

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH – SERMON 24

HAVING A GODLY PERSPECTIVE IN LIFE

Genesis 50:1-21

INTRODUCTION

- How we look at things and the perspective we have in life, makes a great difference in the way we handle the events of life.
- Many professing Christians, who claim to know the Lord, live their lives as if He doesn't exist.
- They are *practical atheists*.
- This perspective manifests itself in pessimism, selfishness, bitterness, fatalism, worldliness and fear.
- We need to have, like Joseph, a view on life that keeps God right in the centre of it.

Consider three areas where we need to have a godly perspective in life:

I. WITH REGARDS TO THE GRAVE'S SORROW (1-14)

A. Jacob's death and burial

1. He had given strict instructions regarding his burial (49:29-33)
2. The Egyptians embalmed Jacob
3. The Egyptians mourned Jacob's death for seventy days – just two days less than for a Pharaoh

4. Joseph asked permission of Pharaoh to go and bury his father in Canaan (4-5)
5. It was a “very great company” that went up to Canaan
6. Jacob was finally buried alongside Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah and Leah (13)

B. The importance of mourning

1. Mourning is a necessary process (cf. Matthew 5:4)
2. Mourning shows respect for the dead
3. The house of mourning is better than the house of feasting (Ecclesiastes 7:1-4)
4. Mourning should come to an end
 - a. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning (Psalms 30:5)
 - b. The believer does not mourn as those which have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14)

II. WITH REGARDS TO THE GUILT OF SIN (15-18)

A. Joseph’s brethren feared his vengeance

1. It is unlikely that Jacob ever left such a message they attributed to him (16-17)
2. It was their uneasy consciences that troubled them, not Joseph’s behaviour
3. We often ascribe motives to other people that are our own

4. They expected Joseph to hate them, as they had hated him (Genesis 37:4-5)
- B. In the same way Joseph's brethren doubted his forgiveness, many Christians doubt God's forgiveness
1. Doubting God's forgiveness brings fear
 2. Doubting God's forgiveness slanders God
 3. The believer's sins are cast into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19)
 4. The believer's sins are cast behind His back (Isaiah 38:17)
 5. The believer's sins are blotted out (Isaiah 44:22; 43:25)
 6. The believer's sins are forgotten (Hebrews 8:12; 10:17)
 7. There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1)
 8. We can have boldness (Ephesians 3:12)

III. WITH REGARDS TO GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY (19-21)

A knowledge of God's sovereignty:

- A. Helps us to forgive (19)
- B. Helps us know our place (19)
 1. When we seek vengeance we take the place of God (1 Peter 4:19)

C. Helps us to cope with suffering (20)

1. This is often called the Romans 8:28 of the Old Testament (Romans 8:28)

2. Not everything that happens in this world is God's will, but God uses all things to accomplish His will (Psalms 76:10)

D. Helps us to reward kindness for evil (21; Romans 12:17-21)