

Crementation and the Bible

1. God formed man from the dust of the ground, and says that **he shall return to the dust**, implying a natural process of decay after death of the body, not destruction by burning (Gen. 2:7;3:19).
2. In both Old and New Testaments, **the saints of the Bible practiced burial** of their dead. Abraham purchased a burial place for his wife Sarah (Gen. 23:19,20); Jacob commanded his remains to be carried out of Egypt and buried in the burying place of his fathers (Gen. 47:29,30); John the Baptist was buried after he was murdered by Herod (Mt. 14:12); Lazarus laid in a grave four days before being raised to life again by Christ (Jn. 11:41). Many other instances can be cited.
3. **Those who were cremated in Scripture serve as warnings of God's judgments** and His vengeance upon sinners, not of His acceptance and blessings toward His children. Achan, the man who stole and hid the accursed spoil from the battle of Jericho, causing the army of Israel to suffer defeat and loss of lives in their next battle, was stoned and cremated for his punishment (Josh. 7:25); the body of Saul, the disobedient king of Israel, was cremated after he had committed suicide in his last battle with the Philistines (I Sam. 31:12); in purging idol worship from the nation of Judah, King Josiah killed the idolatrous priests in his land, then burned their bodies (II Kings 23:20).
4. Burning of human sacrifices was a practice associated with **idolatrous worship**, and condemned by God (II Chron. 33:6).
5. God, to prove His faithfulness and His power on behalf of His own, protected the three Hebrew children. He **did not allow them to be consumed in the burning fiery furnace** into which they were thrown by King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon (Dan. 3:25).
6. As the place of eternal punishment, **hell is called the lake of fire** where the wicked will burn forever, yet not be annihilated so as to escape their sufferings (Rev. 20:15).
7. As the Christian's example in all things, **the Lord Jesus Christ was buried** in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea (Mt. 27:59,60).
8. The Apostle Paul, when giving **a definition of the gospel** of Christ, includes His burial as an essential part (I Cor. 15:3,4).
9. As a church ordinance commanded by Christ, **baptism portrays burial**. As the Christian goes under the baptismal waters, he shows his death to his old life of sin, followed by his rising to a new life of righteousness and holiness with Christ (Rom. 6:4).

Source: www.chapellibrary.org