

Lecture 4: *Cremation*

A Biblical View of Man

Extra-biblical History of Cremation

Inhumation in the Bible

Burning Bodies in the Bible

Cremation in the Bible

Conclusions

Discussion 4: *Cremation*

Questions from the Lecture

1. In Acts 17:32, the Greeks mock Paul because he speaks to them about the resurrection. They believed the body to be evil/bad, and the spirit to be good. How is Christianity different? You can use *Westminster Shorter Catechism* #37 & 38 to help you formulate your answer.
2. In the narratives of the Bible we see that burying, or inhumation, is the exclusive practice of dealing with the dead, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Does this observation have any bearing on our discussion about cremation? Explain.
3. What are the different reasons for burning bodies in the Bible? You should be able to find three uses by looking at Leviticus 21:9, 1 Kings 13:2, and 2 Kings 17:17.
4. There is one possible example of cremation in the Bible, found in 1 Samuel 31:12-13. What are some possible explanations for its use? What is unique about the account following cremation?

Questions from the Reading

1. The history of cremation is fairly recent in our culture. Starting on page 3 look at its development in the west and comment on how this truth should influence the way we use cremation.
2. Section 2.7 deals with the increased popularity of cremation in our day. Choose one of the seven arguments given and point out the strengths and weaknesses of the position.
3. On page 7, there is a section that deals with fire as an agent of judgment in the Bible. Can we apply this use of fire to treatment of the body, especially in light of what we have discussed in lecture question #3?
4. Is the burial of Christ himself something that is persuasive to you as you consider cremation vs. burial? Why or why not?
5. How ought we to respond to someone who has come to a different conclusion than us on this topic? Why?