

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Evening

Date 28th Nov 2021 Hymns 263, 612, 604 Read: Genesis 35:15-20 Text Genesis 35:16-20
Series: Joseph (2) Title: The death of Joseph's Mother.

In tracing Joseph's early years before the age of seventeen, we come to the fourth and final mention of Joseph before chapter 37, but the second which impacts Joseph's life.

Joseph's name is listed in the register of Jacob's sons in **Genesis 35:24** where we read "**the sons of Rachel, Joseph and Benjamin.**"

As already noted in our Bible reading, this list is recorded after the death of Joseph's Mum Rachel.

This means before the age of seventeen, Joseph was faced with death in the home, but particularly the death of his own mum.

Joseph experienced sorrow of heart at a young age. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief.

Scripture reveals parents whose children or child has died, but here we have a young man, whose Mum has died.

Joseph learned just because you are a child of God or brought up in a home where Dad and Mum worship the Lord, that does not mean you will escape sorrow of heart in the death of loved ones.

Joseph's early years confirm that death is real.

You think of people in general but especially young people who lost their mum or dad, some even lose both parents.

Who got Joseph through the trial and trouble, and who is it that will help you through.

You say the support of family and friends, that is very true, but human help and love can only go so far. You can hide tears or disguise pain and hurt from others.

However, Solomon wrote in **1 Kings 8:39** “**Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;**”)

That one is the Lord Jesus Christ, the burden bearer of all who trust in Him. He knows every tear, and understands every heart break and pain, for He was in the highest and intense sense a man of sorrows and acquainted with our grief.

As the High Priest and Saviour of His people, **Heb 4:15** He is “**touched with the feeling of our infirmities...**” **that means he feels the same, He knows what you going through, He’s been there before you.**

Joseph’s life teaches that in every detail, sorrow of heart, the Lord knows and He is with His people to comfort and help.

Joseph’s hope was in the Lord, as **Heb 11:22** states **by faith Joseph...**”. The Lord brought Joseph through the hardest of times, as He lifts up the downcast.

In thinking about the death of Josephs Mother, there are some foundational truth’s about life and death that I want to highlight today, for our learning.

I FIRST THE DEATH OF JOSEPH’S MOTHER TEACHES THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SOUL AND BODY.

In reading these verses concerning the death of Rachel, we learn the formation or make up of every human being.

Whether male and female we are both body and soul. There is a physical and spiritual aspect to our creation by God.

Notice the words relating to **Rachel’s body, her physical frame,** **Verses 16-17** **And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. ¹⁷ And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou**

shalt have this son also. V19 “And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

Notice the words relating to Rachel’s Soul the spiritual aspect, to her being verse 18 “**and it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died)**....”

Therefore, we must go back to the beginning of creation. On the sixth day of creation man was directly made by God.

The body was made first, and then the soul was placed in that body constituting a pure & blessed union and harmony in our original make-up.

In Gen 2:7 “**the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.**” When God created or formed man, He took dust.

That’s amazing all we are is dust from the ground. Dust in scripture is also called clay. Ecc 3:20 “**All go unto one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.**”

However, the physical formation of man was lifeless, there was no activity, because, all life is derived given by God. Gen 2:7 “and the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” If God had not breathed into man life, he would have been remained lifeless. Therefore, God caused Him to live, he gave Him life.

then in Genesis 2:21-22 “**And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; ²² And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.**

While Eve came from Adam's rib, the point is both men and woman in their physical frame are made from the same dust and both possess a soul given by God. King

Solomon wrote, in **Ecc 3:20** **"All go unto one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."**

Therefore, on the basis of Scripture there is no denying the fact that every single human being possesses a soul.

The reason being humanity was made in God's image, **Gen 1:26-27** **"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..."**

The word man in this verse include both male and female.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them."

Adam was made in God's image in the sense that he possessed knowledge, righteousness and true holiness, but not Infinitely and unchangeably.

When God breathed into man the breath of life, God's breath gave him spiritual understanding. Paul states in **Rom 2:14-15** this spiritual understanding, is God's law written in the heart of man.

Remember that along with all else that God made, all creation including Adam was pronounced to be "...**very good**," **Gen 1:31**.

Eccles 7:29 God made man upright.

Col 3:10 **man's** knowledge of God was clear.

Adam's thought life was perfect. He Saw and understood perfectly the works of God. He could see God in all His creation. He understood, every word from God's mouth.

Adam also had righteousness, Eph 4:24. proving he had no experience of transgression and was possessed of full obedience to God's law.

He was also created with true holiness, Eph 4:24. So every faculty was in agreement with the moral nature of God. He was created with a desire toward God.

However, always keep in view, Adam was not infinite, all powerful, and unchanging otherwise He would be God.

As a creature of God, Adam's love for God was tested, but he failed in that test, From that time, sinned effected the whole man, both body and soul.

The spiritual life of man was effected by his own disobedience. Immediately upon disobeying God, Adam died spiritually. Adam's original Righteousness, Knowledge and holiness had been replaced by darkness and corruption of nature. The reason being men are spiritually dead to God.

Romans 5:12 ***"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*** The word **entered** signifies ***an action of a moment including both the sin and the death mentioned.***

Therefore, in that one moment or act, Adam sinned and Adam died. Moreover, being the representative of the entire human race, Adam's sin was the sin of all men & Adam's spiritual death was the spiritual death of all men. Therefore, with reference to that same moment in history, the moment that Adam sinned and died, all men sinned and died with him.

So the point I'm making is this, the whole person is effected because of sin,

both body and soul, bare the curse and penalty of sin at death.

The body will die, but the soul given by God and made in God's image cannot die, and so you have a soul that needs to be saved, brought back into fellowship with God.

Death is the equaliser among mankind. Young or old, rich or poor, all will physically die.

in **2 Sam 19:3** Barzillai, asked the King, ***how long have I to live?*** Isaac said to his son in **Gen 27:2** ***"I am old, I know not the day of my death."***

death comes, at any time, any age and by any means. Rachel was an older woman who died giving birth to her son. **Prov 27:1** ***"Boast not thyself of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."***

But for the Christian death is another matter altogether. Child of God, though we will physically die, yet because we have been saved by grace we have eternal life, ***for He that hath the Son hath life***, we have passed from spiritual death to spiritual life, which is in itself eternal life.

Paul, encouraged the Corinth believers, concerning death, **1 Cor 15:55**, ***"O death where is thy sting?"*** Christ has taken away the sting and terror of death for all who will trust Him.

Through His death, Christ has turned the curse of death into a blessing, as **Heb 11:13**, ***"These all died in faith."*** when a believer dies they do so by faith in Christ.

II SECOND, THE DEATH OF JOSEPH'S MOTHER TEACHES THE DEPARTURE OF THE SOUL FROM THE BODY

The death of Rachel, teaches what death is or what constitutes death. Have you asked that question or been asked that question? What is death, some would answer, it is when the heart stops, but not so, because during heart operations the heart is medically stopped, but the person is still alive. But Death is when the soul leaves the body.

Notice what scripture says about Rachel's death **Genesis 35:18**, ***"And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she***

died) that she called his name Benoni.” That was her soul, but notice her body in **Verse 19** **“and Rachel died, and was buried in way to E-phrath, which is Bethlehem.**

When Christ died on the cross, **Luke 23:46** **“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, He gave up the ghost.”** Then He buried in a tomb.

Therefore, at death the soul departs from the body. Furthermore, at death, when soul leaves the body, it continues to exist. The soul is eternal, the soul cannot die, it cannot decay.

Yes, the body weakens, dies and corrupts, but the soul lives on. Why is that important, because there are many who will teach lies, that at death the soul is annihilated, it ceases to be, or when a person dies that it all over. Some will say the soul is trapped between worlds trying to find its way back.

However, the Bible, God’s infallible word, teaches the soul lives after death, in God’s eternity.

Job asked a searching question, that must be answered here today, **Job 14:10** **“ man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?”** How searching are the words of this question – **“and where is he?”**

when a person dies where are they.

Now if the soul stopped to exist, these words would be pointless, but the question is asked, let me ask you today, when you die, where will you spend eternity.

Im not asking what grave site are you going to be buried? The body will be buried, but the soul lives on.

Im glad when Rachel died she did so in the Lord.

Immediately upon death the soul enters either heaven or hell. There is no in between place. The soul will either enjoy eternal

blessedness with Christ, or endure eternal punishment in hell for rejecting Christ as Saviour.

Think of **Luke 16**, the rich man lives his life in sin no thought of Christ as Saviour. **Verse 22-23** "*the rich man also died, and was buried; ²³ And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments...*" **verse 24** "*I am tormented in this flame.*" His soul exists in hell under divine wrath.

However, Rachel in death went to be with her Saviour, in using words of **Psalm 23:4** "*though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*"

David said in **1 Samuel 20:3** *There is a step between me and death.*

For God's people that last step at death will be the first step into eternal blessing, but for the unsaved the last step at death will be into eternal punishment.

Rachel's hope was in the Lord, we learn that God's design for the soul and body. **Christ paid with His own blood, both the body and soul of His people** and when Christ returns in Glory the soul and body for every believer, will be reunited again, and transformed, into a glorious body for we shall be like Christ.

One day there will be reunion, with love ones.

Unsaved one your body and Soul will reunited for eternal punishment. Trust in Christ, He alone save from God's wrath.

Joseph knew though his mum died, yet she died with her trust in Christ.