

Lessons From The Grave

Introduction. In Genesis 50:22-26, we have the prophecy regarding Joseph's bones in the land of Egypt. Although it looked as if the bones of Joseph would never leave the land of Egypt, the fulfillment finally came (Exodus 13:19; Joshua 24:32).

We are going to examine the graves of two men in the Bible, one in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament, and see the lessons which can be learned from them (1 Corinthians 10:11).

I. **Lessons From The Grave Of Joseph**

- A. We learn that every one of us must die.
 - 1. This is an appointment every man must keep (Hebrews 9:27).
 - 2. There are only two exceptions where men escaped death.
 - a) Enoch (Genesis 5:24; Hebrews 11:5).
 - b) Elijah (2 Kings 2:11).
 - 3. The passing of time lulls the heart into a false security, like the rich man (Luke 12:19-21).
 - 4. However, Joseph died (Genesis 50:26). In his death there was a lesson for Israel and for us (Ecclesiastes 7:2; Psalm 90:12).
- B. We learn that no man is indispensable to God's plan.
 - 1. Joseph had held the highest position in government, and he was an important tool in God's hand for carrying out the history of Israel. However, he was not indispensable to God's plans.
 - 2. Others have been equally prominent, but none indispensable.
 - a) Moses died and Joshua took over.
 - b) King David died and Solomon reigned in his place.
 - c) There is room for everyone in God's kingdom, and a work for everyone to do.
 - (1) However, no one is indispensable to God's plan. His purposes are not dependent upon anyone.
 - (2) The Jews thought they were indispensable in God's redemptive scheme (Matthew 3:7-10).
 - 3. We, too, need to be reminded of our rightful place (Ecclesiastes 5:2-3; Romans 9:20-24). Our lot here is to serve God acceptably (Ecclesiastes 12:13).
- C. We learn about the hope of deliverance.
 - 1. After the death of Joseph, there arose a new king over Egypt who did not know Joseph, and because he feared the strength of Israel, he enslaved God's people (Exodus 1:7-14; 2:23).
 - 2. Joseph's bones, lying in a tomb in Egypt, kept reminding them that God had promised to deliver them (Genesis 50:24-25). It gave hope to the Israelites.

- D. We learn that God is faithful to His promises.
 - 1. God's promise was fulfilled. God said He would deliver His people out of bondage, and He did.
 - 2. God also said He would remove Joseph's bones out of Egypt, and He did.
 - 3. Both Abraham (Romans 4:19-21) and Sarah (Hebrews 11:11) were assured of the faithfulness of God.
 - 4. The promise to rebury Joseph might seem insignificant, but nothing of what God says will fail. He always delivers (2 Peter 3:8-10).

II. ***Lessons From The Grave Of Jesus***

- A. We learn that all men can live.
 - 1. Just as the death of Joseph and his tomb taught that all men must die, the empty tomb of Jesus proclaims that all men shall live (John 5:28-29; 11:11, 25-26, 43-44; 1 Corinthians 15:22).
 - 2. Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1:10). Through Jesus Christ, man forever has the answer to the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14).
- B. We learn that there is one man who is indispensable to God's plan.
 - 1. Our salvation is totally dependent upon this one man (Hebrews 10:10-14).
 - 2. The death of Joseph reveals that salvation was not dependent on him, but the death of Jesus reveals that salvation is completely dependent on Him (Acts 4:12).
- C. We learn that His death and resurrection are the basis for our hope.
 - 1. Joseph's burial in an Egyptian tomb and the prophecy given concerning it were the basis of Israel's hope of deliverance.
 - 2. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ are the basis of our hope (Romans 6:5; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 2 Corinthians 4:14; Philipians 3:20-21).
- D. We learn that His death and resurrection teaches us that God is faithful to His promises.
 - 1. Everything that was written about Him was fulfilled and He fulfilled all that was written concerning Him (Luke 24:44; Acts 13:27-30).
 - 2. Therefore, God will do all that He says regarding us.
 - a) We are raised up with and transferred into His kingdom (Colosians 2:12; 1:13).
 - b) We must abide in Him or else be cast into the fire (John 15:6).
 - c) We will be hated on account of His name, but will be saved if we endure (Matthew 10:22).

- d) All who do not obey the gospel will perish and we will all be judged according to our deeds (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2 Corinthians 5:10).
- e) We will be rewarded if we are holy and faithful (Revelation 22:12-14).

Conclusion. Some verses may, on the surface, seem insignificant. However, in view of what we have studied in this lesson, certainly the statement in Hebrews 11:22 is not insignificant. In one of his lighter moments, Benjamin Franklin penned his own epitaph. He wrote, "The Body of B. Franklin, Printer: Like the Cover of an old Book Its contents torn out, And stripped of its Lettering & Gilding, Lies here, Food for Worms, But the Work shall not be wholly lost: For it will, as he believ'd, Appear once more In a new & more perfect Edition, Corrected & amended by the Author." Death is not extinguishing the light from a Christian; it is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come. Like Joseph, let us by faith live by the precepts of Jesus and inherit the eternal home.