

Text: Genesis 50:1-14

Message: “The burial of Jacob”

INTRODUCTION

1. The burial of a loved one
 - a. One of the most challenging events of a person’s life
 - b. A responsibility usually reserved for family members
2. How the living bury the dead matters
 - a. It reveals the heart of a person
 - b. It also reveals the character of the person

JOSEPH’S RESPONSE TO JACOB’S DEATH

¹ Then Joseph fell on his father’s face and wept over him, and kissed him. ² And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. ³ Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

⁴ Now when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, “If now I have found favour in your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, ⁵ ‘My father made me swear, saying, “Behold, I am dying; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me.” Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will come back.’ ”

⁶ And Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.”

Genesis 50:1-6

1. Jacob’s passing (Genesis 49:29-33)
 - a. He charged his sons to bury him in the cave of his fathers in Machpelah
 - b. After the charge, he breathed his last and passed away
2. The sons’ immediate reaction to his father’s passing
 - a. For Joseph, there were deep expressions of sorrow

- b. For his brothers, no such responses were recorded
 - c. The lack of response reflected their lack of closeness to Jacob
- 3. Joseph's instructions to his servants
 - a. He commanded them to embalm his father
 - i. The Egyptians were highly skilled in embalming their dead
 - ii. Embalming was necessary to bring Jacob's body to Canaan
 - iii. It was a costly affair that only the wealthy could afford
 - b. There was national mourning for Jacob for 70 days
 - i. Official mourning period for the prominent dead in Egypt
 - ii. This was fitting for Jacob due to Joseph's high standing in Egypt
- 4. Joseph's request to Pharaoh
 - a. He asked to bury his father in Canaan as he had sworn to him
 - b. Pharaoh graciously agreed to his request
 - c. He also provided his servants and elders to accompany Joseph
 - d. This was the high regard Pharaoh had for Joseph!

THE JOURNEY TO CANAAN

⁷So 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, ⁸as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's house. Only their little ones, their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen. ⁹And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great gathering.

¹⁰Then they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which *is* beyond the Jordan, and they mourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation. He observed seven days of mourning for his father. ¹¹And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This *is* a deep mourning of the Egyptians." Therefore its name was called Abel Mizraim, which *is* beyond the Jordan.

Genesis 50:7-11

- 1. Joseph brought a great entourage to Canaan

- a. Pharaoh's servants and elders
 - b. The elders of the land
 - c. Joseph's family and household
 - d. Chariots and horsemen (likely for protection)
- 2. They observed 7 days of mourning on the way to Canaan
 - a. This was personal family mourning
 - b. Likely due to Joseph's personal relationship with his father
 - c. The mourning was so deep that the inhabitants of the land took notice!

THE BURIAL OF JACOB

¹²So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them. ¹³For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place. ¹⁴And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.

Genesis 50:12-14

- 1. The sons of Jacob did just as Jacob commanded them
 - a. Carried him to the land of Canaan
 - b. Buried him In the cave of Machpelah
 - c. It is the cave which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite
- 2. After Jacob's burial
 - a. Joseph returned to Egypt as he had promised Pharaoh
 - b. His brothers and all who went up with him followed him back

CONCLUSION

- 1. The heart of Joseph

- a. He had a deep love and regard for his father
- b. This was seen in tangible expressions
 - i. Not only did he sorrow at Jacob's death
 - ii. He also provided the finances to embalm him
 - iii. He planned the long journey back to Canaan
 - iv. He conducted his own personal mourning enroute to Canaan

2. The character of Joseph

- a. He kept his promise to bury his father in the cave of Machpelah
- b. He did his best to honour his father's burial
- c. He kept his word to Pharaoh to come back to Egypt

3. Let us be encouraged by Joseph's example

- a. To cultivate our heart
- b. To cultivate our character
- c. This is how we can honour and please God with our life!