Cor 4:5).

- ➔ Every man shall give an account of himself to God (Rom 14:12).
- ➔ The time is coming when the saints shall take the kingdom (Dan 8:18,22,27).
- ➔ Babylon shall fall, and never rise again (Rev 14:8; 18:2,10,21).
- ➔ There will be a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwells

righteousness (2 Pet 3:13).

- ➔ Those in Christ are strangers and pilgrims in the world (1 Pet 2:11).

These, and a number of other things that are *"surely believed among us"* (Lk 1:1), are to be made known to our households, and within the gathering of the saints. Youngsters should be familiar with these realities, and ponder them frequently. **They should know that these are priorities, and that they need to know them.**

THE EMBALMING OF JACOB AND THE MOURNING FOR HIM

"² And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days."

JOSEPH COMMANDED TO EMBALM HIS FATHER

"And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel . . ."

For Joseph, embalming no doubt meant more than it did to the Egyptians. For him, there was a certainty dignity to the body because it was a creation of God. The prophet Isaiah alludes to the practice of medicine in Egypt, affirming that when He chastened Israel, such mixtures would do them no good: *"Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured"* (Jer 46:11).

The Jews came to practice a certain formality in the handling of the dead, as made known in the burial of Jesus. *"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"* (John 19:40). This was seen in the burying of Lazarus:

"And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44). The burying of Ananias: "And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him" (Acts 5:6).

EGYPTIAN EMBALMING PROCESS

"ACCORDING TO THE MOST EXPENSIVE PROCESS, WHICH COST ONE TALENT OF SILVER, OR ABOUT £250 STERLING, THE BRAIN WAS FIRST EXTRACTED THROUGH THE NOSTRILS BY MEANS OF A CROOKED PIECE OF IRON, THE SKULL BEING THOROUGHLY CLEANSED OF ANY REMAINING PORTIONS BY RINSING WITH DRUGS; THEN, THROUGH AN OPENING IN THE LEFT SIDE MADE WITH A SHARP ETHIOPIAN KNIFE OF AGATE OR OF FLINT, THE VISCERA WERE REMOVED, THE ABDOMEN BEING AFTERWARDS PURIFIED WITH PALM WINE AND AN INFUSION OF AROMATICS; NEXT, THE DISEMBOWELED CORPSE WAS FILLED WITH EVERY SORT OF SPICERY EXCEPT FRANKINCENSE, AND THE OPENING SEWED UP; AFTER THAT THE STUFFED FORM WAS STEEPED FOR SEVENTY DAYS IN NATRUM OR SUBCARBONATE OF SODA OBTAINED FROM THE LIBYAN DESERT, AND SOMETIMES IN WAX AND TANNING, BITUMEN ALSO BEING EMPLOYED IN LATER TIMES; AND FINALLY, ON THE EXPIRATION OF THAT PERIOD, WHICH WAS SCRUPULOUSLY OBSERVED, THE BODY WAS WASHED, WRAPPED ABOUT WITH LINEN BANDAGES, SMEARED OVER WITH GUM, DECORATED WITH AMULETS, SOMETIMES WITH A NETWORK OF PORCELAIN BUGLES, COVERED WITH A LINEN SHROUD, AND, IN DUE COURSE, TRANSFERRED TO A MUMMY CASE."

WILKINSON'S "MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS," VOL. 3. P. 471, ED. 1878

The reason for the Egyptians embalming their dead, particularly the pharaoh's is given as follows:

"THE EGYPTIANS BELIEVED THAT THE BODIES OF THE DEAD HAD TO BE PRESERVED FOR THE NEXT LIFE, AND SO THEY MUMMIFIED(EMBALMED AND DRIED) CORPSES TO PREVENT THEM FROM DECAYING. AFTER A BODY WAS MUMMIFIED, IT WAS WRAPPED IN LAYERS OF LINEN STRIPS AND PLACED IN A COFFIN. THE MUMMY WAS THEN PUT IN A TOMB. SOME EGYPTIANS MUMMIFIED PETS, INCLUDING CATS AND MONKEYS. A NUMBER OF EGYPTIAN MUMMIES HAVE LASTED TO THE PRESENT DAY.

THE EGYPTIANS FILLED THEIR TOMBS WITH ITEMS FOR USE IN THE AFTERLIFE. THESE ITEMS INCLUDED CLOTHING, WIGS, FOOD, COSMETICS, AND JEWELRY. THE TOMBS OF RICH EGYPTIANS ALSO HAD STATUES REPRESENTING SERVANTS WHO WOULD CARE FOR THEM IN THE NEXT WORLD. SCENES OF DAILY LIFE WERE PAINTED ON WALLS INSIDE THE TOMBS. THE EGYPTIANS BELIEVED THAT CERTAIN PRAYERS SAID BY PRIESTS WOULD BRING THE SCENES, AS WELL AS THE DEAD, TO LIFE.

MANY EGYPTIANS BOUGHT TEXTS CONTAINING PRAYERS, HYMNS, SPELLS, AND OTHER INFORMATION TO GUIDE SOULS THROUGH THE AFTERLIFE, PROTECT THEM FROM EVIL, AND PROVIDE FOR THEIR NEEDS. EGYPTIANS HAD PASSAGES FROM SUCH TEXTS CARVED OR WRITTEN ON WALLS INSIDE THEIR TOMBS OR HAD A COPY OF A TEXT PLACED IN THEIR TOMBS. COLLECTIONS OF THESE TEXTS ARE KNOWN AS THE BOOK OF THE DEAD." WORLD BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA

Although the reasoning of the Egyptians was corrupted, it testifies to the truth more fully introduced in apostolic reasoning: *"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and*

their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another" (Rom 2:15). In this case, **"by nature" includes a sense that this world is not the only world, and that life in this world is not the only life.** Men do manage to subdue these intuitions, but in so doing they only become more hardened against the Lord.

Something to Consider

While this is not the acid test of valid reasoning, it should be obvious that **due note should be paid to the customs of people who have been under the direction and tutelage of God.** People who have been exposed to the mind and requirements of the Lord can have their values radically changed, making them unlike the world in certain regards. The handling of the dead is one of those areas. Through Moses, the Jews had been informed of the origin of the human body. God had formed it from the dust of the earth, then breathed into it *"the breath of life"* (Gen 2:7). Also, there was among the ancients a persuasion that something supernatural would happen to the body following death. Job said, *"And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God"* (Job 19:26). David wrote, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness"* (Psa 17:15). Later in Jewish history, the prophets spoke of a certain triumph over death. Hosea prophesied, *"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes"* (Hosea 13:14).

In our text, we are exposed to a certain practice of the Egyptians concerning the handling of the dead. **They seemed to sense that death did not end it all.** This was, I suggest, the result of the Divine imagery being in men, so they sensed certain things intuitively. The Jews, however, saw even more in death than the Egyptians, even though it was decidedly less than is seen by those in Christ Jesus.

Not only was Joseph fulfilling the desires of his father, he no doubt

wanted his father's body to be buried in Canaan in anticipation of the time when, according to the promise given to Abraham, the Jews would leave Egypt to take up occupancy in Canaan.

FORTY DAYS WERE FULFILLED

" . . . And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed . . . " Other versions read, *"Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days,"* ^{NASB} *"taking a full forty days, for that was the time required for embalming. And the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days,"* ^{NIV} and *"Then forty days were devoted [to this purpose] for him, for that is the customary number of days required for those who are embalmed."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

The embalming process itself took forty days. And therefore Joseph and those with him tarried for over a month before disembarking for Canaan with the body of Jacob.

THE EGYPTIANS MOURNED FOR HIM

" . . . and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days." The Amplified Bible reads, *"And the Egyptians wept and bemoaned him [as they would for royalty] for seventy days."*

DIOFORUS SICULUS ON MOURNING FOR AN EGYPTIAN KING

" . . . upon the death of a king, all Egypt went into a common mourning, tore their garments, shut up their temples, forbid sacrifices, kept not the feasts for seventy two days, put clay upon their heads, girt linen clothes under their breasts; men and women, two or three hundred together, went about twice a day, singing in mournful verses the praises of the deceased; they abstained from animal food, and from wine, and all dainty things; nor did they use baths, nor ointments, nor lie in soft beds, nor dared to use venery, but, as if it was for the death of a beloved child, spent the said days in sorrow and mourning." ^{Ibid. p. 65}

It is generally understood that the seventy days of mourning commenced upon the death of Jacob, extending through the forty days required to embalm him, and then thirty more days

beyond that. It was *"the Egyptians"* that mourned – the whole nation. Other versions read, *"Egypt mourned,"* ^{DOUAY} *"a period of national mourning."* ^{LIVING}

Why did the Egyptians mourn because of the passing Jacob, who was not one of their own? A primary reason was doubtless their respect for Joseph, who had saved their nation during a seven year famine, acting wisely and effectively. However, that must not have been the only reason. Pharaoh had a great deal of respect for Jacob and, because of Joseph had given him the best of the land – a significant place in Goshen. I do not doubt that the land flourished under the administration of Jacob. **There had been nothing in either Joseph or Jacob that would have justified any disrespect for them.**

Remember, when they first came to the land it was noted that the Egyptians considered it an abomination to eat with the Hebrews (Gen 43:32). Also *"every shepherd"* was *"an abomination unto the Egyptians"* (Gen 46:34). But now, owing to the favor of Pharaoh and his preference for Joseph, the remarkable wisdom of Joseph, and the conduct of Jacob, there was an apparent adjustment in their attitude. **Not a single disadvantage had been brought to Egypt because of the Hebrews.**

SOMETHING TO PONDER

The people of God are admonished concerning their conduct before the world. *"Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men"* (Rom 12:17). And again, *"Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men"* (2 Cor 8:21). And yet again, *"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."* (Titus 2:7-8).

Peter exhorted us to live in such a manner that those who falsely accuse us would be ashamed. *"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready*

always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ" (1 Pet 3:16). The saints are also admonished. Wives, for example, are to *"give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully"* (1 Tim 5:14). Servants, or employees are exhorted, to *"count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed"* (1 Tim 6:1). It is tragically true that there are some people who

choose to wear the name of Christ who cause Him and His truth to be blasphemed and maligned. This is inexcusable! Thus it is written, *"For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written"* (Rom 2:24). Young men are admonished, *"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you"* (Titus 2:7-8).

Those who wear the name of Jesus are not to leave a bad taste in the mouths of the ungodly because of foolish and misdirected living and thoughtless words.

Solemnly believers are admonished, *"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters"* (1 Pet 4:15). Any chiding that comes their way is not to be because of wrong doing or misrepresenting the Lord Jesus Christ.

O, that more professing "Christians" would consider these things.

JOSEPH ASKS FOR PERMISSION TO BURY JACOB IN CANAAN

"⁴ And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me 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."

WHEN THE DAYS OF HIS MOURNING WERE PAST

"And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh . . . " Other versions read, *"to the household of Pharaoh,"* NKJV *"to Pharaoh's court,"* NIV *"to the servants of Pharaoh,"* BBE *"to the family of Pharaoh,"* DOUAY *"to Pharaoh's palace staff,"* GWN *"to the princes of Pharaoh,"* SEPTUAGINT *"to Pharaoh's royal court,"* NET *"approached Pharaoh's advisers,"* NLT *"Pharaoh's staff,"* LIVING *"to the mighty ones of Pharaoh,"* ABP *"the Egyptian leaders,"* CEV *"the king's officials,"* GNB and *"to [the nobles of] the house of Pharaoh."* AMPLIFIED

Even though Joseph was the governor over all of Egypt (Gen 42:6),

and although every one had to bow to him (Gen 41:43), yet he could not barge into the presence of Pharaoh. The king had made it clear to Joseph, *"Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be*

allotted boundaries of propriety.

This is similar to the experience of Esther the queen. When she needed to go before the king, her husband, and plead a matter pertaining to the Jews,

Those in Christ are faced with much the same situation. They are "sons of God," "kings and priests to God," and are "accepted." Yet, they cannot appear before God on their own merit. If they have a request, it must be made in the name of Jesus.

ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou" (Gen 41:40). Further, the matter concerning which Joseph is making a request is a matter concerning the throne. This does not have to do with the storing, distribution, and all of other matters relating to the administration of bread.

Joseph did it allow his authority to move him to act disrespectfully. He could handle authority – very real authority – without moving beyond

she could not come as a wife, but as a subject of the king (Esth 4:11). **Her domestic role gave her no special advantage in matters of the kingdom.** Therefore she adorned herself properly, and presented herself as all subjects of the king were required to do (Esth 5:1-2). When the king held forth his scepter (Esth 5:2; 8:4), permitting her to speak, it was not because she was his wife, but because she was an obedient subject. Knowing this, though a queen, she conducted herself properly.

It Is Similar With Believers

Those in Christ are faced with much the same situation. They are “sons of God” (1 John 3:1), “kings and priests to God” (Rev 1:6), and are “accepted” (Eph 1:6). **Yet, they cannot appear before God on their own merit.** If they have a request, it must be made in the name of Jesus (John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-25). Yet, Jesus made it clear that using His name did not mean they addressed their prayers to Him. *“And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you”* (John 16:23). Rather, we are coming to the Father through Jesus.

IF I HAVE FOUND FAVOR

“ . . . saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh . . . ” Other versions read, “found favor,”^{KJV} “If now you have love for me,”^{BBE} “If you approve my request,”^{CEB} and “I would like to ask a favor.”^{CJB}

Now, whether or not Joseph has been a good governor will determine the acceptance or rejection of his petition. If he has been unfaithful to the king’s desires, or been an agitator, or caused unnecessary complications by his administration, it will now turn to his

I PRAY THEE

“ . . . saying, My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me.. ”

Joseph does not mince his words, or try and paint a fictitious picture in an effort to please the king. He simply tells him the truth.

Jacob had delivered a commandment to Joseph. He did say, “Do not bury me in Egypt.” That was truly the meaning of his request, but that is not how Joseph will present it. He states it like his father did, in words of wisdom. Jacob had said, *“I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite”* (Gen 49:29). Joseph said, *“My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me”* (Gen 50:5).

The reasoning is twofold. First Jacob was going to be gathered to his people in spirit, and therefore wanted to be buried where they were buried. Second, the place for his burial; had already been purchased in Canaan, and readied for his burial there.

households.

LET ME GO UP

“ . . . Now therefore let me 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. ”

Although Joseph was the Governor, and probably could have gone up without much opposition, yet he knew Pharaoh was over him, and therefore honored him by making a humble request. Pharaoh, on the other hand, saw that Joseph honored his father, as well as being in subjection to Pharaoh himself.

Because of Joseph’s excellent reputation, faithfulness in service, and honor to his father, and Pharaoh as well, Pharaoh consented to Joseph’s request. Had Joseph been a trouble-maker, a rebel, disobedient, or unfaithful in the execution of his duties, his request would no doubt have been denied. However, in remaining absolutely faithful to his God, he also proved to be a faithful servant to and administrator, the king of Egypt.

Something to Learn

Between being born again and death, or the coming of the Lord, we have opportunity to confirm the sincerity of our hearts. It seems to me that within contemporary Christendom, very little thought is given to preparing to meet the Lord – a judging Lord. There is simply too much absorption with the things of this world. Social and domestic deficiencies have been given more attention than spiritual inadequacies.

There are extensive responsibilities associated with this preparation. This involves, although it is not limited to, the following:

- ➡ The crucifixion of the flesh (Gal 5:24).
- ➡ Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts(Tit 2:11-12).
- ➡ Perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1).

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disadvantage. Further, at this critical point, displeasing the King would prove his greatest disadvantage.

He appeals to the King’s favor, knowing full well it will not be granted if he has been displeased.

He does not speak derisively of Egypt, for that is where they had been living by Divine direction. He does not bring up the prophesy of Abraham, for it was not the right time to do so. This Pharaoh had befriended both Joseph and Jacob, together with his sons and

- ➡ Presenting our bodies a living sacrifice to God (Rom 12:1-2).
- ➡ Doing whatever we do heartily, as unto the Lord (Col 3:17).
- ➡ Running the race with patience that is set before us, while looking unto Jesus (Heb 12:1-2).
- ➡ Proving to be a faithful steward (1 Cor 4:1).
- ➡ Having and maintaining a fervent love for the brethren of Jesus (1 Pet

2:17; 4:8).

- ➡ Not quenching, or grieving, or resisting the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30; 1 Thess 5:19; Acts 7:51).
- ➡ Keeping our affection set on things above, and looking at the things that are seen (2 Cor 4:18).
- ➡ Growing up into Christ in all things (Eph 4:15).
- ➡ Setting your affection on things above, and not on things on the

earth (Col 3:1-2).

Jesus affirmed that there will be people who will be rejected, and cast forth his presence (Matt 7:23; 25:41). Not a single one of those rejects shall have been believing or faithful – not a one! All of the faithful will be told, *"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"* (Mat 25:34). **O, prepare, brother and sister, prepare for the coming of the Lord and the day of accountability.**

JOSEPH GOES TO CANAAN WITH AN ENTOURAGE

"⁷ And Joseph went up 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, ⁸ And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. ⁹ And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company."

JOSEPH WENT UP TO BURY HIS FATHER

"And Joseph went up to bury his father . . ."

I particularly like this language. It does not say Joseph went to a funeral, but to bury his father . . . not to lament the passing of his father, but to bury him. There would be weeping and mourning, but the objective of the trip to Canaan was to *"bury"* Jacob. They were going to *"sow"* his body in the ground (1 Cor 15:36-37).

Jacob had already been *"gathered to his people"* – before he was to be buried. This happened while his body was still upon his bed. As it is written, *"And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people"* (Gen 49:33). Considerably more than seventy days later, his body

was buried.

THE MANNER OF EGYPTIAN FUNERAL PROCESSIONS FOR DIGNITARIES

FIRST SERVANTS LED THE WAY, CARRYING TABLES LADEN WITH FRUIT, CAKES, FLOWERS, VASES OF OINTMENT, WINE AND OTHER LIQUIDS, WITH THREE YOUNG GEESSE AND A CALF FOR SACRIFICE, CHAIRS AND WOODEN TABLETS, NAPKINS, AND OTHER THINGS. THEN OTHERS FOLLOWED BEARING DAGGERS, BOWS, FANS, AND THE MUMMY CASES IN WHICH THE DECEASED AND HIS ANCESTORS HAD BEEN KEPT PREVIOUS TO BURIAL. NEXT CAME A TABLE OF OFFERINGS, FAUTEUILS, COUCHES, BOXES, AND A CHARIOT. AFTER THESE MEN APPEARED WITH GOLD VASES AND MORE OFFERINGS. TO THESE SUCCEEDED THE BEARERS OF A SACRED BOAT AND THE MYSTERIOUS EYE OF OSIRIS, AS THE GOD OF STABILITY. PLACED IN THE CONSECRATED BOAT, THE HEARSE CONTAINING THE MUMMY OF THE DECEASED WAS DRAWN BY FOUR OXEN AND BY SEVEN MEN, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A SUPERINTENDENT WHO REGULATED THE MARCH OF THE FUNERAL. BEHIND THE HEARSE FOLLOWED THE MALE RELATIONS AND FRIENDS OF THE DECEASED, WHO EITHER BEAT THEIR BREASTS, OR GAVE TOKEN OF THEIR SORROW BY THEIR SILENCE AND SOLEMN STEP AS THEY WALKED, LEANING ON THEIR LONG STICKS; AND WITH THESE THE PROCESSION CLOSED.

WILKINSON'S 'MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS,' VOL. 3. P. 444, ED. 1878.

The same was true of Abraham. It is said of his death, *"Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people"* (Gen 25:8). After he was gathered to his

people, his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried his body (Gen 25:9-10).

The same was true of Isaac: he was gathered unto his people, then buried later. *"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"* (Gen 35:29).

I draw attention to the records of the death and burial of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for a significant reason. There are those who teach that being *"gathered unto his people"* refers to the interment of the body in the earth. They imagine that this view allows them to keep their soul-sleeping hypothesis. But they are wrong – seriously and willingly wrong! According to the Word inspired by God (2 Tim 3:16), the burying of the body follows the individual being gathered to his people. Because the body is a part – and only a part – of the total human constitution (1 Thess 5:23). The unseen part of man however, is not placed in the grave, but is gathered to the people with whom the person was identified while yet in the world,

EGYPTIANS WHO WENT WITH HIM

" . . . and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt. . ."

The honor of Jacob, and the high regard for Joseph, is seen in this remarkable entourage. Some are of the opinion that the expression *"all the servants of Pharaoh"* is a classification—a heading for the two groups of people that are mentioned. This is reflected in the NIV: *"All Pharaoh's officials accompanied him – the dignitaries of his court and all the dignitaries of Egypt."* Other versions read similarly: *"all the servants of Pharaoh, both the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt,"* ^{GENEVA} *"All Pharaoh's officials, the leaders in his palace staff, and all the leaders of Egypt"* ^{GWN} *"all of Pharaoh's officials who were senior members of his household and all the other elders of the land"* ^{NAB} *"all Pharaoh's officials went with him– the senior courtiers of his household, all the senior officials"* ^{NET} and *"all Pharaoh's officials, the dignitaries of his palace and all the dignitaries of Egypt."* ^{NJB}

The word translated *"servants,"* has the following lexical meaning: "SLAVE SERVANT, MAN-SERVANT; SUBJECTS." THERE ARE OCCASIONS WHEN IT IS USED OF "SERVANTS AND WORSHIPERS OF GOD (EX 4:10; NUM 12:7; JOSH 1:1; JUDGES 2:8) . . . PROPHETS (1 KGS 9:7; EZRA 9:11; JER 26:5) . . . AND ISRAEL (LEV 25:55)." ^{STRONG'S}

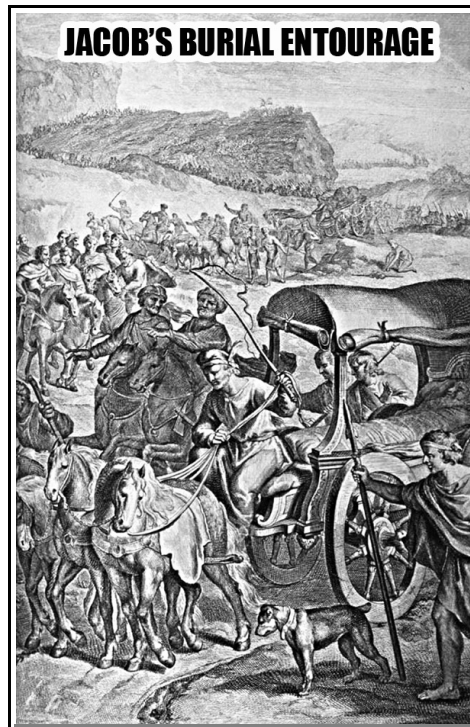
In view of the above definition, I do not believe it would be proper to call *"The elders of his house,"* and *"All the elders of the land of Egypt"* Pharaoh's servants – even though they did serve him. The word translated *"elders,"* aside from referring to their age, is used to denote *"THOSE WITH AUTHORITY,"* OR *"SENATORS."* ^{STRONG'S}

Other versions read (correctly, I believe), *"All of Pharaoh's servants went with him, together with the elder statesmen in his household and all of the elder statesmen in the land of Egypt,"* ^{NCEB} *"all the bondmen of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt"* ^{DARBY} *"all the servants of Pharaoh, both the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt"* ^{GENEVA} *"all the servants of Pharaoh went up with him, and the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt."* ^{SEPTUAGINT}

The servants of Pharaoh. These

were slaves, doubtless taken along for servile purposes: caring for the animals, and serving the various necessities of the Egyptian dignitaries.

The elders of his house. These were the statesmen, senators, or dignitaries that ministered in the palace, and perhaps in the capital city. If their number was anywhere in the vicinity of Solomon's court, we can get an idea of the number involved by the description of Solomon's daily meal. The Queen of Sheba described his court as "these thy servants, which stand continually before thee" (1 Kgs 10:7). Here was their daily meal. *"And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour (about 185 bushels), and threescore measures (about 375 bushels) of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl"* (1 Kg 4:22-23).



All the elders of the land of Egypt. These were the statesmen, senators, or dignitaries that ministered throughout the various provinces of the land. They would have become familiar with Joseph, and thus with Jacob, through the food distribution program administered by Joseph.

HEBREWS WHO WENT WITH HIM

" . . . And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen."

When Jacob first came into the land, there were *"seventy souls"* (Gen 46:26-27). Now, it is seventeen years later (Gen 47:28), and it was already said of them at the beginning of Jacob's tenure in Egypt, *"And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly."* (Gen 47:27). When, therefore, it is written that Joseph took *"all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house,"* a multitude of significant size is involved.

A VERY GREAT COMPANY

" . . . And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company." Other versions read, *"a very great gathering,"* ^{NKJV} *"a very large company,"* ^{NIV} *"a great army,"* ^{BBE} *"a huge collection of people,"* ^{CEB} *"it was a very large caravan,"* ^{CJB} *"exceeding great company,"* ^{GENEVA} *"a very imposing retinue,"* ^{NAB} *"a very large troop,"* ^{TNK} and *"So a very great number of chariots, cavalry, and people accompanied Joseph."* ^{LIVING}

"Very"	→	Exceedingly, abundance, muchness, exceedingly, showing magnitude or degree, to a great degree. ^{STRONG'S}
"Great"	→	Massive, abundant, numerous. ^{STRONG'S}
"Company"	→	Army, company, body of people. ^{STRONG'S}

What an impressive procession this must have been! In addition to the multitude of people, there were *"chariots and horsemen."*

A Vivid Picture

We have here a marvelous depiction of the great ingathering of the saints. Collectively and individually, it will be an *"entrance"* that is *"ministered"* ***"abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."***

The vastness of the number of the saved is described as, *"a great*

multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (Rev 7:9). Salvation is certainly no small thing, as will be attested by the number of the saved.

Following his prophecy of the death of Christ and its effects, Isaiah wrote, *"Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD"* (Isa 54:1). Other versions read, *"For the sons of the desolate one will be more numerous Than the sons of the married woman," says the LORD,* ^{NASB} *and "the children of the wife who has been deserted will be more numerous than the children of the married, says the LORD"* ^{CEB}

This indicates a latter condition that is larger than the former one – in staggering proportions (i.e. first harvest versus final harvest)– and it is owing to the atoning death of Christ (Isa 53:4–6), and intercession (Isa 53:12). Add to that the satisfaction of God for the atonement made upon the cross (Isa 53:11). Under these foreordained conditions a *"so great salvation"* commenced in the arena of human experience. The staggering investment was not in order to save only a small number (Isa 49:6).

The promise of the Father to the Son is arresting to consider: *"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession"* (Psa 2:8). Again, the Psalmist wrote, *"All the ends of the world shall*

remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee" (Psa 22:27).

Just as Jacob was attended by a few when he entered Egypt, but his body was escorted to Canaan amidst a great host, so *"the day of salvation"* (1 Cor 6:2) commenced with a first-fruit harvest of 3,000 souls (Acts 2:41), but will end with a great ingathering described as *"a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues"* (Rev 7:9) – and there will be a period when the earth shall be *"full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"* (Isa 11:9; Hab 2:14). I long for that to be fulfilled. I have come to realize the greatness of the provision inherent in salvation, and that the God of heaven does nothing in vain.

THEY MOURED WITH A GREAT LAMENTATION

¹⁰ *And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days."*

Notice the case with which the burial of Jacob's body was carried out. This is certainly not a twenty-first century manner of burial. It even appears as though the majority of professing Christians would scoff at such a practice. However, this is only because of the lack of value that is placed upon a spiritually productive life. Generally speaking, the death of a saint of God is not considered as a loss to humanity. Under the incapable leadership of spiritual charlatans, a successful spiritual impact of a godly life is rarely considered. Under the reign of the institution, the older a person gets, the less value they have. They are expected to retire from truly meaningful activities, and become relatively inactive – at least so far as the work of the Lord is concerned. This is even beneath the heathen view of productivity.

There are a few glimpses we are given of the burial of significant people.

The Burial of Jesus

➔ He was buried *"as the manner of the Jews is to bury"* (John 19:40).

➔ Peter referred to Christ's burial as

Notice the case with which the burial of Jacob's body was carried out. This is certainly not a twenty-first century manner of burial. It even appears as though the majority of professing Christians would scoff at such a practice.

We should begin with the burial of Jesus Christ: the primary and by far most productive *"Man"* (1 Tim 2:5).

➔ Jesus referred to His burial, and of the anointing of His body that readied Him for it (Matt 26:12; Mk 14:8; John 12:7). His burial was obviously a significant event.

His body resting in hope (Acts 2:26-27).

➔ The burial of Jesus is a essential part of the Gospel itself (1 Cor 15:4).

Truth is never associated with meaningless events. In this regard, God cultured a people who viewed death

differently than the heathen. Within the context of that view, burial itself became significant.

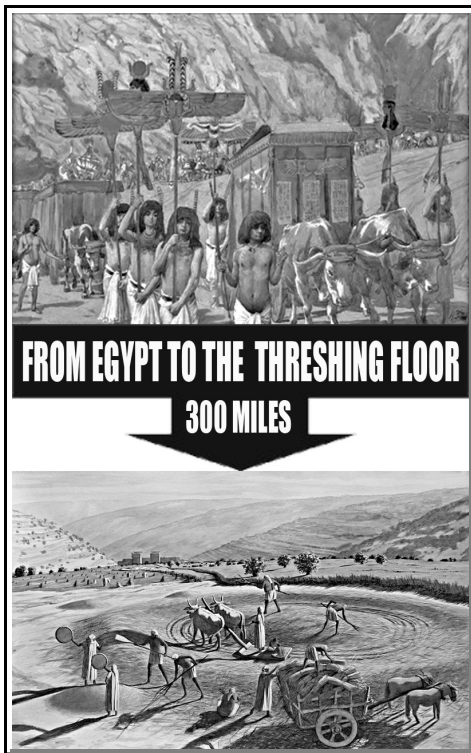
The Burial of John the Baptist

When John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod, *"his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus"* (Matt 14:12). When Jesus heard about it, He did not treat the news as meaningless: *"When Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart"* (Matt 14:13).

The Burial of Stephen

Following the stoning of Stephen, *"And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him"* (Acts 8:2).

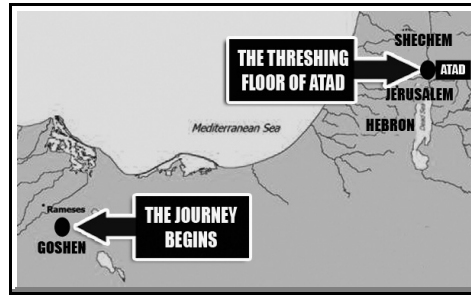
THEY CAME TO THE THRESHING FLOOR



"And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan . . ."

"THE THRESHING-FLOOR, OR GOREN, WAS A LARGE OPEN CIRCULAR AREA WHICH WAS USED FOR TRAMPLING OUT THE CORN BY MEANS OF OXEN, AND WAS EXCEEDINGLY CONVENIENT FOR THE ACCOMMODATION OF A LARGE BODY OF PEOPLE SUCH AS ACCOMPANIED

JOSEPH" PULPIT COMMENTARY

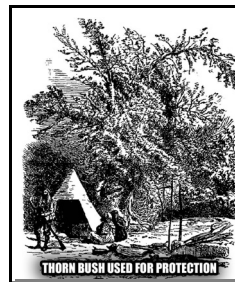


The expression *"beyond Jordan"* means on the other side of Jordan – **the Canaan side.**

The journey from Egypt to the threshing floor of Atad was about three hundred miles. If they moved along at twenty miles a day, the normal place of a caravan, the trip would have been about fifteen days.

This is the only place in Scripture we read of *"Atad,"* We do not know if it was the name of a place or a person, or both. The word itself means *"to pierce,"* and probably refers to a *"thorntree."*

Thorntrees were used for protection, and may either have been planted around the threshing floors, or a sort of fence was made from its limbs to surround the floor. In our text, this appears to have distinguished this threshing floor from all others.



THEY MOURNED WITH A GREAT AND VERY SORE LAMENTATION

" . . . and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation..." Other versions read, *"a great and very solemn lamentation,"* ^{NKJV} *"very great and sorrowful,"* ^{NASB} *"loudly and bitterly,"* ^{NIV} *"with great and bitter sorrow,"* ^{BBE} *"great and exceeding sore,"* ^{GENEVA} *"they wailed with a very great and sore wailing,"* ^{JPS} *"a long and solemn lamentation,"* ^{NJB} and *"a great lamentation and extreme demonstrations of sorrow."* ^{AMPLIFIED}

HE MADE A MOURNING SEVEN DAYS

" . . . and he made a mourning for his father seven days. Other versions read, *"he observed,"* ^{NKJV} *"Joseph observed a seven day period,"* ^{NIV} *"Joseph mourned seven days,"* ^{CSB} and *"Joseph took seven days to mourn his father's death."* ^{GWN}

A number of versions omit a reference to Joseph, and simply read *"they mourned"* (BBE, CJB, DOUAY, NLT, LIVING, ERV). The meaning is that Joseph instituted this mourning, in which all who were with him participated.

In this special burial, and the extensive mourning for Jacob, a special remembrance of him was cemented into the memory of the participants. It seems to me that this is as it should be when the righteous leave this world. It is written of God Himself, *"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister"* (Heb 6:10).

If God is *"not unrighteous to forget"* the *"work and labor of love"* that has been *"showed toward His name,"* in that men have *"ministered to the saints, and do minister,"* **ought we to not remember those who have ministered unto us the precious things of God?** It is not proper to lament their absence from the battlefield and the assembly of the saints? Many of God's ministers have not even become well known until after they left the body and this present evil world. Today, most of religion has been shaped for the here and now, with little recollection for foundation-layers and saint-stabilizing ministers of the past. If it were not for the books they had left behind, many of their names would have disappeared from all memory. Keep in mind that Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph wrote no books – but God did. He has made provision for the recollection of those whose names were written in heaven. **These were great men and women who went through experiences that were necessary to establish the necessity of faith, and root the rich olive tree whose root and fatness we are now enjoying.**

THE INHABITANTS OF CANAAN SAW THE MOURNING

"¹¹ And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan."

THE INHABITANTS OF THE LAND SAW THE MOURNING

"And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad . . ."

These were inhabitants that were scheduled to be expelled from the land. It could have been done about four hundred years later, but because of the unbelief of the Israelites, those who balked when they heard a negative report, were not allowed to enter Canaan. They all died during the forty-year wandering of Israel in the wilderness.

Here you will note that Joseph did not tell the people to hide their mourning, or to put on a good face, so to speak. He, together with those with him, lived out before the people their sorrow as well as their gladness; their hard experiences as well as their more pleasant ones.

A lot can be learned about professing believers by their response to sorrow as well as their response to grief; how they react to difficulty as well as to great deliverance. Some of the "good works" the saints do involve activities with the veil of sorrow over their heart. How they react to the loss of the mighty among them testifies to whether or not they are living with the power of God upon them.

THIS IS A GRIEVOUS MOURNING

" . . . they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians . . ." Other versions read, *"a deep mourning,"* ^{NKJV} *"a solemn ceremony of mourning,"* ^{NIV} *"Great is the grief,"* ^{BBE} *"a solemn observance of grief,"* ^{CEB} *"These funeral ceremonies are taken very seriously,"* ^{GWN} *"This is a very sad occasion,"* ^{NET} *"This is a significant time of mourning,"* ^{ISV} and *"This is a very great wailing."* ^{LITV}

The man who had died was no ordinary man, and the mourning for him was no ordinary mourning. The Canaanites probably had no idea it was Jacob the Hebrew who had died, who had lived among them, in the same general territory, seventeen years earlier. During that time, it appears as though they had forgotten Jacob and his household, seventy in number, who had went away in a large caravan of wagons.

THE NAME OF IT IS ABELMIZRAIM

" . . . wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan."

The word *"Abelmizraim"* means, *"MOURNING OF THE EGYPTIANS."* ^{McCLINTOK & STRONG'S} *"MEADOW OF EGYPT."* ^{ISBE} The significance of the term is found in the joining of the two words *"Abel"* and *"Mizraim."* *"Abel"* (differing from the name of Abel, Adam's second son) means *"A GRASSY MEADOW."* ^{McCLINTOK & STRONG'S} *"MIZRAIM"* MEANS *"EGYPT"* OR *"EGYPTIANS."* ^{McCLINTOK & STRONG'S}

The idea is that this plot of ground, in Canaan, was now identified with the Egyptians. It was named to bear that association, so that every time the name was mentioned – even in

Canaan – the people thought of the Egyptians and the day they mourned.

A Type Is Seen

It has been the practice of men to give names to places that commemorate events that took place there. Cain built a city and named it after his son, Enoch (*"INITIATED,"* OR *"FIRST"* – Gen 4:17). Hagar named the well where an angel appeared unto her *"Beerlahairoi"* (*"well of a living One, my Seer"*) – Gen 16:13. Abraham called the place where he was to offer Isaac, but offered a revealed ram instead, *"Jehovahjireh"* (*"THE LORD WILL SEE TO IT, PROVIDE"*) – Gen 22:14). Isaac named the well where the men of Gerar strove with him *"Esek"* (*"QUARREL"*) – Gen 26:20. Jacob named the place where God first appeared to him *"Bethel"* (*"HOUSE OF GOD"*) – Gen 28:19). God placed His own name upon the city of *"Jerusalem"* (*"FOUNDATION, OR CITY OF, PEACE"*) – 1 Kgs 14:21.

From this we learn the wisdom of viewing our lives with spiritual epochs in mind rather than mere earthly experiences. It is, to say the least, difficult to live wholly for a Lord who is really secondary in our lives. While it is out of order to make laws on such matters, it should suffice to assist one another in being able to identify events in our lives where special deliverances were realized, key matters were opened up to us, or, by the grace of God, a major spiritual change took place in our lives that redefined how we live.

O, the blessedness of being able to know where to raise your Ebenezer (1 Sam 7:12) – where to establish an ongoing memory that will consistently yield profit to the soul!

THE SONS DID AS THEY WERE COMMANDED

"¹² And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: ¹³ For his sons carried him into the land of

Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession

of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre."

HIS SONS DID UNTO HIM

"And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them . . ."
Other versions read, *"did unto him,"* ASV/ERV/GENEVA/JPS. *"did for him,"* NKJV/NASB/NRSV/CEB/CSB/ESV/GWN/AMPLIFIED. *"did as he had commanded him,"* NIV/DOUAY. *"did to him,"* CJB/SEPTUAGINT/DARBY/ABP. *"and did what he had ordered."* NJB

In order to confirm what this text is saying, let us establish two preliminary points: (1)–What Jacob said to do, and (2)– What Joseph commanded.

First, Jacob said, **"BURY ME** with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite" (Gen 49:29).

Second, it is said of Joseph: *"Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to **EMBALM HIS FATHER:** and the physicians embalmed Israel"* (Gen 50:2).

Note that in these particular texts Jacob **did** not say, "bury my body," and Joseph **did not** say "embalm my father's body." It is not that it would have been improper to say this. Also, when the burial of Jesus took place, it is written of Nicodemus and Joseph, *"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"* (John 19:40). Also, when the Baptist was beheaded, *"His disciples came, and **took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus"*** (Mat 14:12). Thus it is clear that here I'm going to deal with a revealed technicality, for thirty-six times the Scripture says of a burial, they *"buried HIM"*—ex: Gen 25:9; 35:29; Josh 24:30; 1 Sam 25:1; Acts 5:6). Jesus spoke of *"a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."* Of that man, the Lord said, *"the rich man also died, and was **buried,**"* also revealing that a certain beggar named Lazarus *"died and was **carried by angels to Abraham's bosom"*** (Lk 16:20,22).

Concerning someone who suffered the punishment of death, Moses said, *"**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."* (Deut 21:23).

Also, the Gospel includes this statement of Jesus, **"HE was buried"** (1 Cor 15:4).

Here, then are two different representations of death, both of which are true. In one, the *"body"* of the person was buried, in the other, the person is said to have been buried.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE HUMAN CONSTITUTION

At this point, and in order to confirm the reasoning involved in the phrases "embalm his father" and "buried him," I will touch briefly on the basic human constitution, or what comprises a "person." There is some confusion on this matter that has led to some overly simplistic expressions, and some heretical teaching.



There is a sense in which a part of

our being counts for the whole. Thus the body can be considered *"him."* In another sense, the *"soul"* can be considered *"him,"* for man was made a *"living soul"* (Gen 2:7), and, men are often referred to as *"souls"* (Acts 2:41; 1 Pet 3:20). Additionally, men, especially departed ones, are also referred to as *"spirits"* (1 Pet 3:19). God is also referred to as *"the Father of spirits"* (Heb 12:9).

Also, take note of how the Spirit speaks of men. *"And the very God of peace sanctify **YOU** wholly; and I pray God **YOUR whole spirit and soul and body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* (1 Thess 5:23). There you have *"spirit, soul, and body"* described as *"you."* Now, consider these three parts.

The Soul

Because of this tripartite nature of man, salvation is calculated to touch every part of man. From the standpoint of life in this world, sanctification is intended for the entire man: spirit, soul, and body (1 Thess 5:23). We therefore read of the *"salvation of your souls"* – the rational and expressive part of our persons (1 Pet 2:9).

The Human Spirit

Our spirits are also saved, being *"joined unto the Lord,"* and becoming *"one spirit"* with Him: *"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit"* (1 Cor 6:17). This speaks of our essential person – what gives us true identity before the Lord. That is involved in Paul's statement, *"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your **spirit.** Amen"* (Gal 6:18).

Men have a difficult time distinguishing between the *"soul"* and the *"spirit"* – and rightly so, because it is, indeed, a complex matter. However the powerful word of God can distinguish between the two, satisfying the understanding of men: *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the **dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"*** (Heb 4:12).

The Body

The body is the part of us that is most closely aligned with the world. It has been excluded from the Kingdom of heaven, for *"flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption"* (1 Cor 15:50). Notwithstanding, because it is integral to our persons, salvation includes *"the redemption of our body"* (Rom 8:23). This will take place at the resurrection of the dead when this shall come to pass *"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. For this corruptible **must** put on incorruption, and this mortal **must** put on immortality"* (1 Cor 15:52-53). At that time the saying will be fulfilled to the finest degree, *"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass **the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?**"* (1 Cor 15:54-55).

At that time, for the first time, all, who are in Christ will be saved: spirit, soul, and body. While in the world, we live with an enemy in the house. With great groanings the saints cry out, *"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with **me**. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in **my members**, warring against the law of **my mind**, and bringing **me** into captivity to the law of sin which is in **my members**. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver **me** from the body of this death?"* (Rom 7:21-24).

I understand *"the new man"* to be

a special creation of God – *"His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus"* (Eph 2:10). It is to the unseen part of men what the resurrection body is their physical constitution. The difference is that, as long as they are in the body, the redeemed had two contradicting natures. One is identified with Adam, and one with Christ. Only one of them can dominate. Further, one of them must dominate, for our personhood consists of three distinct and separate parts. The inward government of those in Christ is to be through *"the new man,"* which alone has been *"joined to the Lord,"* being *"one spirit"* with Him (1 Cor 6:17).

I am quick to say this is my own view, and therefore cannot press it upon anyone beyond their ability to see it this way. It is to be understood that *"newness of life"* can only be lived under the administration of *"the new man,"* which is to be *"put on"* in that capacity (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10).

All too many professing believers are attempting to live under the dictates of *"the old man."* Such a life is in no way acceptable to the Lord.

THEY CARRIED HIM INTO CANAAN

" . . . For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in

the cave of the field of Machpelah . . ."

Here again we see this language – *"they carried **him**"* – when technically it was his body that they carried. All of the standard versions read the same way, *"they carried **him**."* They buried all that was capable of being buried – but it was a part of his person. Like the rest of the dead, that part of his person will remain in the earth until Jesus comes, and the dead are raised into immortality. Until that time, the place a burial remains a reminder of his pilgrimage through this present evil world.

A PURCHASED BURYINGPLACE

" . . . which Abraham bought with his money for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre."

I am intrigued by the way this is stated. It points out the dignity of the only form of worldly life that bears the image and likeness of the Almighty (Gen 1:26; 5:3; James 3:9). Although this *"likeness"* is not found in the human body, yet, because of it, the body belongs to God by creation, and to the Lord by purchase (1 Cor 6:13,19). Although the details of this were not as clear to the *"fathers"* as it is to those who are in Christ Jesus, yet they sensed this truth in their spirit, and lived accordingly.

Burial is not something that can be successfully debated with those who lack this insight. However it is something that can be seen if man is viewed as the creation of God, and object of Divine purchase. When death occurs, and the body is thus vacated, burial is the only suitable way to handle the body.



JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN RETURNED TO EGYPT

" ¹⁴ And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

The burial having been accomplished, their mission was now completed. Joseph knew that it was not yet time for the Israelites to make Canaan their abode, even though there

may have been longings to do so. There were yet over four hundred years to be spent in Egypt – years that would soon commence to be attended by intense suffering. God had made this clear to

Abraham: *"And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance"* (Gen 15:13-14). **Abraham did not know the identity of the nation, but it appears clear that Joseph did know** (Gen 50:25). The fact became clearer and clearer as the time of deliverance drew closer.

A LESSON TO BE LEARNED

Even though Joseph and other informed Israelites knew their future would be attended by a lengthy period of hardship, they lived with their trust in God. **Accounting a generation as the customary forty years, ten generations of Israel would know nothing for their entire lifetime but bondage and oppression.** Under those conditions, it might seem natural for absolute hopelessness to develop, and the promise be stricken from all memory. Yet, this is not what took place. Those with faith waited patiently for something they knew would take place long after they died. If there was no other reason to remain alive, it would be to pass along the promise of God to the next generation, and they to the generation following them.

No informed Israelite expected the promised deliverance to take place at any moment. Many believing Israelites lived knowing full well the deliverance would not take place during their lifetime. Such people *"all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country"* (Heb 11:13-14).

There has been a lot of superfluous thinking concerning the coming of the Lord in the Christian community. Some, wholly lacking in understanding, affirm that the early believers thought Jesus was going to return at any moment. However, those disciples were not lacking in their

understanding of some of the words of our Lord and his holy apostles:

- ➡ *"And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet"* (Matt 24:6).
- ➡ *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come"* (Matt 24:14).
- ➡ *"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."* (2 Thess 2:2)
- ➡ *"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God"* (2 Thess 2:3-4).

Living by faith is not living with time in mind. It is rather living with the

that all of the dead will be raised and see Christ coming in great power and glory **together** – *"every eye shall see Him"* (Rev 1:7). It is not like anyone is going to miss that glorious appearing! **However, we only have our lifetime in the world to prepare for that epochal event** – so we live with the coming of the Lord in mind, for we shall see it when it takes place.

The more a person believes, the closer the appearing of Christ seems – not from the standpoint of time, but from the experiential point of view. Our last experience in this earth is not death, but resurrection, when *"the earth shall cast out the dead"* (Isa 26:19).

The Lord *"will come as a thief in the night"* – and yet, faith compels us to be *"Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"* (2 Pet 3:12). The person who is not living by faith is confused by the statements made concerning Christ's second coming and the culmination of the purpose of God on the earth. They think in terms of times, and it is not even their prerogative to think of *"times and seasons"* which the Lord has put in His own power (Acts 1:7). Faith

The more a person believes, the closer the appearing of Christ seems – not from the standpoint of time, but from the experiential point of view. Our last experience in this earth is not death, but resurrection, when "the earth shall cast out the dead"

promise in view – and *"the just shall live by faith"* (Heb 10:38). Those with faith do NOT reason after this manner: "Before Jesus comes, this and that must first take place – so He will not come in this generation." That would be like nine generations of Israelites living in Egypt and thinking: "Deliverance will not come in our time, so why worry about it. Let us make the most of our time now."

What unthinking people forget is

enables the person to live in view of the sure coming of the Lord, and make preparations now for that appearing. The coming itself is certain, and therefore faith enables us to prepare for it regardless of when it occurs. Jesus said, *"Be ye also ready!"* (Matt 24:44)

Blessed is the person who can understand this, and makes preparation for the appearing of the Lord now – for that is the only time that has been allotted for the required preparation.

FAITH LOOKS AHEAD AND PLANS ACCORDINGLY

→ **ABOVE TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCE**

LOOKING FOR THAT GLORIOUS APPEARING

**WHEN HE IS COMING IS NOT THE POINT, BUT THE FACT THAT
HE IS COMING TO RECEIVE US TO HIMSELF**

**THE COMING
OF THE
LORD
JESUS CHRIST**

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 6/13/14. We will continue our series of lessons in the book of Genesis. The eighty-second lesson will cover verses 15 thru 26 of Chapter 50: "THE DEATH OF JOSEPH." As soon as Jacob was buried, Joseph's brothers reasoned he would hate them, and repay them for all of the evil they had done to him. They sent a messenger to Joseph saying their father had told them to ask him to forgive them of their trespass against him. Joseph wept when they spoke to him. His brother fell down before him and said they were his servants. Joseph told them not to fear, that he was not in the place of God. He then told them God had sent him before them, and although they meant it for evil, God had meant it for good. He comforted them. When he was 110 years old, Joseph told his brothers he was about to die. He strictly charged them to see to it that his bones were carried out with them when the Lord delivered them from Egypt, as He had promised. He died, was embalmed, and put in a coffin in Egypt – for the time being, or until their deliverance came. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.