

MOURNING (*Grief, Sadness, Sorrow*)

What does the Bible teach us about mourning?

BIBLE READING: Genesis 50:1-26

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *When they arrived at Atad (meaning “Threshing Place of Brambles”), beyond the Jordan River, they held a very great and solemn funeral service, with a seven-day period of lamentation for Joseph’s father.* (Genesis 50:10, TLB)

Mourning takes time. When Jacob died at the age of 147, Joseph wept and mourned for months. When someone close to us dies, we need a long period of time to work through our grief. Crying and sharing our feelings with others helps us recover and go on with life. Allow yourself and others the freedom to grieve over the loss of a loved one, and give yourself time enough to complete your grieving process.

BIBLE READING: 2 Samuel 1:1-16

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *David and his men tore their clothes in sorrow when they heard the news. They mourned and wept and fasted all day for Saul and his son Jonathan, and for the Lord’s people, and for the men of Israel who had died that day.* (2 Samuel 1:11-12, TLB)

Mourning is an appropriate response to the loss of a loved one. “They mourned and wept and fasted all day.” David and his men were visibly shaken over Saul’s and Jonathan’s death. Their actions showed their genuine sorrow over the loss of their king, their friend Jonathan, and the other soldiers of Israel who died that day. They were not ashamed to grieve. Today, some people consider expressing emotions to be a sign of weakness. Those who wish to appear strong try to hide their feelings. But expressing our grief can help us deal with our intense sorrow when a loved one dies.

BIBLE READING: John 11:17-44

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *Jesus wept.* (John 11:35, NIV)

Jesus experienced grief. John stresses that we have a God who cares. This portrait contrasts with the Greek concept of God that was popular in that day—a god with no emotions and no messy involvement with humans. Here we see many of Jesus’ emotions—compassion, indignation, sorrow, even frustration. He often expressed deep emotion, and we must never be afraid to reveal our true feelings to him. He understands them, for he experienced them. Be honest, and don’t try to hide anything from your Savior. He cares.

Jesus did not hesitate to reveal his emotions. When Jesus saw the weeping and wailing, he too wept openly. Perhaps he empathized with their grief, or perhaps he was troubled at their unbelief. In either case, Jesus showed that he cares enough for us to weep with us in our sorrow.