**Disposal of the death**

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1. **Introduction**

Everyday 150.000 people die. I do not consider it a normal thing. Death can actually be considered an ultimate kill-joy, which we cannot but accept under protest. ‘Memento mori’ means ‘remember that you have to die’. No less important than this, is to consider what should happen to the body *after death*. In any case, the human body will totally disappear after a course of time.So why should we have toworry about it? As if it is totally unimportant, the subject *disposal of the dead*is completely absent from many manuals on Protestant-Christian ethics.1However, I would like to make an attempt to explain théor áChristian ethic related to the burial acts. To invoke tradition as an argument is not strong.2

Especially for church leaders I think reflection on this is valuable, because all kinds of requests concerning the treatment of the deceased can be addressed to them. The disposal of the deceased has a great diversity. They can be classified according to the four elements: earth, water, air and fire. This is where the worldwide traditions come from: A dead man can be *interred*or placed in a grave. We then speak of a funeral. One can let a dead person drift off at sea or on a river. He is then entrusted to the *water*. It is often believed that the mortal remains finally reach their destination in a mysterious place far away. One can give a dead person a (high) place in the *air*. In that way he becomes a prey for scavengers such as hyenas and vultures, or for sun, rain and wind. The remaining bones can get a place in the house of the bereaved relatives.

This is actually a rare phenomenon. One can let a dead person becomeashes by *fire*. This form of body disposal happens in all parts of the world (especially in Buddhism and Hinduism).3The Dutch Burial Act4has been changed very often in the last century. In 1955, cremation was still illegal in the Netherlands. Opinions, also among Christianson the subject of activities of funeral undertakers, started to shift enormously.5

1. **Deceased fetuses**

A specific theme concerns fetuses that die during pregnancy. In this Article 2 1b of the Dutch Burial Acts, a stillborn child is described as ‘'the human fetus that is born lifeless after a gestational period of at least 24 weeks', but this period may be shortened in the future. Thanks to medical developments,sometimes viability outside the uterus can already occur before twenty-four weeks of pregnancy. When a fetus dies *before*the twenty-four weeks of pregnancy specified by law, this is usually referred to as a miscarriage. If a fetus dies *after*twenty four weeks, this law applies the term ‘stillborn’6.

From the beginning of 2017, it has become possible in the Netherlands to have a stillborn child included in the Register of births.A petition to this effect was signed by 82,000 people. This is the only way to recognize the existence of children. There will be a possibility (on a voluntary basis) of a birth certificate.7In Almere, a graveyard has been opened for children born before the 24th week of pregnancy, but that place can only be taken for five years.8

**3.Thanatopraxis**

Thanatopraxis is the artificial temporary slowing down of the decomposition process in order to keep a mortal remains in good condition until the funeral. Since 1 January 2010, the 'light embalming', called thanatopraxis, has been legally permitted in the Netherlands, which is increasingly being used. (In 2010 a few hundred, while in 2013 more than 1200 treatments were used).9

Thanatopraxis is a modern method to *temporarily*preserve a deceased body for up to three weeks after death and can be divided into two parts: the temporary preservation as such and the cosmetic part (the 'restoration' of a deceased person and the make-up, so that for example blue nails disappear and often a face gets a little color again). Liquids can be used with or without formaldehyde solution.

The fluid is introduced into the body through an opening in the neck or inguinal artery. The blood is then transported via a vein and collected. This is a specialist treatment that may only be carried out by a qualified thanatopractor.

The final costs for the care and cooling of a deceased person at a home location are approximately equal to a thanatopraxis treatment.10

1. **Cooling and embalming**

Because thanatopraxis is a difficult word for many, it is popularly referred to as embalming. In the Netherlands there are legally permitted possibilities to preserve a deceased person: cooling (up to 3 - 5 degrees Celsius).

Think of a cooling room, a bed cooling system and a coffin cooling system. By cooling a body, the decomposition is slowed down. By embalming, a deceased person remains presentable than is possible with cooling alone, and therefore people can take more time to say goodbye. This can be beneficial for the bereavement processof the next of kin. Embalming is a method to preserve a deceased body for *a longer period of time*, on average from a few days after death, up to a maximum of three weeks.This is a treatment in which a preserving liquid (with very low concentration of formaldehyde in the solution) is introduced into the body, with the aim of stopping the natural decomposition by internal bacteria. Embalming does not substantially alter the natural appearance of the deceased. If desired, restoration techniques and camouflage make-up are used. By using dyes in the liquid, the facial color of the deceased becomes less white, slightly pinker. The formaldehyde solution has a protein hardening effect on the body cells of the deceased.

1. **Mummification**

Mummification is a traditional method known from ancient Egypt, whereby a deceased body was prepared for conservation for eternal life.

The ancient Egyptians were experts in this and immersed the body of a deceased pharaoh or noble person in a bath of caustic soda, after which the internal organs were removed and placed in stone or earthenware pots. These were usually buried together with the mummy. The body was wrapped in linen bandages or cloths, infused with cedar wood oil and other natural substances, herbs and oils.

Then the body was placed in a sarcophagus and buried in a pyramid or tomb. The purpose was to keep the body forever, and as people can see in the museum of Cairo, it worked reasonably well. Mummification occurred also in other ancient cultures, such as the Incas.11

Mummification occurs when a body dries out by natural or artificial means. Two conditions are required for mummification: a dry environment and a relatively small body mass.

Spontaneous mummification occurs earlier if the body of the deceased (generally a thin person) contains little body fat mass. Moisture (together with a high ambient temperature) accelerates the decomposition process.

1. **Body donors**

Human remains can be made available to science.

Those who leave their bodies to education and science do something other than donate organs.12At Erasmus MC, anatomy education is given to medical students. In addition, specialists learn to perform orthopaedics, traumatology or plastic surgery operations. On average, a body remains for two years, after which it is cremated. Since 17 September 2016 there is a memorial on the Rotterdam graveyard Hofwijk. There appeared to be a great need for this monument. This monument was not financed from the education budget, but 12,000 euros was raised by students, hospital staff and relatives. Embalming nowadays is done with formaldehyde, but also with the liquid AnubiFIX.

13Plastination is a method to preserve dead organisms using a preparation of acetone and liquid silicone rubber is used. This is done not only for scientific purposes, but also for entertainment. ‘Body Worlds’ is the only anatomy exhibition in the world based on a donor programme. The special prepared and stuffed dead bodies with unrecognizable persons are as fascinating as they are creepy. The donors hereby are persons who record in their will that after their death their bodies may be used for educational purposes in the exhibition. All plastinates of whole bodies and most specimens come from those donors.

Some specimens that represent something very unusual come from ancient anatomical collections or morphological institutes. At the moment, the Institute for Plastination has a donor pool of more than 13,000 people worldwide, including 60 Dutch people.14

In the Netherlands some 16,000 people are registered as body donors.

Every year, about 650 bodies do not end directly in a grave or urn, but on the cutting table. A few decades ago, the Netherlands was still struggling with a permanent shortage of body donors, but now there is even a registration ban.

Secularization is an important reason of the increased willingness to donate the body to science. The church’s involvement in body donors seems to be much lower than in the society as a whole. For many donors, the underlying motivation is to want to live on after their death.15

1. **Funeral**

At a funeral the deceased person is literally buried. In the old centuries preferably *in*the church building, but that was more for the elite.

People were also buried in the court (garden) right next to the church: the graveyard. Stillborn babies that had not yet been baptized, were not allowed to be buried at the graveyard for centuries. That is why they were buried at dusk, in stone cooking pots, close to the cemetery, under the hedge. These were popularly called hedge funerals.16

Because churches and the surrounding graveyards became overcrowded and hygiene started to play a major role, people decided at the end of the 18thcentury to move the graveyards to areas outside the city. Napoleon (1804) and King William I (1829) tried to introduce a ban on church funerals and burials within the city. However, this did not last long. Besides, due to the strong growth of cities, many graveyards that had initially been placed outside the city were later again enclosed by the urban expansion. Since 1869, the Netherlands has had the so-called Burial Act, which regulates the only legally permitted delivery of dead bodies: burial in a graveyard or in a field for the scattering of ashes. Graves can be very sober with only a few data on the tombstone or with all kinds of attributes such as a picture of the deceased, a small truck near the grave of a truck driver, lamps, etc. All these gravestones, concrete, wood, metal are a burden for the environment but a tribute to the deceased. In 1998, the grave rest period was reduced from twenty to at least ten years. There are differences in these periods, but also in the costs per municipality or even per graveyard.17

It is a misconception that the remains of the dead are still burnt after ten years; this only happens if the surviving relatives give permission to do so. In principle, the remains are reburied in a closed part of the graveyard, the so-called ‘pit of bones’. If someone never wants to be reburied, they have to buy a grave with grave rights for an indefinite period of time. It is advisable to record this with a notary. A new trend has been imported from England: the natural graveyards. Every year there are at least two or three more. The motive for this choice is often the eternal rest on the grave, so that the grave does not have to be cleared or maintained. The payment of grave dues for maintenance is not necessary either.In a natural or green graveyard, the deceased are often buried without a memorial, or with a grave ‘stone’ which is biodegradable, for example of wood. GPS coordinates can be used to indicate where someone is lying.

Only half a percent of the deceased makes this choice, but the interest of this small group is great.18

As the Christian faith loses ground, contact with nature seems to gain ground. Italian designers Anna Citelli and Raoul Bretsel hope to set a new trend. They intend to offer people another option besides burial or cremation: An egg shaped “seed” casket made of 100% biodegradable starch plastic, in which the deceased is planted in the fetal position and planted in the soil after which a tree of their own choice grows out of their decaying body. Do you find this Capsula Mundi project creepy? Probably. But that is a burial or cremation just as well. In addition, it is a lot more eco-friendly to die this way. “For a normal casket, precious old trees are now used,” according to the team of their website.

“It took a tree like that ten to forty years to grow, while the final casket is only used for three days”.

Just as the planet provides for our lives, they say, our death can be a way to givesomething back. It should lead to traditional cemeteries becoming a kind of sacred forest, which literally keeps the memory of the deceased alive. "Planting several trees next to each other creates a beautiful forest, where children can learn about nature and adults can take a walk, thinking of their loved ones.”19

As it has already been mentioned above, the decomposition by *cooling*a body is slowed down and by *embalming*a deceased person remains presentable longer than it is possible with cooling alone. As a result, more time can be taken to say goodbye, which may be beneficial for the mourning process of the bereaved relatives. Embalming is a method to preserve a deceased body for a longer time, on an average from a few days after death, up to a maximum of three weeks.

This is a treatment whereby a preserving liquid (with a very low concentration of formaldehyde in the solution) is injected into the body, with the aim of stopping the natural decomposition by internal bacteria. Embalming does not substantially alter the natural appearance of the deceased. If desired, restoration techniques and camouflage make-up are used. By using dyes in the liquid, the facial color of the deceased becomes less pale, a little pinker. The formaldehyde solution has a protein hardening effect on the body cells of the deceased. However, the natural decomposition of a body will continue after some time, unless a heavy fixation has taken place, because then the body will not decay further into the ground.

1. **Sea burial**

An exceptional form of a funeral is the *seaman’s grave*or *sea burial*.

Whereas in the past a seaman’s grave was an emergency measure, nowadays one (think of sailors and ocean lovers) can consciously choose for this. If someone dies on board of a ship, the wishes of the deceased determine what happens to the body. In principle, a corpse is brought ashore, but if it is not possible directly or quickly by helicopter, the mortal remains can be cooled and stored and brought ashore with a (n) (other) ship. According to the funeral law, a seaman’s grave may only take place on a Dutch ship in international waters. Only 36 hours after death, a deceased person is allowed to be given a seaman’s grave, but only if the state of health on board would be endangered, the corpse is allowed to be thrown overboard earlier. A seaman’s grave means that a deceased person is thrown overboard on the open sea, because the body cannot be kept on board until one gets to shore. There are strict requirements for the coffin: it must weigh at least 100 kilos, have at least 12 holes of 20 mm on each side and be closed with two steel straps to prevent the coffin from disintegrating immediately after the launch blow. Furthermore, the deceased must have a plastic band on two different limbs with the name, the date of the funeral and the telephone number of the undertaker. Often the captain commemorates the deceased and pronounces a short prayer and a Bible section is read. The boatswain takes away the flag and calls out 'a.... two ... three .... in God's name' (the traditional farewell greeting), after which the coffin slides into the water.

In the Netherlands the seaman's grave is not allowed, but the United Kingdom is the nearest country with four legal locations designated for (expensive!) sea burials. At these places, where fishing is not allowed, the sea is more than 300 meters deep. In the United Kingdom, a seaman's grave occurs about 25 to 30 times a year.20In Portugal (but not for foreigners), in South Africa, around the Cape of Good Hope and in some American states bordering the sea, seaman's graves are also legally possible.21However, with a burial at sea, one cannot visit a graveyard with a visible memorial stone, which can help at the mourning process.

1. **Cremation**

Cremation is derived from the Latin word ‘cremare’ and has the meaning of burning a body. At a cremation, also knowns as incineration, the mortal remains are burnt. It is a deliberate destruction of the body, including the bones.

**9.1 History of cremation**

In the late Bronze Age (1,500-400 BC) cremation was the most common funeral method. Due to economic reasons (firewood became scarce so expensive) people started to bury the deceased. In 785 AD, Charles the Great issued a ban against the burning of dead bodies. In this *Capitulare Paderbrunnense*, he forbade under threat of death to burn a deceased according to the rite of the pagans.22Burning occurred within the Christianized world, but then as a punishment.23Under the influence of Christianity, cremations were ’not-done’ in the Netherlands, until the 19thcentury. Cremation became more interesting again in the 20thcentury. The question is whether this is a modern development or a return to old paganism. The linguist and founder of the fairy tale research J.L.K. Grimm, was also called the father of the modern cremation. Grimm pointed out that before Christianity took control in the northern world, the burning of corpses was the common form of funeral care among the Germanic people.

It is remarkable that the first modern crematorium was opened in 1873 in Campo Santo at Milan, i.e. in Roman Catholic Italy. The first successful propaganda for the introduction of cremation was based on the Freemasons in Italy.24Freemasonry has played a major role at the spreading of the modern cremation idea. Modern cremation in the Western world has its origins in rationalism. From this direction, everything that cannot be rationalized with reason, including the Christian idea of the resurrection, is considered unacceptable.25On 22 June 1874, the first legal regulation of cremation was also established in Italy. In 1878 Germany followed with a crematorium in Gotha in the Thuringian Forest.

Around 1874, the ‘Association for Incineration of the dead’ or the ‘Association for Facultative Cremation’ was founded in The Hague, with the first cremation (of mr. C.J. Vaillant, head board member of the Association of Optional Incineration of the Dead. After a hundred minutes this process was completed, which consumed 120 liters of oil) took place on 1stApril 1914 in the Westerveld Crematorium in The Hague. This promptly resulted in a lawsuit, because cremation was still illegal at that time.Because nothing had been arranged, no sanctions were imposed. In 1919, the Association for Cremation (AVVL) was added. Together they propagated the use of the first Dutch Crematorium at Velzen, which was opened in 1914. The first Dutch man who was incinerated, was the novelist Eduard Douwes Dekker or Multatuli. He was cremated much earlier, in 1887, in Germany. Only since then, cremation has been legalized in the Netherlands and in Belgium since 1932. When in 1964 the Roman Catholic Church determined that ‘cremation in itself is neither good nor bad’, the cremation rate increased by leaps and bounds.26Cremation would go against the Christian tradition, but not against Christian doctrine. The general Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands of 1961, took the position that for the reformed believers, burial would be the way of burial activities, but it all sounded somewhat hesitant.27A legal provision of 26thSeptember 1968 abolished all restrictions regarding cremation for our country and made burial and cremation legally equal. As a result, the name ‘Funeral Law’ was changed to ‘Burial Act’. Discussion points concerning cremation, were: hygiene; possible traces after a crime; economic aspects and the amount of space that a corpse or ashes occupied. However, the main arguments were and continued to be the ethical and religious considerations.28

It is striking that in the Netherlands, atheists in particular, first pleaded for cremation. We should also note that non-believers, atheists and a-religious people were the first to be cremated. A little later, the Liberal Protestants followed. With the choice for cremation one intends to proclaim that there is no eternity, no God, no judgment, and no resurrection from the dead, so no hope.

But all this will not interest modern man and will on the contrary distance itself from it. Cremation no longer takes place out of a kind of antichristian attitude.

In cremation there is something noticeable of commercialization and camouflage of death, whereby the process of decomposition is shortened as it pleases. There is no doubt that the application of cremation in Europe has been opposed and later completely banned by the Christian doctrine of the physical resurrection from the dead. In 1874, both the Protestant leader Abraham Kuyper and in 1886, the Roman Catholic leader Pope Leo XIII strongly rejected cremation, but they seem to have fewer and fewer supporters. Nowadays, cremation of a deceased person has been socially accepted that approximately 57% of the population chooses cremation after death.29Even 75% of the deceased are currently cremated in England. In 2012 the number of crematoriums has grown to 71 and in 2017 to 93 in the Netherlands. Every year, 94,000 people are cremated, which is 63% of the total number of the deceased.

With the expected growth of a number of cremations (mainly due to the increase of the number of deaths), dozens of new crematoriums are planned to be built.30

The (controversial) chairman of the board J.M.H.J. (Henry) Keizer of the Optional Group (since 1874) says that the big shift from burial to cremation happened in the sixties and seventies. This had everything to with the secularization. Traditions shifted and people searched for and are searching for new customs. A Frisian funeral director observes a new trend: ‘football is religion and the stadium is the church’. According to the consumers’ demands, the funeral industry makes skillful use of this trend. Mourning announcement cards can be sent with the logo of, for example, the Cambuur football club; the ceremony can be held in the stadium and the player’s bus is available to guide the deceased fan to his last resting place. It is even considered to scatter the ashes of the deceased on the main field.31Feyenoord does not lag behind: A real Feyenoord area will be set up at the Zuiderbegraafplaats in Rotterdam-Zuid. The grass swards from the Kuip will be brought to the Zuiderbegraafplaats. There will also be a scattering field in the shape of the Kuip. A funeral in the Kuip, a casket in Feyenoord colors, the players’ bus as the support car for the mourning relatives and being buried under the sacred grass of the Kuip, it is all possible. Board member Mark Koevermans says: “For many supporters, the club is, next to family and friends, more or less the most important thing there is.”32Football is increasingly taking the form of a religion. But now we shall return to our subject: cremation.

**9.2 Practice and technique of cremation**

Although the new Burial and Cremation Act which came into force on 1stJuly 1991, does not permit burial and cremation without a casket, many crematoriums refuse to cremate bodies without a casket out of humanitarian considerations, partly out of respect towards their employees. This legal rule has mainly been attributed to ethnic minorities who, for religious reasons or traditions, do not use a coffin, such as Muslims who wish to be buried in a kneeling position with their faces eastwards, and Hindus who are cremated in a linen cloth.33Pace-makers can explode in the oven of a crematorium, causing noise nuisance and damage to the oven. They had to be removed because of a dangerous radioactive core. Nowadays, a pacemaker contains a battery that belongs in the chemical waste. Crematorium staff are regularly at risk because cell-phones and bottles of liquor explode in the ovens. People place them in the casket at the last minute. Batteries and bottles explode in the heat of at least 850 degrees Celsius. In cremations, the mortal remains are heated to approximately 750 degrees Celsius, then the fuel supply is cut off and when there is no more fire, the mortal remains are put in the oven and converted into ashes. This process takes about 70 minutes. The approximately three kilos of ashes go into an ash container and the ash container into a pottery, wooden or a china urn, which can also be made of biodegradable material. After the cremation has taken place, the ashes must be kept for at least one month in the crematorium, according to the law. This period is to give the bereaved relatives time to reflect on the ash destination.34Up to six ash containers can be buried in the urn-graves, after which they are covered with a natural stone panel. Here, the dividing wall between cremation and funeral is very thin. The green graveyards Bleric and Saint Odiliënberg reintroduced a millennia-long tradition of the burial of ashes in perishable urns. As in pre-Christian times, the urns are made of unfired clay, where relatives can also give a small gift to the deceased. This sand urn is placed on a hill grave in the center of other sand urns and merges with the surrounding soil. According to the administrator, there is a lot of interest in this.35

Usually, the urn with ashes is placed temporarily (for three years) in an urn gallery (columbarium), which is a wall with alcoves). Sometimes a columbarium is built in a church. But after a cremation, people can also choose for the scattering of the ashes. Emotionally, this gives a form of freedom. As many people think, ashes do not belong in an urn, or in a columbarium; they prefer to scatter it on foot, by ship or by airplane in a natural and different environment such as over the sea, in a forest, on the mountains, in the blue sky.  Recently, a former roman catholic church in Arnhem has opened its doors to 4,600 urns and memorial plaques, a ‘memorary’, which is a contraction of ‘in memory of’ and ‘columbarium’. The costs for it are: 2,365 euros for ten years. So it is not the intention that the urns will stay there for decades. The memorary is more of an intermediate station before the mourning relatives proceed to scatter or bury the ashes.36Yet another and new way of scattering the ashes is to fill a biodegradable balloon with a maximum of 1.6 kilogram of ashes per balloon and helium.

The attendees can follow the balloon for approximately 8 to 15 minutes under the right weather conditions. If the balloon goes up, the pressure outside the balloon decreases in relation to the pressure in the balloon causing the balloon to swell to a diameter of 450 cm. At an altitude of 20 to 25 kilometers, the pressure on the wall of the balloon gets so great that it snaps into small fragments and the ashes spread over the four corners of the compass.37According to the chairman F. Polders of the Dutch Union of Entrepreneurs in the Funeral Service Industry (NUVU), moreand more surviving relatives rare regretting after a cremation, because they do not have a place to visit the deceased, which is a part of the process of mourning. ”If they have bought a cheap funeral, the bill is still higher because a psychiatrist has to be paid. This really happens.”38But whether the solution to this problem should be sought in the following other technical possibilities is very much the question: The ashes (with the chemical formula ‘C’ (carbon) can be compressed to a diamond (also “C’). For 2,500 euros, a diamond of a quarter carat can be made in Chicago.39

 Furthermore, the ashes can be processed in an ash tattoo, but the health risks are such that minister Schippers of Public Heath advises against its use. Actually, it is likely that the ashes when mixed with the ink by the tattooist is no longer sterile and in addition, the ashes may contain harmful substances (carcinogenic, such as PAHs).40The urn or the jewel with the ashes can be embraced, caressed and cuddled and reassurance or wise counsel can be derived from it.41One can wonder whether the dead is not only honored in this way but even worshiped, which is an unhealthy bond. There is even a French company that intends to secure the typical scent which a person wore when still living, by chemically recreate it from his/her clothing or bedlinen and sell it to the bereaved relatives. The costs are: $ 600.42

Honoring the deceased is fine, but veneration goes too far. Here too, idolatry is just around the corner. A new invention in the processing of the ashes of the dead is a concrete memorial tableau. With the commemorative facades, Cinovum43wants to offer the mourning relatives tangible consolation. In the concrete, a personal photograph of the loved one can be placed. Lovers can also be immortalized together in one work of art. In a commemorative facade, it is also possible to use the ashes of several dead persons, bringing generations back together. An existing facade can be mixed with new ashes, by professionally grinding and reusing it. The ashes can also be divided in several facades, so that everyone from the family or other loved ones have their own commemorative facade. It is an outcome for people who do not prefer to have a fragile urn on the mantelpiece. Besides humans, pets are also cremated more often. It took more than a year of research to mix ashes into the concrete. Thereby, animal ashes react differently than human ashes when it comes into contact with concrete.44

**9.3 Alleged benefits of cremation**

According to Keizer, new forms of mourning have made people less afraid of cremation.45

Another argument in favor of cremation is the relatively high cost of the grave. The advantages of cremation are mentioned: it would be hygienic, economically advantageous, space-saving and aesthetic. Let's look at these arguments and take a critical look at them:

*Hygienically*: Although in the Bible, many laws were actually hygienic measures, and despite the fact that in the hot Middle-East the mortal remains decompose faster, it is obvious that burial was and is more effective than cremation. With the exception of the members of the royal family that are interred in the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft, no one in the Netherlands is buried in a church anymore and no risk can be expected from this. Then we go from the church building to the graveyard. Graveyards could affect the groundwater and in that way spread diseases. Possible poisonous substances could be washed away in the lower groundwater. In the Netherlands, graveyards have to meet many requirements that also have to do with environmental hygiene. It is unknown whether a single graveyard in the Netherlands causes any public health problems, which cannot be said of crematoria.

*Economically*: It is difficult to compare burial and cremation with each other in terms of costs, because there are many variations. It comes down to comparing apples with pears. Out of love and special feelings toward the dead, and all the way out your faith, the costs should not be the deciding factor. The burial of the Lord Jesus, or to be more exact: His sepulture, was also costly. Joseph from Arimathea *bought*a linen to wrap Jesus in. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome *bought*fragrant oils to embalm Him. The hewn grave must have been costly too, but a rich man like Joseph from Arimathea could pay for this and he did it for Jesus wholeheartedly.46Abraham *bought*a grave with a cave and field and the accompanying trees for four hundred shekels in the neighborhood of Hebron, to bury his wife Sarah.47Later on, Abraham himself was buried there also. This turned out to be a family grave, because also for his son Isaac and his wife Rebecca, Lea and her husband Jacob this grave, which was *bought*from the Hittites, became their final resting place.48People abuse the sorrow and confusion after the death of a loved one, unfortunately. Cunning businessmen take advantage of unstable gullible bereaved ones. In the United States, the final goodbye is often used to show once again that money is no problem and funeral directors take advantage of it very cunningly.

The journalist Jessica Mitford did a research on the practice of the American funeral profession. It resulted in a book called ‘The American Way of Death.49This book hit like a bomb, in a short time it became a bestseller and Mitford a much sought-after guest in talk shows. The shock was great among the public and the funeral world) especially the Service Corporation International (SCI), which both in the book got off badly. Generally speaking, less money is spent on cremations than on funerals; rarely do people buy an excessively expensive box for this. But the SCI is inventive. In a special sales program, the management has instructed the British salesmen to write to each family of a cremated person and to persuade them not to have the ashes scattered, but to place them in a (paid) place in the crematorium. The sales techniques used in this can be called American. One crematorium sends families a brochure in which the deceased speaks from the great beyond, with a sentimental and manipulative poem50VVD’s (People Party for Freedom and Democracy) chairman Henry Keizer, who has resigned and was discredited, is according to his own website, the vice president of the Landelijke Vereniging van Crematoria, chairman of the Landelijke Organisatie van Begraafplaatsen, chairman of the Werkgeversvereniging van Nederlandse Crematoria, secretary general of the International Cremation Federation and honorary vice-president of the Institute of Cemetery & Cremation Management. The Facultative Group calls the transporting and caring of corpses ‘Post mortem assistance’, which is a part of the ‘funerary logistics’. They are very skilled in thanatopraxis – an embalming method which was prohibited, but thanks to the political contacts of Keizer, according to FTM, it was also made possible in the Netherlands. The next technique to come, is the bio cremation with water and alkali, ‘our development and research department in Leeds is already in an advanced stage with this technique’, according to Keizer in the book Vaarwel (Farewell) by Annet de Jong. A great new earnings model … Death is being marketed here.51Money stinks indeed. This business mixed with politics has a very bad smell of death…

*Spatially*‘The Netherlands is full.’ Also regarding graveyards, this assertion is very relative. The question is, what are the priorities of the municipalities?

In addition, the graves are removed after a course of time, which makes space again for new graves. But in Judaism it is absolutely forbidden to remove graves. In the case of a lack of space, the Jews solved it by heightening the graves with the soil, so that graves could be dug further. That’s how grave mounts with layers arose. Recently, Donald Schruggs from California came up with a creative solution for the lack of space on graveyards. His ‘funeral container’ has the shape of a screw, which can be rotated perpendicularly into the soil.52

*Esthetically*: The casket lies relatively deep under the earth where there are no worms. Decomposition is a bacteriological process which starts within the body. Because of the corpse eaters, it is not a pleasure to look into an open grave, which also applies to looking into the oven. We should neither romanticize fire. Sacrificing a loved one to the flames could also be considered an unaesthetic thought as well.

*Solidarity*: The Emeritus Reverend, Pieter Klaas Pilon (from PKN= Protestant Church in Holland) had himself cremated. ‘The cremation took place privately. Not buried, so he could show his way of solidarity with the millions of Jews who were burnt in the Second World War.53This argument is rarely heard.

**9.4 Involuntary cremation**

There are countless people who – of course against their will – were killed by fire and afterwards burnt. In this we commemorate the Jews during the Holocaust (or better called: the Shoah), who were gassed and burnt as industrial waste; but also martyrs who ‘experienced’ their final moments at the stake; those who were victims of a nuclear war, etc… In the event of natural disasters such as the outbreak of epidemics with a high risk of contamination and earthquakes, the choice for a mass cremation can be made, because the funeral capacity has been massively exceeded. The martyrs that were removed from the arena in a mutilated condition, were buried honorably by their fellow-believers and were not burnt as waste. The ancient church was familiar with the Phoenix theme and therefore it took, in the service of their own proclamation, an Egyptian symbolic of the bird that resurrects from the ashes. The form of cremation which is neutral in itself, can as much be filled with Christian symbols as all kinds of pagan and superstitious traditions can be related to the funeral.54

1. **Old and new techniques**

There are all kinds of traditions regarding funeral activities: the preservation, conservation of the body by a fumigation method, embalmment, throwing the body to the birds of prey (as the ancient Seyten did and in Central China, and among the Zarathoestras and the poor Siamese people) and then casting the body in a river. While the discussion on the sanctioning of cremation seems to be outdated for a long time, new variants of funeral activities are arising.

**10.1 Resomation**

Besides funeral and cremation, there are still other modern possibilities for funeral activities: Resomation (solution) and cryomation (freeze drying).55

With resomation or hydrolysis, the body without a casket is placed for one and a half hour in a resomator, which weighs the body and adds the corresponding quantity of water and chemical substance potassium hydroxide (KOH) or sodium hydroxide or caustic soda (NaOH) to it. By means of steam, with a temperature of 180 degrees, the body is constantly sprinkled with the fluid.

An alkaline fluid is circulating under pressure and high temperature for three hours.This breaks down the chemical compounds in the body. It is the natural process that a body goes through when it is buried, but in this way it goes faster: it takes some hours instead of decades. Resomation is a method whereby the dead is placed in a bath of quick lime (calcium oxide CaO).  In that way the body is dissolved into the components from which it has been built, namely water with amino acids (small peptides), sugars, salts, and ashes which are pure calcium phosphate (Ca3(PO4)2). Only the porous bones remain, which become so fragile that they can be easily crushed into a ‘bio powder’ or ground into a fine white powder, softer than ashes and nearly twice as much. The process takes longer than a cremation; it costs less energy and is less environment polluting and probably slightly cheaper, though it is $145 more expensive at Anderson-McQueen than a cremation.56An alkaline solution (Alkaline hydrolysis) also called ‘green cremation’, ‘bio cremation’ or ‘water cremation’, is as expensive as a common cremation. The ‘ashes’/powder can be given back to the bereaved, just as with cremations.

The remains are cooled. Prosthetics, dental fillings and pacemakers can be removed and recycled.57Just 3% of the body is left. What is left is four kilos of solid material. The remains, the released tea-colored fluid which contains human DNA, are flushed down with the waste water in the sewage. This method has already been used for deceased persons in some places in America.58In seven states in the US, resomation is permitted, but in Europe (still?) nowhere.58In order to legalize this modern practice, the burial acts must first be adjusted. This method is ideal when carcasses of contaminated animals must be removed quickly, for example after a BSE outbreak. As if it’s about ‘the best definite disappearing act’ of corpses, the mortal remains can also be immersed in a vessel of Hydrochloric acid (HCI). But what do these new techniques tell us about the human attitude? The materialistic and economic arguments can be considered, while ethnical and religious motives do not seem to matter or seem to matter less. Is it really such an attractive idea that the remembrance of someone will literally be solved? Is it ethically accountable to discharge water with human remains in the sewage? The Roman Catholic Church responded disapprovingly.60

**10.1 Cryomation**

At cryomation or lyophilisation, in other words freeze-drying with nitrogen, uses a lot of energy, twice as much as with cremation. After a treatment of two to three hours, the machine can shake the frozen body apart by vibration. In a dried condition, the snowflakes will form an odorless powder of about 25 kilo.

Deceased persons have been tested by this method for the first time in Sweden. This method has not yet been tested with human bodies, but with pig carcasses.61

1. **Considerations**

A modern criterion is the environmental tax. Burying, cremating and resomating are affecting the environment almost at an equal rate. However, several environmental factors can be weighed differently and it remains difficult to compare apples with oranges.62The non-recycling of prostheses, not to mention the funeral procession itself, are environmentally polluting. The reuse of the coffin, the tombstone (must be transported from far away) and the synthetic clothing count towards the assessment of whether this form is harmful to the environment. The question is whether this was included in the comparison in an earlier study by the renowned engineering firm Haskoning in Nijmegen. This research showed that scattering cremation ashes results in overfertilization of minerals and accumulation of toxic heavy metals such as copper and zinc.63Such scatterings release a higher concentration of these substances than on a graveyard. Pastor W.G. Overbosch from Amsterdam even noted that trees began to die around crematoriums64A legal argument for burying and against cremating is that a judicial investigation by an ordinary pathological anatomist or forensic pathological anatomist after funeral activities by cremation, has become impossible. The decisive factor for the Christian is not a certain tradition, or commercial, ethical, hygienic motives, planning considerations, ecological, in short, materialistic motives, not even a national law nor what the majority thinks and does. The decisive factor for Christians is the theological motive for the funeral activities.

* **Disposal of the dead in Judaism**

The funeral activities in Judaism is the example for Christianity. Beside their close blood relatives, the priests are not allowed (cohanin, plural of cohen) to touch the dead and to defile themselves in that way. Therefore they keep distance toward the dead during a Jewish funeral. Nazarenes were not even allowed to come close to a dead person under any circumstances.65

For the orthodox Jew, death is a sleep and there is an expectation for the future. The physical resurrection belongs to the core of Judaism. Jewish graveyards are called ‘Dwelling places of the Living’, where the dead can count on eternal rest. Therefore these graves should never be removed. If a Jew is buried somewhere in the diaspora, they enclose a little soil from the Promised Land Israel with the casket (scattered under his head or over his body), to express in that way that it is actually ideal to be buried in the country of his ancestors. If they want their expectation of the resurrection to take shape, then in any case some substance of the body, be it only a little bit, must remain. Rabbi De Vries explains further: “A human corpse is not a bait, not a carcass, but a casing in which a human was manifested. There had been a human soul in it. It was a dwelling place of God, an image of God. Our respect towards the mortal remains is no less than towards a human in life. The casket is unplaned white timber, the robes of the dead is white linen, without jewels, the simple mourning service has to be sober. The bier is carried, yes, even on the shoulder out of respect. ‘In this way the dust turns back to the earth as it was: the spirit goes back to the Deity, Who has given it to him’ (Ecc.12:7). Doing whatever you want with a dead body, not taking proper care of it, being careless about it, touching or approaching it disrespectfully, is inconceivable for the sense of the Jew. Violating a dead body, even in the slightest detail, is not less than horrible. An autopsy is only allowed when a person who is still alive could be saved immediately or when the law makes the autopsy necessary. It will always belong to the ground in which the bed of the dead has been made up.

To open a grave other than to judicial necessity, is inconceivable. Only when a person has been buried first in a temporary grave, the corpse is permitted to be exhumed at a later time to be united in the ‘grave of ancestors’ or to be buried into Israelite soil”. While in Babylon we find cremations from the fourth century before Christ in Greece and in the ancient Roman Empire, we have never found it in Israel. Cremation was not only prohibited, it was also a crime, even if it involved a person on death row. Regarding cremation, De Vries explains further: “Neither the Torah nor the Talmud contains a provision that prescribes burial in an authoritative way. To every dead person it means that the burial is tacitly accepted as a law.

Nevertheless, Judaism rejects, yes despises cremation of a dead body. Those who desire to have the Judaism of the Torah and history according to the spirit of their ancestors to be continued, will and can in no way show any compensation toward cremation”.66This Rabbi was also killed by the Nazis in 1944 in Bergen-Belsen, and therefore he himself was not allowed to undergo a Jewish funeral. Yes, he had not even found a final resting place, and his ashes were windswept.. The infamous German crematoriums tried to rob the Jews from looking forward to and their expectation of the eternal future. In contradiction to a grave, the ashes of the defragmented Jews became literally untraceable after the scattering of their ashes. Die Auflösung der Jüdenfrage… This has already been dealt with in 9.4, regarding involuntary cremation. Unfortunately, antisemitism has not been annihilated. Orthodox Jews take care of every human remains after a bomb attack, in order to bury them as respectfully as possible. Discharging human remains with a fog nozzle – as if it were garbage – into the sewerage, is inconceivable and shocking to them. Although the Jewish religious law strongly prohibits the cremation of dead people, some non-orthodox Jews still had themselves cremated to support the victims of Auschwitz to some extent. Despite the Jewish aversion against cremation, some famous secular or liberal Jews such as Lex Goudsmit, Isaac Israëls and Aletta Jacobs had themselves cremated anyway, and in their case in the oldest Dutch crematorium at Velsen. Cremation is an enemy of Judaism. “Is cremation not the clearest evidence of having no respect for life, the life given by God”?67

But what should one do when a Jewish testator has determined in his testament that he wishes to be cremated, while his heirs or surviving relatives have objections against the execution of that particular last will, based on Jewish religious grounds? According to the Dutch law, the last will which is laid down in a testament or codicil for cremation of the mortal remains will not carry a legal obligation for the heirs or surviving relatives to carry out that particular wish, unless it has been notarized. They remain free to ignore such a last will on religious grounds. It becomes difficult when the surviving relatives are divided about this. The same goes for the last will of a deceased person to donate his mortal remains to medical science.68Time flies by and secularization is gaining ground. Since 2005, Israel also has had a crematorium, however, at a secret location. It had probably been discovered by orthodox Jews and in 2007 it was set on fire. Some months later it was put into service again at another secret location.69According to the owner Alon Nativ from the crematorium, his company is supporting a growing need. In Israel, the ground is scarce and people therefore have to pay more and more money for a place at a graveyard of their own choice. The leader of the secular Shinui Party, Yosef Lapid, points out that the Nazis not only *burnt*the Jews, but also *buried*Jews. Should we therefore banish funerals also?70More and more Jews have themselves cremated. Even those who are members of a Jewish church or even of a chewre, which is a Jewish *funeral*association.

1. **Disposal of the dead in other religions**

The Islam, which for the greater part came forth from Judaism and Christianity, also condemns cremation firmly. Muslims also believe in the resurrection from the dead and therefore condemn the deliberate destroying of mortal remains. For centuries the cremations among Hindus have been customary. The ashes of the dead are scattered in the Ganges River. In India, the fire God Agni in the offering fire, is considered the life of the world; To the dead, the stack at which the body is laid, has the meaning of ‘the place of birth’.71The intention is to help the dead to come to the definite redemption via reincarnation. When the old body has been burnt, the dead will go on to exist in something as an ethereal body, consisting of spirit (preta). It sometimes happens that a body is burnt first and afterwards still buried. In the past, women were even buried alive together with their deceased husbands, because those women would have major supernatural powers and could spread eternal blessings.72Buddhists and Hindus do cremate, because they consider the body as a prison, out of which the soul must be liberated. Japan has a tradition of cremation and in this densely populated country, nearly all deceased people are cremated.73

* **A Christian view on disposal of the dead**

Also on this ethical issue, we would want to apply the Biblical theology as guidance, and therefore, not the economy (what is the most profitable?), not the ecology (what is the most eco-friendly?) not the aesthetics (what is the cleanest?) and not the spatial planning (is there any space?) determines the acts of the Christian. Death is a natural fact within the evolutionistic faith that we just have to accept. That message is even communicated in the popular animated film ‘The Lion King’. Everybody would simply be in the ‘life circle’ of arise, shine and go down. Death would be quite normal, but it is still the wages of sin.74‘Returning to dust’ is not a blessing, but an awful result of sin. We have to accept that God has established death as punishment. We may not in any way camouflage the gruesome, hostile character of death. On the other hand, embalming and particularly mummification, can be expressions of unbelief among people who do not want to have the deceased returned to dust and therefore, actually refuse to accept death as a result of the fall of man. Religious aspects and hope disappear more and more in our secularized society. As soon as people replace the hearse by a limo, the pace of the ceremony will be higher than before. A cremation may be a sterile and clean event, where, as in a factory it is all about speed, efficiency and professionalism. However, against expectations, cremation was not popular in the atheistic, communist and materialistic Russia.75The funeral industry is not immune from commercialization.76As I understand it, a Christian, however, is not supposed to preserve the bodies artificially (as the Egyptians did), neither is he supposed to destroy the bodies mechanically, but entrusts the deceased to the lap of the earth and let it rest there until the resurrection day.77

**14.1 Funerals in the Bible**

According to Philippians 1:2078, Christ can be magnified in both a living and a dead body. A deceased body or corpse is therefore not equal to worthless garbage. Is there a difference between dust and ashes? A comparison could be made between a body and seeds on the one hand and ashes as ground ‘seeds’ (thus as infertile flour) on the other hand. Before seeds germinate, they die, so that they may produce life (Jn.12:24). But to draw such a conclusion from a metaphor is not strong. For the mourning process, a grave is more suitable than an urn.79The mourning process can already start with the anointing. Jesus was anointed twice out of love and honor: before His death by Mary for the preparation of His funeral and after His death by women with spices such as it was customary among the Jews.80One can just look up a concordance, in order to get clearly convinced about the fact that*burying*in Biblical times was natural, normal and customary, not only in Israel, but also among the surrounding pagan nations81 In Gen.23:19 (and 49:31) we find the first described funeral of Sarah by Abraham, for which he was willing to pay a lot of money and make a lot of efforts. All of the patriarchs and matriarchs were buried.82 After his death, Jacob had been embalmed for forty days, was transported from Egypt to Israel and was buried there with his fathers, according to his will (Gen.50:1-14). Joseph was embalmed and he wanted his bones to be transported to the land of his ancestry (Gen. 50:25, 26), which indeed happened.83 The dead body was not laid in a casket, but often placed on a bier.84We only read once in the Bible about a coffin: the embalmed Joseph was placed into it and had to be transported like that to his native country, for he did not want to be buried as the savior of Egypt in a pyramid.85 Others who were also buried, are among others:  Job86; the first high priest Aaron (Deu.10:6); Joshua (Jos.24:30); the second high priest Eleazar (Jos.24:33); the judges from the Bible book with the same name, kings, etc.

It is remarkable that Moses was even *buried*by God personally (Deu.34:6).

In this way God sanctioned this tradition! The body of Moses (God’s property) was even fought for between the devil and the angel Michael (Jude 9). As reasons for this fight, we could think of the fact that with Moses’ body, idolatry could have been committed, as with the copper snake indeed happened (2Kgs18:4). But it seems more likely to me to explain the fight for his body, in order to hinder his resurrection or on the contrary, to make it possible. Whatever the case. Moses appeared with a glorified body, centuries after his death.87A caterpillar, to which words like ‘transiency’, ‘dishonor’, ‘weakness’ belong, undergoes an unimaginable metamorphosis and becomes a butterfly, typified by ‘immortality’, ‘glorification’, ‘power’, and ‘spiritual body’ (1Cor.15:42-44). A disobedient prophet was killed by a lion, but thereafter was honorably buried (1Kgs.13:29, 31). The dead bodies of Saul and his sons were burnt, but their bones were spared, which was ‘a service of love’88by the inhabitants of Jabes, according to David.89Therefore, here there is no mention of a total cremation, but it is the intention to keep the dead bodies from further violation. Saul’s bones were honorably buried at a later time. Wicked people (Ecc.8:10), strangers in Israel (Mat.27:7) and even the criminals who were killed (Deu.21:23) were nevertheless also buried. Sinners like Ananias and Sapphira were severely struck by the death penalty, but nevertheless were buried (Acts 5:6-10). The beheaded John the Baptist, Lazarus who died by illness and Stephen who was stoned, were all buried.90

Great care was given to the (possible) final burial of corpses. The conclusion is very clear: the tradition was therefore to bury people. The burying of loved ones also belonged to one of the seven works of mercy. In reverse, not having been buried in the ancient world, was considered to be a shame and the heaviest penalty for a criminal. The graves of the ancestors indicate one’s ‘roots’, and meant to be a precious and emotional bond to Nehemiah (Neh.2:3, 5). Not having been interred in a family grave or not ‘having been gathered to one’s ancestors’, was felt as a shame.91 According to Jer. 7:33, 8:2, 9:22, 15:3, 16:4, 19:7, 25:33, 34:20 and Eze. 29:5, it was humiliating and it was a punishment when someone’s corpse was scattered on a field as manure or was eaten by the beasts (such as the wicked queen Jezebel).92

Having the dead bodies to be devoured by scavengers such as hyenas or vultures, after they have been chopped into pieces, may be practiced in parts of India, China and Tibet and bear nice names like ‘air funeral’ or ‘heaven funeral’, however, from a Jewish and a Christian view it is shocking because it is considered very dishonorably. The carcass of an unclean animal was dragged outside the city and was left to the side of the street or in the field to the birds of prey. According to Jer.22:19, king Jehoiakim was buried with such a so-called inglorious donkey’s burial, because of his sins. In the final fight, an angel shouts to the birds that were flying high in the sky: ‘Come to God’s great meal. Then you will get meet to eat of kings, army commanders and rulers; the meat of horses and their riders, of slaves and free people, the meat of young and old.’ ‘The beast’ and the false prophet will be judged. All birds will stuff themselves with their meat.93We read this rather with great fear than that we desire this to be our dishonorable end as prey or bait. Conquered enemies as the Philistines, among others Goliath, were not buried, but delivered to the vultures (1Sam.17:44, 46) and humiliated in this way. The summit of punishment was that the lions even crushed their bones in the lion’s den, their horrible place of execution (Dan.6:25). Not burying a person who had been killed, polluted the land (Deut.21:22). It was a punishment and shame for the deceased when his body was not buried.94In ancient times, cremation was an attempt to the eradication of the name on earth when it was about a verdict. In Judaism, one is only dead when nobody is thinking about you anymore; when the remembrance of you has been fully faded away. Also the modern man wants to continue to live in the minds of his descendants. Tomb stones are precisely to keep alive the remembrance.95

Our great example Jesus Christ was, despite brutal abuses, honorably buried (actually: placed) in a grave, after He was embalmed.96In Jn. 19:42, we read that *Jesus*was laid in a grave. In contrast to, for example king David, Jesus’ body did not undergo decay.97Despite being incomplete (after all, His soul and Spirit were missing), the dead body seems to be the Person still. The body is not called the ‘mortal remains’, ‘wrapping’, ‘packaging’, or something similar. The prophecy that not a bone of Him would be broken was fulfilled.98It was customary that a year after the burial, the bones are put honorably in a so-called ossuary (bone urn) or in a vault especially reserved for it. This is therefore called a reburial (ossilegium). He was embalmed and buried entirely according to the tradition of the Jews. . (Jn.19:40) From His resurrection body it can be observed that there is a continuity between the ‘natural’ and the spiritual life, and even of the identity. A Christian is buried because Christ was also buried (Jn. 19:41, 42). The faith in the revival or resurrection is fundamental in Christianity. Jesus said: “I assure you: there comes a time, and it has now come, that the dead will hear the voice of God and that he who will hear Him, shall live”. “Don’t be surprised about it, there comes a time that those who are dead will hear His voice and will come out of their *grave*: he who has done the good, shall arise to live, he who has done the bad, will arise to be judged.”99We find emphatically and repeatedly in God’s Word100the funeral of our Savior Jesus Christ.

It confirms the message of mortality, decay *and*resurrection. The body that was left behind and buried, testifies as a seed that is looking forward to the harvest: the resurrection of the dead which will be fulfilled at the return of Christ. We trust that the extremities will ‘not only be restored from the earth and brought back, but also from the inaccessible corners of other elements in which the corpses that had fallen apart have ended up.’101Every human body is completely renewed by other molecules after seven years. The resurrection is therefore not the collection of the past matter, but the receipt of a new, perfect physicality. 102What is still original in a plant that came from a seed that has sprouted from it? Let us not confuse this beautiful prophetic symbol of ‘sowing seeds’ with God’s inevitable judgment, of which the burning fire is an image. One day the *graves*(not the urns) will be opened.103 Incinerated people have not disappeared forever to God. After all: ‘Your dead shall live –also my totally consumed corpse (Isa. 26:19). By following Him in this, we bear witness. Our body is a holy temple which is not to be violated.104 Our body is not ours. We have been bought with a price and we are to glorify God in or with our bodies, as a temple is intended for. Dead bodies are no waste products that have to be burnt (Psa.80:17).  We sow in mortality and harvest in immortality. Like sowing and harvesting are related to one another, so are being buried and resurrection related with one another. There is hope; death is and will be conquered (1Cor.15:35-49)! The resurrection from death is described as the coming of new flesh on the old existing bones (Eze.37:1-14). We see a foretaste already before Easter when many bodies of saints who had fallen asleep were raised (Mat.27:52).

**14.2 Cremations in the Bible**

Death by burning is not the same as cremation, because death by burning is the burning alive as a penalty for a certain crime.105 To let someone go through fire is also not a cremation, but to God a despicable and horrible way of offering human sacrifices to Moloch or Baal.106 As a punishment for the pagan priests, their bones were to be burnt posthumously (1Kgs13:2). This prophecy was indeed fulfilled. King Josiah exhumed the bones of the pagan priests and still burnt them, as a punishment after death, even hundreds of years later! On the contrary, *no*t disturbing the bones of the prophet from Betel, was considered an honor and grace (2Kgs 23:16-19). God’s wrath is against those who have burnt human bodies (Amos 2:1-3). Amos 6 is an exceptional and unclear passage. There is an emergency situation here where a great number of dead victims were threatening to pollute the air. In order to prevent an epidemic, a mass cremation seemed to be legal out of emergency. In the church history there is no mention of cremation. The opponents made short shrift with the Christians by cremation. In that way, Wycliffe the reformer was exhumed thirty years after his death and then burnt as a punishment. After the Jews had to dig their own mass grave, they were executed on the edge of it. ‘Special troops exhumed the bodies and burnt them. For the first time in history, the Jews were not only murdered twice, but they were also not allowed to have their final resting place.’107Only in the time of libertinism within Christianity, sympathy has been increasing for cremation.

The autonomy of the modern man seemed to be drastic at the beginning and end of life: induced abortion, euthanasia. Also cremation is a phenomenon of self-determination of the autonomous man.

**14.3 Conclusions regarding cremation**

Only in exceptional situations, we find cremations in the Bible: The burning of a body was applied as an extreme execution of sentence. Cremation can only be accepted in case of force majeure (when for example, funeral is prohibited by law and cremation is offered by law, as in Japan). Furthermore in case of epidemics and in case of war, thus in cases of emergency. Exceptions are not allowed to become rules. The burning only took place after the explicit order from God or because God Himself had carried it out in His judgment. The burning was never to take place arbitrarily. The burning was applied as a curse for those who had committed the sin.

1. **Final conclusion**

After our death, our bodies will decompose fast or slowly so that nothing will be left of it, not even the smallest bone. Deceased people can *become*dust, (in a grave) and they can be *made to become*dust (in an oven). We can respect the bodies –no matter how battered they are-, but we can also destroy them by reducing the bodies to ashes. “Cremation is a symptom of our secularized [western WJAPH] world.”108 In any case, cremation or whatever kind of funeral activities, there is absolutely no hindrance for the almighty God to resurrect a ‘spiritual body’ (1Cor.15:44). The martyrs who were burnt at the stacks, were comforted because of this security. A man is more than a body. A soul without a body is a ghost and a body without a soul is a corpse. It remains a mystery where a soul and the spirit come from, how they can enter a body, and where they dwell after death has made an end to the earthly life.  “Everybody, whether it transfers into dust, or is resolved into liquid, or becomes ashes, or dissipates into smoke, escapes from us, though still remains preserved for God, the protector of the elements.”109 The burying does not make the resurrection more possible, but cremation also does not make it more impossible.

To escape from God, avoiding the judgment by making yourself to be disappeared after death, is impossible. Of the inhabitants of Sodom, there was only ashes left. Nevertheless, Jesus says of them in Luke 10:12: *“I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city”*. Alsothose who had a burial at sea, who apparently have disappeared and have become untraceable, will still arise (Rev. 20:13). God’s power is after all unlimited. He, who created man from dust110 is able to recreate man from dust. Of funeral activities by cremation or burial, or by whatever modern technology, no fundamental matter of faith can be made, for not our opinion about it, determines where we shall spend eternity, but our faith inJesus Christ Who died and resurrected for us. Also among the cremated people are true Christians who longed to be with Christ. People can have themselves cremated out of ignorance or in good faith.

Cremation is not forbidden anywhere in Scripture, but that does not mean automatically that it would be sanctioned. Jesus’ command “Let the dead bury (and not cremate) the dead” looks like an order, is anyway an accepted custom111, but here it is a call to follow the Lord Jesus now, instead of mourning for months. The Christian moral is not the same as the divine decree, but a good Christian moral deserves to be defended and followed .112 Resistance against cremation or any new form of funeral activities, is not a result of conservatism, but of a custom sanctioned by God Himself. Although our heart and soul are not dependent on how our body will ultimately decay, we should not be indifferent about it. “Attending a crenation ceremony cannot be considered unauthorized, but must practically be treated in the same way as attending a funeral of an unbeliever.”, according to pastor Lok.113 Leading a cremation as a preacher must not be excluded in advance, if it can be testified that burying in sobriety is in line with the Bible. No place should be excluded for the proclamation of the gospel. In 1961, the General Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands did not deem “to consider why the church council would not represent a disposal service of a deceased person by the means of cremation, because the way of the disposal of the dead cannot dismiss the church from its calling to speak about the evangelical testimony of the eternal life in Jesus Christ towards the revelation of death and mortality.”114

However, the late pastor Veenendaal, preacher of the reformed church, found that when a church denomination has taken a clear stand against cremation and despite that, yet attends a cremation, it will negate its own clerical view. According to him, condolences should be expressed to the bereaved families and pastoral care must certainly not be withheld from them, but the church must powerfully testify against pagan customs and not sanction them by attending and leading a mourning service in a crematorium.115

A corresponding service wherein a moment was consciously taken in remembrance of the deceased, had to be inhumanely short. Honders even speaks about ‘the half-hour-schedule of the crematorium industry.’116

So, there are many different views regarding this issue. ‘Let everyone follow his own conviction.’ Rom.14:5. Dr.L.G. Wagenaar states: ‘In principle, burial or cremation may not and cannot be a criterion for belief or unbelief.  Considering the arguments, we conclude that the Christian custom of burying is an adiaphoron [an action that is neither condemned nor approved by morality] which is determined by consideration and feelings.’117I think that is too weak.

From God’s Word there is a clear preference for an honorable burial.

Choosing for cremation is not an obvious sin, but a pagan custom. The disposal of the dead should therefore not be the main issue, but a side issue, which, due to the changed laws and new techniques can cause a lot of concerns.

In biblical times it was natural that someone was buried after his death.

God’s Word remains the same forever. According to 1Cor.6:19 and 20 we should glorify God with our living and even dead bodies. Before it becomes impossible for you to reflect on this or before others will (have to) make a decision for you about this, it is good for one to have considered it already what God’s will is in this. We can have it recorded in our testament.

I wish you a lot of wisdom in determining a responsible Christian view.

**Drs. W.J.A. Pijnacker Hordijk**

translated by Ursula Moestapa

Literature consulted:

\* [**http://www.opdoorreis.nl/**](http://www.opdoorreis.nl/) (in transit)

\* Advertorial *Crematie of begrafenis (Cremation or funeral?)?*Delftse Post, 28-9-2011

*\* Crematie in het licht van de Bijbel (Cremation in the light of the Bible)*, J.I. van Baaren (Amsterdam: Evangelische Wereld Pers Moria, 1981)

*\* Crematie bijbels verantwoord (Cremation Biblically justified )*J. Ph. Fijnvandraat (Apeldoorn: Medema, 1978)

\* *Begraven of cremeren Wat zegt de Bijbel (To Bury or to cremate? What does the Bible say?)?*Ger de Koning (Doorn: Het Zoeklicht, 2005)

\* *Begrafenis of crematie (Burial or cremation)*, ds. R. v.d. Kooij (Joure: Spijksma, 1979)

1 *Encyclopedia of Biblical and Christian Ethics*by R.K. Harrison (general editor) 1987, see also a list on *Rondom de dood (*The *Issues of death*), Dr. J. Douma, (Kampen: van den Berg, 1984) footnote 1, p 139.

2The use of tradition as an argument has often been mentioned in this article: Hilbert Meijer, *Begraven of cremeren(Burial or Cremation?)? - Het beeld kantelt (The image turns over)*, Nederlands Dagblad 24-8-2013, pp. 10-12

3*Rondom de dood (The issues of death)*, Dr. J. Douma, (Kampen: van den Berg, 1984) p. 140

4[**http://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0005009/geldigheidsdatum\_19-10-2011**](http://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0005009/geldigheidsdatum_19-10-2011),– laws of the government/expiry date… it contains 96 articles. The Burial Acts are not applied to the members of the Royal Family. This manifests itself among others in article 87.1. This has to do with the possible interment of the member of the Orange Family in the Royal Vaults in the New Church of Delft, Holland.

5The outcome of a survey, which was filled out by nearly 100 out of the 800 students in response to the fifth anniversary of CSFR with the theme (‘A Time to die’) (*Reformed Students do not reject Cremation)*Nederlands Dagblad 13-10-2011 *It is about answers to a multiple choice question with predictable answers. The statement was: ‘A Christian lets himself be buried.’ To respond negatively (which dr. Hoek also does in a way when he speaks about ‘Christians who let themselves be cremated’) is yet not the same as ‘having no problems with cremation’. To see a development of a decreasing Scriptural authority in this is great, since the most chosen negative answer contains the statement that there is ‘no explicit Biblical regulation’ for burial. It would be even more justified to say, based on the survey, that there is an erosion of tradition by the absolutization of the Bible. Teus| Utrecht | 13 Oct 2011 - 17:07*

6 If all the fetuses – in fact young babes!- that have been killed deliberately by induced abortion would be buried, a real space problem would arise….

7Frans Tijssen, *Doodgeboren kind officieel geregistreerd*(*Still born child officially registered)*, Nederlands Dagblad, 20-9-2016

8On 18thMarch 2017, the unique so-called Vlinderveld (Butterfly Field) was opened and it is an initiative of the Graveyeard and Crematorium of Almere, Holland. *A Graveyard for premature babes,*Nederlands Dagblad, 20-3-2017

9 Klaas Blomsma, *Licht balsemen na dood is nieuwe uitvaarttrend (Light Embalming after death is a new burial trend)*, Metro, 7-2-2013

10Kijk op Uitvaart (A view on Burial, katern in Delft op Zondag, 26-4-2015

11 [**http://www.balsemen.com/theorie.html**](http://www.balsemen.com/theorie.html)(Embalming Theory)

12 See [**https://stichting-promise.nl/christelijke-medische-ethiek/orgaan-en-weefseltransplantatie.htm**](https://stichting-promise.nl/christelijke-medische-ethiek/orgaan-en-weefseltransplantatie.htm)(Christian medical ethics on Organ and Tissue transplant)

13 Bart Dirks, *Monument voor ‘gevers’ lichaam (A Monument for ‘donors’ Body*, Nederlands Dagblad, 20-9-2016

14 [**http://www.bodyworlds.com/nl/amsterdam/plastinatie.html;**](http://www.bodyworlds.com/nl/amsterdam/plastinatie.html;) Guido Verburg, *Lijken kijken is gezond, (Looking at Corpses is healthy)*Sp!ts, 12- 1-2012, in response to the traveling exhibition until 22-4-2012 The Story of the Heart in Expo Zuidas in Amsterdam.

15 *‘Als ik dood ben ga ik naar de universiteit’ (‘When I am dead I go to the university’)*, Stephan Bol, Nederlands Dagblad, 29-9-2012, in response to the research on the motivation of the donors, from the Anthropologist Sophie Bolt. (doctorate graduation at the Radboud University in Nijmegen)

16 Hilbrand Rozema, *Archeoloog ontdekt babyskelet in doos (Archeologist discovers a babe’s skeleton)*, Nederlands Dagblad, 14-7-2016

17 [**http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/gemeenten/vraag-en-antwoord/wat-zijn-grafrechten.html**](http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/gemeenten/vraag-en-antwoord/wat-zijn-grafrechten.html) (Central Government; Issues/ municipalities/questions and answers/what are Burial/grave rights)

18 Marlies Dinjens, *Natuur- begraafplaatsen nemen flink in aantal toe (Natural Graveyards are increasing considerably)*, Metro, 9-9-2013

19 [**http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/nl/blog/your-decaying-corpse-could-become-a-tree**](http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/nl/blog/your-decaying-corpse-could-become-a-tree)

20 [**http://www.uitvaart.nl/infotheek/begraven-cremeren-e-a/zeemansgraf**](http://www.uitvaart.nl/infotheek/begraven-cremeren-e-a/zeemansgraf)(Burial-Cremation-Burial at sea) Or a hundred times a year a burial at sea, according to Marjon Weijzen, *Te Land, ter zee of in de lucht (On land, at sea and in the air),*in the Trade Journal Uitvaartzorg of July 2016, p. 11

21 [**http://www.groeneuitvaart.nl/page\_125.html**](http://www.groeneuitvaart.nl/page_125.html) (Geen Burial)

22 Douma, a.w., p. 142

23 Arnoldus van Brescia, Johannes Hus, Girolama Savonarola and Giordano Bruno were killed at the stake, as well as witches.

24 In 1869, ‘The International Convention of Freemasonry at Napels made a statement for the advancement of cremation.’ J.W. de Cock, *Crematie of Begrafenis*, Parakleet nr. 15, zomer 1984, p. 14, Douma, a.w. , p. 143; ds. T. Niemeijer, *Hoe moeten christenen omgaan met crematie? (How should christians deal with cremation?)*Het Zoeklicht, 87e volume nr. 16, p. 16

25 Ronald Koops, *Verzorgen of verbranden? (To take care or to burn)*Visie, 17-23 mei 2003

26 Decree The cadaverum crematione of 5thJuly 1963 and the release by the congregation for the doctrine ‘Instructio de cadaverum crematione ‘ on 24 October 1964

27 J. van ‘t Hul, *Crematie: waarom, waartoe, waarheen?*(Why, What for, Where to?)Reformatorisch Dagblad, 24-11-1995. The synod then stated that ’they do not see any reason why a church council would not represent itself at a funeral activity by the means of a cremation, because the manner of the funeral activity cannot dismiss its calling to make the evangelical testimony of eternal life in Jesus Christ against the revelation of death and mortality to be heard.’ Prof. dr. K. Runia, *Begraven of cremeren – Burial or Cremation,*Friesch Dagblad, 4-11-1989

28*Begraven of cremeren Wat zegt de Bijbel?*(Burial or cremation, what does the Bible say? Ger de Koning (Doorn: Het Zoeklicht, 2005) p. 18

29 *Na de laatste adem (After the last breath)*, Visie, 5-11 Nov. 2011, p. 40. ‘At national level, about 60 % of the deceased is cremated’.  *Unique for Delft and its region: Crematorium Iepenhof*, Delft on Sunday, 6-11-2011; At the moment, still, in 40 % of the deaths, people choose for a burial, from: *Hogere kosten graf leiden tot toename crematies (The higher costs of a grave lead to an increase of cremations)*, Nederlands Dagblad, 31-3-2012

30 Bendert Zevenbergen, *De markt voor cremeren floreert (The market for cremation is flourishing)*, Trouw, 3-5-2017

31 Bart Jungmann, *Blauw-gele kist en rouwkaarten met logo voor dode Cambuur-fan (A Blue-yellow coffin and mourning cards)*, de Volkskrant, 16-11-2011

32 Carel van der Velden, *Laatste rustplaats onder gras uit de Kuip (The final resting place below the grass from the Kuip Stadium)*, Algemeen Dagblad, 2-7-2014

33 *Crematoriums only want coffins*, Nieuwsblad van het Noorden 17-7-1991

34 *Uniek in Delft en regio (Unique for Delft and its region): Crematorium Iepenhof*, Delft on Sunday, 6-11-2011

35 *Oeroude urnentraditie terug van weggeweest (Ancient Urn Tradition is making a come back)*, Nederlands Dagblad, 27-12-2011

36 Maarten Vermeulen, *Memorarium in oude kerk bewaarplaats voor urnen (Memorary in the old church, a storing place for urns),*Nederlands Dagblad, 16-5-2013.

37 [**http://www.asverstrooiing.eu**](http://www.asverstrooiing.eu/)(scattering of ashes in Europe)

38 *Toename van crematies voorbij (The Increase of cremations is over)*, Reformatorisch Dagblad, 14-4-1988

39 *Diamantje van een kwart karaat uit as van overledene (A tiny diamond of a quarter carat)*, Haagsche Courant, 8-4-2003 See also: [**http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LifeGem**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LifeGem)

40 *Schippers ‘As van cremeerden beter niet in tatoeages’ (The ashes of cremated should not be mixed in tattoos)*, de Volkskrant, 1-4-2016

41 Piet Houtman, ‘*Asbestemming’ (‘destination of ashes’) belangrijker dan ritueel (more important than rituals)*, Nederlands Dagblad, 30-1-2012, n.a.v. Religiewetenschappelijk proefschrift van promovendus Meike Heesels aan de Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. (In response to a religion thesis from a graduate student Meike Heesels at the Radboud University of Nijmegen.)

42 [**http://www.popsci.com/french-company-plans-make-perfume-smells-dead-relatives**](http://www.popsci.com/french-company-plans-make-perfume-smells-dead-relatives)?dom=tw&src=soc

[**http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/24/french-perfume-maker-bottles-scent-of-the-dead**](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/24/french-perfume-maker-bottles-scent-of-the-dead)

43 Cinovum is derived from 'Cinis Novum', which is Latin for 'new ashes'. A commemorative tableau with the size of 15 x 20 x 4 cm will cost you more than 600 euro, with no frame included.

44 [**www.destadamersfoort.nl/lokaal/as\_overledenen\_samengebracht\_in\_beton\_3450705.html#.VONTWbd0yic**](http://www.destadamersfoort.nl/lokaal/as_overledenen_samengebracht_in_beton_3450705.html#.VONTWbd0yic)(The ashes of the deceased, gathered together in concrete)

45 *Meer crematies dan begrafenissen (More cremations than funerals)*, Reformatorisch Dagblad 20-2-2004

46 Mat.28:57-61

47 Mark 15:46, 16:1, Gen.23, 25:7-10, 50:12-14, Acts 7:16

48 Gen.35:27-29, 49:29-33

49 1964, which was translated in Dutch later on by Sanderijn Houtsma-van Schaik als *Laatste eer naar laatste mode. ([From] last honor to latest fashion) Begraven op zijn Amerikaans Een sociologisch onderzoek naar het verband tussen begraven en zaken in het huidige Amerika (Buried in American style, a sociological research on the connection between Burial and Matters in present America)*(Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1964), 296 pp.

50 [**http://www.groeneuitvaart.nl/page\_213.html**](http://www.groeneuitvaart.nl/page_213.html)(Green funerals)

51 Toine Heijmans, *Post mortem assistance*, de Volkskrant, 2-5-2017

‘The journalistic research platform Follow The Money (FTM) reported about frauds on the acquisition of the multinational crematorium company The Facultative Group in 2012. According to the FTM publications, mr. Keizer became the owner of the company for next to nothing, with the enormous possibility to perform as both buyer and seller.’ Inge Lengton and Bart Mos, *‘Die dikke deugt niet’ (‘The fat one stinks’)*, De Telegraaf 29-4-2017

‘The man who professes high standards with respect to integrity, would have committed ‘unscrupulous self-enrichment’ himself. ‘When he was asked whether the sharing out of the ministerial posts has already been discussed, he replied already with a definite ‘yes’. “We make Henry Keizer to be the minister who is responsible for the Burial Acts! Would (the Prime minister) Rutte and (minister) Zijlstra laugh about it tomorrow?” Wouter de Winther, *De crematiekoning en de beeldvorming (The creamation king and the image formation)*, De Telegraaf, 2-5-2017

52 *Begraven in een schroef (Buried in a screw)*, Visie, 17 t/m 23 -12-2011 Schruggs has obtained the patent on his design.

53 Rouwadvertentie in Trouw van 14-9-2016 (Obituary in Trouw Newspaper)

54 Dr. J. Hoek*, Crematie is en blijft tegen de christelijke zede (Cremation is and remains to be against the Christian tradition*, Reformatorisch Dagblad, 5-2-1982

55 Jenny van der Zijden,  *Vriesdrogen schoner dan begraven uitvaarten milieukundig overwogen (Cryomation cleaner than burial, funerals from an environmental point of view),*de Telegraaf, 26-2-2005 Onderzoek van TU Delft H. Remmerswaal (Research of Delft University of Technology)

56 Mark Heijster, *Resomeren (Resomation). An up-date.*Uitvaartzorg Trade Magazine Uitvaartzorg 6, July 2016 p. 15

57 The Ortho Metals company in Zwolle has a cooperation agreement with the national Association of Crematoriums and it annually extracts 250 tons of titanium, cobalt, aluminum, stainless steel and other high-grade raw materials from the ashes of crematoriums from both home and abroad. Three quarters of the revenues go to charities.

These raw materials are not used for the manufacture of artificial hips or – knees. Erik van der Veen, *A company that collects used artificial hips and – knees*, Nederlands Dagblad, 23-7-2012

58 [**http://www.balsemen.com/theorie.html**](http://www.balsemen.com/theorie.html)(enbalming)

59 Sabrina Franken, the president of the Funeral Company Yarden,  *Resomation as a new form of burial activities in The Netherlands?*Trade Journal Uitvaartzorg (Funeral care) 6, July 2016 p. 13

60 Dissolving bodies in a vat of chemicals and pouring the resultant liquid down the drain is not a respectful way to dispose of human remains.” So reads a letter from the Catholic Conference of Ohio to the state legislature in 2012. The previous year, the California Catholic Conference had written: “As Catholics we believe that the human body, once alive and animated by an immortal soul, possesses a moral dignity which must be honored.” Similar letters were sent by the Church to lawmakers in New York and New Hampshire, and partly because of these interventions, alkaline hydrolysis is not currently legal in any of these states. Within the Catholic community, the ethicist Sister Renee Mirkes makes a similar point. “The flashpoint of indignity with alkaline hydrolysis - specifically, pouring the liquid remains down the drain - is found in a similar form in the seepage after burial and in cremation through rain,” she wrote in the National Bioethics Quarterly in 2008, referring to the process whereby smoke from a cremation ultimately falls back to Earth, sometimes in raindrops that are washed into drains. In her article Mirkes notes that cremation was in effect prohibited in the Catholic Church until 1963, when Pope Paul VI ruled that while burial remained the preferred method for disposing of bodies, cremation was not intrinsically evil and the faithful were free to choose it when necessity dictated. She argues that the Church’s position on cremation should apply to green cremation too, although she suggests it should be left to bishops to advise the faithful in their dioceses.  [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-) sh/dissolving\_the\_dead

61 Sarah Venema, *Schone dood (A Clean death): Dissolving or freeze drying the body*, de Volkskrant, 10-8-2011; zie ook **http://mens- en-samenleving.infonu.nl/diversen/56954-nieuwe-uitvaart-mogelijkheden-resomeren-en-cryomeren.html**

62 Marjon Weijzen (environment hygieneologist and Chief editor of the Trade journal *Het Uitvaartwezen (Funeral Business*) *Begraven is niet slecht voor het milieu (Burying is not bad for the environment)*, Trouw, 16-8-2011 A study on behalf of the funeral company Yarden by TNO (Applied Scientific Research) executed by TU (University of Techniques) Delft in 2005.

63 Haskoning studied the scattering fields of the crematoriums in Utrecht, Dieren, Beuningen and Leeuwarden. The results of the report were submitted to P. Verkerk, the superintendent of Public Health and Environmental Hygiene of the ministry of VROM on 24-9-1991.

*Crematie-as vervuilt bodem en grondwater (Cremation ashes contaminates the ground and the ground water)*, Reformatorisch Dagblad, 24-9-1991

64 J. van ‘t Hul, *Cremation: waarom, waartoe, waarheen? (Why, What for, Where to?,*Reformatorisch Dagblad, 24-11-1995

65 Lev.21:1, 11, 22:4, Num.6:6

66 Rabbijn (Rabbi) S. Ph de Vries MZN, *Joodse riten en symbolen (Jewish rites and symbols)*(Amsterdam: Arbeiderspers, 1968 3rd print) pp. 263- 295

67 Rabbijn H. Rodrigues Pereira in het Nieuw Israëlitisch Weekblad, citaat (a quote) in het Reformatorisch Dagblad, 30-8- 1986

68 Mr. H. Loonstein, *Is men verplicht de wens tot crematie uit te voeren (Is it compulsory to carry out the wish for cremation)?*Nieuw Israëlitisch Weekblad, quoted in the Reformatorisch Dagblad van 24-9-1983

69 [**http://www.depers.nl/opmerkelijk/95278/Enige-crematorium-Israel-in-brand-gestoken.html**](http://www.depers.nl/opmerkelijk/95278/Enige-crematorium-Israel-in-brand-gestoken.html), [**http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=79949**](http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=79949)

70 *Eerste crematorium in Israël doorbreekt taboes (First crematorium has broken Taboos in Israel)*, Sp!ts, 10-6-2005

 71 *Crematie in het licht van de Bijbel (Cremation in the light of the Bible)*, J.I. van Baaren (Amsterdam: Evangelische Wereld Pers Moria, 1981) pp. 5, 9

72 *Christen en crematie Pastorale handleiding ten dienste van de geloofsbezinning op vragen rondom de crematie (Christian and Cremation, a Pastoral Guide on behalf of the religious reflection on questions regarding the cremation)*, Th. Delleman (’s-Gravenhage: Boekencentrum, 1977) p. 14

73 Delleman, a.w., p. 68, 69 In Hong Kong it takes even years before room is available to place or bury an urn with ashes. Unbearable for the bereaved relatives who both literally and figuratively want to give their bereavement a place. In order to solve the lack of space, Japan has built mechanical tombs. When the bereaved relatives scan their pass with a laser, the right urn is being transported upwards within 60 seconds. One out of ten looking places are equipped for performing suitable rituals by family members. Another popular option is a cruise ship on the South China Sea. This ship is at anchor and offers space for tens of thousands of urns. To use a new piece of land for that purpose meets with a major opposition, for according to the Chinese Feng Shui teaching, it would be very detrimental when the dead and the living are in the same environment. *Geen plaats voor de doden (No place for the dead)*, Adriënne Simons (graphic designer, lives and works in Hong Kong), Nederlands Dagblad 13-6-2012

74 Gen. 3:19, Rom.5:12, 6:23 1Cor.15:26

75 Delleman, a.w. , pp. 21-24

76 Urns, clothing, hearses, umbrellas, tomb stones, flower arrangements and commemorative pictures sometimes carry the name of the makers. The Dutch trade association for certified funeral undertakers (BGNU) does not recognize this problem, but considers advertising to be important, in order to break the taboo regarding funerals in this way. The border lies with the funeral itself. Linda Stelma, *Actie tegen reclame op urnen en grafstenen (Action against advertising for urns and tomb stones)*, Nederlands Dagblad, 3-1-2012,[**www.geenreclamebijdedood.nl**](http://www.geenreclamebijdedood.nl/)(no advertisements for death)

77 Gereformeerde Dogmatiek, IV par.572 (Reformed Dogmatics)

78 The Translation of the Dutch Bible Society is more literally here than the NBV (New Bible Translation).

79 2Sam.3:32, Jn.11:31, Acts 2:29

80 Mat.26:12, Mk14:18; Mk16:1, Jn.19:39, 40

81 *Kanaän/Hethieten (Canaanites/Hittites)*: Gen. 23:6, *Egypt*: among others the Pyramids Exo.14:11, Num.33:4, Eze.32:18, (Job 3:14 ?), *Assur*: Eze.32:22, *Elam*: Eze. 32:24, *Meshech-Tubal*: Eze.32:26, *Edom*: Eze. 32: 29, *Sidon*: Eze. 32:30 (*Moab*: Ruth1:17). Also the enemy Gog had to or has to be buried by Israel (Eze.39:11-16).

82 Gen. 35:20 (Rachel) 35:29 (Izaac), 50:13 (Jacob), 50:25, 26 Joseph in a casket). Acts 7:16

83 Exo.13:19, Joz.24:32, Acts 7:16

84 1Kgs.13:29-31, 2Sam.3:31, Lk7:14

85 Gen.50:25, Exo.13:19, Jos.24:32, Heb.11:22, the same is applied to his father Jacob: Gen. 47:29-31, 49:29, 50:1-14

86 Job 17:1, 14, 21:32, 33

87 Mat.17:1-13, Mark 9:2-13, Luke 9:28-36

88 Statenvertaling (Dutch States Translation: ‘charity’, Herziene (Revised) Statenvertaling: ‘expression of kindness’, NBV: ‘has shown faithfulness’

89 1Sam.31:11-13, 2Sam.21:13, 14

90 Mark 6:29, John11:17, Acts 8:2

91 1Kgs.13:21, 22, , Psa.79:2, 3, Jer.14:16, 16:4, 6, 25:33, Eze.39:4, 17, Rev.11:9

92 1Kgs.14:11, 2Kgs.9:10, 30-37, 2Sam.21:1-14, Jer.7:33, 8:1, 15:3, 16:4, 34:20, Eze.29:5, 32:4-6

93 Rev. 19:17-21

94 Psa.79:1-3, Isa.5:25, 14:18-20, 66:24, Jer. 36:30, Rev.11:7-10

95 Gen.35:20, 2Kgs.23:17

96 1Cor.15:1-4

97 Acts 13:35-37

98 Psa.34:21, John19:32-37

99 John5:25, 28, 29, Dan. 12:2

100 1Cor.15 (:3, 4 There is mention here of a division: 1. Christ has died for our sins according to the Scriptures. 2. Christ was buried and was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. It is remarkable that in this division ‘buried’ and ‘raised’ are united. Therefore, bury does not mean destroy as it is the case with cremation. ds. (reverend) T. Niemeijer, *Hoe moeten christenen omgaan met crematie (How should Christians deal with cremation?*Het Zoeklicht, 87thvolume, nr. 16, 6-8-2011, p. 17)

101 The poet Lucanus from ‘*To Life and death’*part 3 cremation, Edited by A. Blijlevens, W. Boelens, G. Lukken (Hilversum: Gooi & Sticht, 1990) p. 68

102 The New Cathechism, Proclamation of faith for adults, composed on behalf of the bishops in the Netherlands (Hilversum-Antwerpen: Paul Brand; ’s-Hertogenbosch: L.C.G. Malmberg; Roermond-Maaseik: J.J. Romen & Zonen, 1966), pp. 555, 561

103 Mat.27:52, Jn.5:28

104 1Cor.3:16, 17, 1Cor.6:13-15, 19, 20

105 Gen.19:24, 25, 38:24, Lev. 20:14, 21:9, Num.16:35, Judges.14:15, 15:6, Joshua7:15, 25, 2Sam.23:7, 2Kings1:10- 14, 23:16-19, Isa.33:12, Jer.29:22 (levend roosteren? (roasted alive?), Eze.16:19-21,38:22, 39:6, Dan.3, Hos.8:14, Amos 1:4- 14, 2:1-5, 7:4, Mat.13:40, 2Pet.2:6 (Gen.19:4-25, Deu.29:23, Jude 7), Rev.18:8.

106 Lev.18:21, 20:1-5, Deu.12:31, 18:10-13, 2Kings16:3, 17:17, 31, 21:6, 23:10, 1Chron10:13, 2Chron.28:3, 33:6, Jer.7:31, 19:5, 32:35, Eze.16:21, 20:26, 31, 23:37.

107 Elie Wiesel, *Nacht (Night)*(Amsterdam: Meulenhof, 15th edition 2016), p 8.

108 Douma, a.w., p.159

109 Marcus Minuscius Felix, *De opstanding des vleses en het Nieuwe testament bij Tertullianus, (The resurrection of the flesh and the New Testament by Tertullius*p. 367,  *appeared in Dutch*Theologian Journal, Aug. 1955, quote in Delleman, a.w., p. 27

110 Gen.2:7, 3:19, 18:27, Job 39:19

111 Mat.8:22, Lk 9:60

112 Douma, a.w., p. 160

113 Ds. P. Lok, *Graf of oven? (Grave or oven?)*(Groningen: de Vuurbaak, zj (niet voor 1972)) p. 58

114 Delleman, a.w., p. 13

115 *Crematie mogen wij er naar toe?(Cremation, are we allowed to attend it?),*ds. J. Veenendaal (Rotterdam: stichting (Foundation) Lectori Salutem, 1993)

116 *Op Dood en Leven (To Life and death)*deel 3 crematie, Onder redactie van A. Blijlevens, W. Boelens, G. Lukken (Hilversum: Gooi & Sticht, 1990) p. 81

117 Dr. L.G. Wagenaar, *De kerkelijke begrafenis*(*The church funeral*) (’s Gravenhage: Boekencentrum, 1964) p. 25