

Epitaphs Of God

Introduction. John James Ingalls said, "In the democracy of the dead all men at last are equal. There is neither rank nor station nor prerogative in the republic of the grave." Life is described as a shadow (1 Chronicles 29:15), a weaver's shuttle (Job 7:6-10), a runner (Job 9:25), a handbreadth (Psalm 39:5), the wind (Psalm 78:39), the grass (Psalm 90:5-6), a leaf (Isaiah 64:6), and a vapor (James 4:13-14). Death is certain (Hebrews 9:27), and the "by and by" depends on the "now and now" (Galatians 6:7).

I. *The Custom Of Epitaphs*

- A. An epitaph (in Greek, ἐπιτάφιος -- literally "on the gravestone") is a short text honoring a deceased person.
 - 1. On the other hand, the Laudatio Turiae, the longest known ancient Roman epitaph, is a husband's eulogy of his wife, and is 180 lines long.
 - 2. The inscription gives a unique insight into the late first century Roman world during the rise of Augustus Caesar.
- B. Although strictly speaking, an epitaph is inscribed on a tombstone or plaque, the word is also used figuratively, which is the way we will use it today. God wrote epitaphs about many people in the Bible -- some good, some bad.

II. *Some Good Epitaphs*

- A. "Walked with God" (Genesis 5:24).
- B. "Well done" (Matthew 25:21).
- C. "Full of good works" (Acts 9:36).
- D. "He being dead yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4).
- E. "Kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).
- F. "Blessed are the dead" (Revelation 14:13).

III. *Some Bad Epitaphs*

- A. "Betrayed him" (Matthew 26:25).
- B. "Obeyed not the gospel" (2 Thessalonians 1:8).
- C. "Made shipwreck of faith" (1 Timothy 1:19).
- D. "Loved this present world" (2 Timothy 4:10).
- E. "Sinned willfully" (Hebrews 10:26).
- F. "She repented not" (Revelation 2:21).

Conclusion. Henry Ward Beecher said, "There is but one easy place in this world, and that is the grave." Your epitaph is being written right now. What will it say? What goes on a tombstone is not really important, but what God says about you is critical. He wants a good epitaph for you (Revelation

3:20-21). His goodness leads you to repentance, and He is longsuffering (Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). You can start preparing by obeying Jesus today!