

Cremation

Is It Christian Or Pagan?

In recent months, a number of people have asked me if cremation is Scriptural and acceptable to God. It is a subject that most people would rather avoid, but in recent years it has become quite an issue. More and more people are electing to have themselves or their loved ones cremated due to the reduced cost compared to customary burial. The purpose of this tract is to take a brief and concise, but in-depth, look at this subject. We will see what the Bible has to say about it, and then, as a Christian, you can decide what to do regarding this sensitive matter.

The first point I would like to make is that cremation does not affect salvation as many people are cremated without the knowledge of it happening to their remains. I do emphatically state, however, that no properly informed Christian would choose cremation. We do know that some people are accidentally burned to death in fires of various types and causes. We also know that the Church of Rome burned many Christian martyrs at the stake. Certainly, being a victim of an earthly fire does not necessarily determine where you will spend eternity.

We must ask the question, why would a Christian choose to have his or her body burned to ashes after death? In I Corinthians 6:19-20, we read as follows: "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Why would a Christian want to burn to ashes the temple that God lived in?

We also understand that God refers to the body at the time of death as a seed to be planted. In I Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-44, we read, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body...So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Thus, the body is to be sown, or planted, in the ground and not burned to ashes.

We also know that our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, was buried, and He is our great example in all things. When Jesus blessed the woman who had anointed Him shortly before He was crucified, He said the following words, which are found in Mark 14:8-9: "She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." Thus, the burial of Jesus was a part of the Gospel itself. The Gospel, or good news, is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Gospel cannot be represented by choosing to have your body burned!

We also know that when Moses died, God himself buried him. In Deuteronomy 34:5-6 we read the following words: "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day." In this case, God himself did the burying, and He did not cremate Moses! We also know that Satan, to whom is reserved everlasting fire, wanted the body of Moses but could not have it. Verse 9 of Jude tells us, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst

not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."

Yet another example tells us of Joseph, the son of Jacob, in Hebrews 11:22. "By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gave commandment concerning his bones." Please note that it was a commandment and not a suggestion concerning his bones!

Fire has always been a sign of the judgment of Almighty God! We know that God rained fire on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the pervasive homosexuality in those cities. We read of this in Genesis, chapters 18 and 19. These cities and their inhabitants were incinerated, or cremated, by the wrath of Almighty God.

We also read of God's anger and consternation against Moab because of their cremation activity. In Amos 2:1 we read, "Thus saith the Lord, for three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime."

After reading all of the above, we can certainly conclude that voluntary cremation is wrong in the eyes of God. We also know that it is pagan! Idolatry often included human sacrifice in the

fires of pagan gods like Chemosh and Molech. That is why God commanded the following in Deuteronomy 18:10: "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch." Here we see the connection of the burning of bodies with witchcraft itself. We know that both witches, who do not believe in Satan, and Satanists, who do believe in Satan, use the power of fire in their forbidden crafts. We also know that Hinduism and Buddhism use cremation in their false religions. This brings out another point which should tie this whole subject together.

In these last days before the return of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus, we know that many false religions would arise and deceive many. We read of this in Matthew, chapter 24; Luke, chapter 21; and Mark, chapter 13. We also see from Luke, chapter 17, that the spirits of homosexuality would fill the world before Jesus Christ's return and turn the entire earth into a latter day Sodom. We now see this coming to pass. The United States, for example, is filled with Eastern religions, Buddhism, Hinduism and others of that ilk. Homosexuality, lesbianism, and bisexuality are also everywhere in America. Do you see the connection of all of this with fire? It is no wonder that the spirit of cremation and

burning is becoming so popular. It is compatible with the other spirits who have used it for centuries. Cremation and burning is also the spirit of Sodom, and it was fiery wrath that turned Sodom to ashes.

The spirit of cremation is in defiance to the plan of the Almighty God, the Creator. After Adam and Eve sinned and death became a part of existence, God told them in Genesis 3:19, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Ecclesiastes 12:7 states likewise, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

Christians should know better than to purposely select to have their bodies burned! If you didn't know it before, now you do! If we walk in obedience, we will have the joy of the Lord; and death is nothing more than a step into the glorious presence of God forever. We must dedicate our bodies, souls, and minds unto our Saviour. Glory to his Name!

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