

OLD AGE DESCRIBED IN MOVING PICTURES

[Ecc 12:1-7](#) “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.....”

When should I remember my Creator? 12:1-8

*Remember your Creator
in the days of your youth
before the days of
trouble come*

Ecc 12:1



Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, “I have no pleasure in them”;

² while neither the sun nor the light, nor the moon nor the stars be darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain;

³ in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and the eyes that look out of the windows be darkened;

⁴ and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low; and he shall rise up at the voice of a bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low;

⁵ also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way; and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets;

⁶ or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern—

⁷ then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

⁸ “Vanity of vanities,” saith the Preacher. “All is vanity.”

⁹ And moreover because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed and sought out and set in order many proverbs.

¹⁰ The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth!

¹¹ The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the master builders, which are given from one Shepherd.

¹² And further, my son, by these words be admonished: of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness to the flesh.

¹³ Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

¹⁴ For God shall bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.

Senile decay and failing powers are usually the lot of the aged as they slowly inch toward the long home of death. It is true, modern medicine and other factors have contributed much in making old age more bearable, but it still is a time of weakness and fading strength.

“Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,” said the Lord to man after he had fallen into sin and brought a curse upon himself and creation. Old age is one of the results of man’s disobedience to God.

The weaknesses of old age are described in our text. Each little description of some phase of senility is a beautiful picture in itself. Put all the little pictures together and we have a masterpiece. Let us look at this picture painted by the hand of an inspired master.

OLD AGE DESCRIBED IN MOVING PICTURES

1. WITHOUT GOD THEY ARE EVIL DAYS

Youth and life itself without God is evil enough, old age without the Creator is appalling. It is because old people follow a set pattern that the preacher says, “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.”

Old age is called “evil days” in v.1, days of sickness and want, a putting off death for another day. The “years draw nigh” and like a string of beads they become less and less as they are counted off. There is “no pleasure in them” for often people tire of the old folks, and many former friends and relatives have passed on leaving the aged like a solitary tree in a field.

The pictures of old age continue in v2. The eyes become weaker and the light from the heavens begins to fade. Clouds of pain and trouble keep reoccurring and cause an unsettled condition in life, like the weather.

“The keepers of the house” v.3, the head, arms, and hands shake and tremble. “The strong men shall bow themselves” for the legs, back, and main supports of the body become weak and cause an arching or bowing of the body. “The grinders cease” as the teeth gradually decay until there are few left to chew the food. “Those that look out of the windows be darkened” are the eyes which become affected by age.



There are more pictures of old age in v-4. “The doors shall be shut in the streets.” Old people do not care to go out, they prefer resting in their favorite chair. Or perhaps these words are a reference to the lips that are shut to retain the food in the mouth. Then the “sound of grinding,” chewing, is very low due to the absence of teeth. The insomnia or light sleep of old folks is expressed by “he shall rise up at the voice of the bird.” Hard of hearing and a deterioration of speech are another failing in old age, so “the daughters of music shall be brought low.”

Our text is indeed a series of moving pictures. V.5 depicts the timid and careful walk of the old, “they shall be afraid of that which is high. ” The graying and whitened’ head is likened to “the almond tree that shall flourish.” “The grasshopper shall be a burden” refers, perhaps, to the fact that even the lightest foods are hard to digest and the desires for food diminish.

The “silver cord” in v.6 could allude to that which holds body and soul together; and the “golden bowl” might mean the heart and blood stream; the “pitcher” may point to the sources of life in the body, like the main spring of a watch. It is bad enough in later years to lose all the desires and powers which make life good and livable; imagine slipping into old age without God, without any sustaining hope, without the Savior in whom alone we have eternal life.

The pictures of old age are dreary enough, how horrifying, how terrible to pass through that stage of life without being at peace with our Maker. When

the Preacher says, “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth” he is implying that if this is not the case there will be little change expected in the later years. Few people are converted in old age, habits become stiffened and set with the passing of the years. Now is the time to seek the Lord while He may be found.

2. WITH GOD THEY ARE PLEASANT DAYS

“Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” To give our youth to the devil and our old age to God is much worse than bringing torn and sick sheep to God for an offering. ([Leviticus 4:32](#) “And if he bring in a sheep for his offering, for a sin-offering, a female, a perfect one, he doth bring in...”)

Now in the days of our youth when our powers and strength are in full bloom is the time to serve the Lord with gladness. Then we can offer Him labor and service in building His kingdom, then we can work tirelessly for the glory of His marvelous name.

How blessed the young and the middle-aged who joyfully carry out the will of the Lord, bringing up their families in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord,” building the church, giving cheerfully for the expansion of the kingdom. These are the people who are the backbone of the church and the strength of our Synod.

Such young people and families will grow older, but their days will be pleasant. As old age inevitably draws near they can look back to the years devoted to the service of Him who is the Lord of all. Old age with all its declining powers will still be a pleasant age for they have the Savior with them who will never leave them comfortless.

When they pray with David in [Ps 71:9](#) “Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth” they will get an answer which will lift them above life’s vicissitudes. God’s love is not founded on youth and beauty, a wrinkled skin or bent back does not change God’s love in the least. His love to us in Christ is eternal and changeless. Whenever we pray, “Abide with me” we always have the answer of Jesus our only Savior, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

God loved the world, young and old, and gave His only Son to pay for all our sins by dying on the cross. The offer of eternal life is for all men; whosoever believes that Jesus died to save us, will be saved.

Is old age then something to fear and dread for a child of God in Christ? It is true there are many aches and pains and the many other things described in our text, but all these things are only for a few short years at most. Old age is the door to eternal life for the believers, the aged are nearing the goal of life, to be forever with the Lord in glory. What is so

frightening about that? These thoughts can sustain us in all tribulations and give us a real settled peace which passeth not away. Actually old age is the most blessed time of life for the believers, they are that much closer to being delivered from all evil. They, too, can say with Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation," [Luke 2:29](#). The Lord has already given us the answer to our prayers ([Isaiah 46:4](#)), "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you." So we see, our text may be depressing, but not for the children of God in Jesus.

Let all of us, young and old, accept Jesus now in faith as our only Redeemer, then whether we die young or old, we shall ever be with the Lord.

We can appropriately sum up our sermon with the words of the Preacher 12: 13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." AMEN.

**Let us hear the conclusion
of the whole matter: Fear
God, and keep his
commandments: for this
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Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**



PRAYER. Lord of life, help us dedicate all our days to service and glory. Thou hast redeemed us with the blood of Thine own Son. Make us willing and able to place all our gifts and talents into Thy hands to labor in Thy kingdom. When life draws to a close then "Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes. Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies. Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me." AMEN