



# *Longevity*

*Promises For A Long  
And Fruitful Life*

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## Overview

The Lord will manage all his worldly concerns, and preserve his life on earth, so long as it shall be good for him.

For encouragement in this he looks unto Jesus. He shall live long enough; till he has done the work he was sent into this world for, and is ready for heaven.

Who would wish to live a day longer than God has some work to do, either by him or upon him? A man may die young, yet be satisfied with living. But a wicked man is not satisfied even with long life.

At length the believer's conflict ends; he has done for ever with trouble, sin, and temptation.

### **Genesis 15:15**

And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

## **The days of the years are my pilgrimage.**

### **Genesis 47:9**

And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

### **Jacob Blesses Pharaoh**

With the gravity of old age, the piety of a true believer, and the authority of a patriarch and a prophet, Jacob besought the Lord to bestow a blessing upon Pharaoh.

He acted as a man not ashamed of his religion; and who would express gratitude to the benefactor of himself and his family.

We have here a very uncommon answer given to a very common question. Jacob calls his life a pilgrimage; the sojourning of a stranger in a foreign country, or his journey home to his own country. He was not at home upon earth; his habitation, his inheritance, his treasures were in heaven.

He reckons his life by days; even by days life is soon reckoned, and we are not sure of the continuance of it for a day. Let us therefore number our days. His days were few. Though he had now lived one hundred and thirty years, they seemed but a few days, in comparison with the days of eternity, and the eternal state.

They were evil; this is true concerning man. He is of few days and full of trouble; since his days are evil, it is well they are few. Jacob's life had been made up of evil days. Old age came sooner upon him than it had done upon some of his fathers.

As the young man should not be proud of his strength or beauty, so the old man should not be proud of his age, and his hoary hairs, though others justly reverence them; for those who are accounted very old, attain not to the years of the patriarchs.

The hoary head is only a crown of glory, when found in the way of righteousness.

After a life of vanity and vexation, man goes down into the grave, equally from the throne as the cottage. Nothing can make us happy, but the prospect of an everlasting home in heaven, after our short and weary pilgrimage on earth.

### **Moses natural forces were not abated.**

#### **Deut. 34:7**

And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

Moses obeyed this command of God as willingly as any other, though it seemed harder. In this he resembled our Lord Jesus Christ. But he died in honour, in peace, and in the easiest manner; the Saviour died upon the disgraceful and torturing cross. Moses died very easily; he died "at the mouth of the Lord," according to the will of God. The servants of the Lord, when they have done all their other work, must die at last, and be willing to go home, whenever their Master sends for them, [Ac 21:13](#).

The place of his burial was not known. If the soul be at rest with God, it is of little consequence where the body rests. There was no decay in the strength of his body, nor in the vigor and activity of his mind; and his understanding as clear, and his memory as strong as ever.

This was the reward of his services, the effect of his extraordinary meekness. There was solemn mourning for him. Yet how great so ever our losses have been, we must not give ourselves up to sorrow.

If we hope to go to heaven rejoicing, why should we go to the grave mourning?

## **The senses of Barzillai remained strong.**

### **2 Samuel 19:34-37**

And Barzillai said unto the king, how long have I to live, that I should go up with the king unto Jerusalem?

I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? Can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women?

Wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king? Thy servant will go a little way over Jordan with the king: and why should the king recompense it me with such a reward?

Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, and be buried by the grave of my father and of my mother. But behold thy servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king; and do to him what shall seem good unto thee.

Barzillai thought he had done himself honour in doing the king any service. Thus, when the saints shall be called to inherit the kingdom, they will be amazed at the recompense being so very far beyond the service, [Mat 25:37](#).

A good man would not go anywhere to be burdensome; or, will rather be so to his own house than to another's. It is good for all, but especially becomes old people, to think and speak much of dying. The grave is ready for me, let me go and get ready for it.

## **David died full of days with riches and honor.**

### **1 Chron. 29:28**

And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead.

When we read the second book of Samuel, we could scarcely have expected to behold David appear so illustrious in his closing scene.

But his repentance had been as remarkable as his sin; and his conduct during his afflictions, and towards the end of his life, appears to have had a good effect on his subjects. Blessed be God, even the chief of sinners may hope for a glorious departure, when brought to repent and flee for refuge to the Saviour's atoning blood.

Let us mark the difference between the spirit and character of the man after God's own heart, living and dying, and those of worthless professors, who resemble him in nothing but their sins, and who wickedly try to excuse their crimes by his sins.

Let us watch and pray, lest we be overcome by temptation, and overtaken by sin, to the dishonour of God, and the wounding of our own consciences. When we feel that we have offended, let us follow David's example of repentance and patience, looking for a glorious resurrection, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Job was to come to his grave full of age.**

**Job 5:26**

Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

There is little exercise for faith when all things go well. But if God raises a storm, permits the enemy to send wave after wave, and seemingly stands aloof from our prayers, then, still to hang on and trust God, when we cannot trace him, this is the patience of the saints.

Blessed Saviour! How sweet it is to look unto thee, the Author and Finisher of faith, in such moments!

**Your age will be clearer than the noonday.**

**Job 11:17**

And thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

Zophar speaks well concerning God and his greatness and glory, concerning man and his vanity and folly. See here what man is; and let him be humbled.

God sees this concerning vain man, that he would be wise, would be thought so, though he is born like a wild ass's colt, so unteachable and untamable. Man is a vain creature; empty, so the word is.

Yet he is a proud creature, and self-conceited. He would be wise, would be thought so, though he will not submit to the laws of wisdom.

### **With the length of days is understanding.**

#### **Job 12:12**

With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.

This is a noble discourse of Job concerning the wisdom, power, and sovereignty of God, in ordering all the affairs of the children of men, according to the counsel of His own will, which none can resist.

It were well if wise and good men, who differ about lesser things, would see how it is for their honour and comfort, and the good of others, to dwell most upon the great things in which they agree. Here are no complaints, or reflections.

### **Job's friends we silenced.**

#### **Job 32:4-9**

Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he.

When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled. And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion.

I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom. But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

Great men are not always wise: neither do the aged understand judgment.

Job's friends were silenced, but not convinced. Others had been present. Elihu was justly displeased with Job, as more anxious to clear his own character than the justice and goodness of God.

Elihu was displeased with Job's friends because they had not been candid to Job. Seldom is a quarrel begun, more seldom is a quarrel carried on, in which there are not faults on both sides. Those that seek for truth, must not reject what is true and good on either side, nor approve or defend what is wrong.

Elihu professes to speak by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and corrects both parties.

He allowed that those who had the longest experience should speak first. But God gives wisdom as he pleases; this encouraged him to state his opinion.

By attention to the word of God, and dependence upon the Holy Spirit, young men may become wiser than the aged; but this wisdom will render them swift to hear, slow to speak, and disposed to give others a patient hearing.

### **Job's prosperity is renewed.**

#### **Job 42:17**

So Job died, being old and full of days.

In the beginning of this book we had Job's patience under his troubles, for an example; here, for our encouragement to follow that example, we have his happy end.

His troubles began in Satan's malice, which God restrained; his restoration began in God's mercy, which Satan could not oppose.

**Mercy did not return when Job was disputing with his friends, but when he was praying for them.**

God is served and pleased with our warm devotions, not with our warm disputes. God doubled Job's possessions.

We may lose much for the Lord, but we shall not lose anything by him. Whether the Lord gives us health and temporal blessings or not, if we patiently suffer according to his will, in the end we shall be happy.

Job's estate increased. The blessing of the Lord makes rich; it is he that gives us power to get wealth, and gives success in honest endeavours. The last days of a good man sometimes prove his best, his last works his best works, his last comforts his best comforts; for his path, like that of the morning light, shines more and more unto the perfect day.

### **The Lord will not forsake the old.**

#### **Psalm 71:18**

Now also when I am old and grey headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.

The psalmist declares that the righteousness of Christ, and the great salvation obtained thereby, shall be the chosen subject of his discourse.

Not on a Sabbath only, but on every day of the week, of the year, of his life. Not merely at stated returns of solemn devotion, but on every occasion, all the day long.

The Lord often strengthens his people in their souls, when nature is sinking into decay. And it is a debt which the old Disciples of Christ owe to succeeding generations, to leave behind them a solemn testimony to the advantage of religion, and the truth of God's promises; and especially to the everlasting righteousness of the Redeemer.

Assured of deliverance and victory, let us spend our days, while waiting the approach of death, in praising the Holy One of Israel with all our powers.

And while speaking of his righteousness, and singing his praises, we shall rise above fears and infirmities, and have earnestness of the joys of heaven. The work of redemption ought, above all God's works, to be spoken of by us in our praises.

The Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God, is worthy of all blessing and praise.

### **By reason of strength, man may live longer**

#### **Psalm 90:10**

The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

The afflictions of the saints often come from God's love; but the rebukes of sinners, and of believers for their sins, must be seen coming from the displeasure of God.

Secret sins are known to God, and shall be reckoned for. See the folly of those who go about to cover their sins, for they cannot do so.

Our years, when gone, can no more be recalled than the words that we have spoken. Our whole life is toilsome and troublesome; and perhaps, in the midst of the years we count upon, it is cut off.

We are taught by all this to stand in awe. The angels that sinned know the power of God's anger; sinners in hell know it; but which of us can fully describe it?

Few seriously consider it as they ought. Those who make a mock at sin, and make light of Christ, surely do not know the power of God's anger. Who among us can dwell with that devouring fire?

## **You shall bring forth fruit in old age.**

### **Psalm 92:14**

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

It is from his grace, by his word and Spirit that believers receive all the virtue that keeps them alive, and makes them fruitful.

Other trees, when old, leave off bearing, but in God's trees the strength of grace does not fail with the strength of nature.

The last days of the saints are sometimes their best days, and their last work their best work: perseverance is sure evidence of sincerity.

And may every Sabbath, while it shows forth the Divine faithfulness, find our souls resting more and more upon the Lord our righteousness.

## **Let everyone praise the Lord.**

### **Psalm 148:12-13**

Both young men, and maidens; old men, and children: Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.

Let all manner of persons praise God. Those of every rank, high and low. Let us show that we are his saints by praising his name continually.

He is not only our Creator, but our Redeemer; who made us a people near unto him. We may by "the Horn of his people" understand Christ, whom God has exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, who is indeed the defence and the praise of all his saints, and will be so forever. In redemption, that unspeakable glory is displayed, which forms the source of all our hopes and joys.

May the Lord pardon us, and teach our hearts to love him more and praise him better.

## **Grey hair is a crown of glory.**

### **Proverbs 16:31**

Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained by living a godly life.

Old people especially should be found in the way of religion and godliness. [Prov 16:32](#).

To overcome our own passions, requires more steady management, than obtaining victory over an enemy. [Prov 16:33](#).

All the disposal of Providence concerning our affairs, we must look upon to be the determining what we referred to God; and we must be reconciled to them accordingly.

Blessed are those that give themselves up to the will of God; for he knows what is good for them.

## **Remember your creator in the days of your youth.**

### **Eccles. 12:1-7**

Don't let the excitement of youth cause you to forget your Creator. Honor him in your youth before you grow old and no longer enjoy living.

It will be too late then to remember him, when the light of the sun and moon and stars is dim to your old eyes, and there is no silver lining left among the clouds. Your limbs will tremble with age, and your strong legs will grow weak. Your teeth will be too few to do their work, and you will be blind, too.

And when your teeth are gone, keep your lips tightly closed when you eat! Even the chirping of birds will wake you up. But you yourself will be deaf and tuneless, with a quavering voice.

You will be afraid of heights and of falling, white-haired and withered, dragging along without any sexual desire. You will be standing at death's door. And as you near your everlasting home, the mourners will walk along the streets.

Yes, remember your Creator now while you are young, before the silver cord of life snaps and the golden bowl is broken. Don't wait until the water jar is smashed at the spring and the pulley is broken at the well.

For then the dust will return to the earth, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.

We should remember our sins against our Creator, repent, and seek forgiveness. We should remember our duties, and set about them, looking to him for grace and strength.

This should be done early, while the body is strong, and the spirits active. When a man has the pain of reviewing a misspent life, his not having given up sin and worldly vanities till he is forced to say, I have no pleasure in them, renders his sincerity very questionable.

Then follows a figurative description of old age and its infirmities, which has some difficulties; but the meaning is plain, to show how uncomfortable, generally, the days of old age are.

As the four verses, [Ecc1 12:2-5](#), are a figurative description of the infirmities that usually accompany old age, [Ecc1 12:6](#) notices the circumstances which take place in the hour of death.

If sin had not entered into the world, these infirmities would not have been known. Surely then the aged should reflect on the evil of sin.

### **God alone, saves his people.**

#### **Isaiah 46:4**

I will be your God throughout your lifetime—until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you.

This promise to Israel, enfeebled and grown old as a nation, is applicable to every aged follower of Christ.

When compassed about with infirmities, and perhaps those around begin to grow weary of you, yet I am He that I have promised to be, He that you would have me to be.

I will bear you up; carry you on in your way, and carry you home at last. If we learn to trust in and love him, we need not be anxious about our remaining days or years; he will still provide for us and watch over us, both as the creatures of his power, and as new-created by his Spirit.

### **Anna prophecies concerning Jesus.**

#### **Luke 2:37**

She was now eighty-four years old. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer.

There was much evil then in the church, yet God left not himself without witness. Anna always dwelt in, or at least attended at, the temple.

She was always in a praying spirit; gave herself to prayer, and in all things she served God. Those to whom Christ is made known, have great reason to thank the Lord.

She taught others concerning him. Let the example of the venerable saints, Simeon and Anna, give courage to those whose hoary heads are, like theirs, a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness.

The lips soon to be silent in the grave, should be showing forth the praises of the Redeemer.

## **Older men should live wisely.**

### **Titus 2:2-3**

Teach the older men to exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have strong faith and be filled with love and patience.

Similarly, teach the older women to live in a way that is appropriate for someone serving the Lord. They must not go around speaking evil of others and must not be heavy drinkers. Instead, they should teach others what is good.

Old disciples of Christ must behave in everything agreeably to the Christian doctrine.

That the aged men be sober; not thinking that the decays of nature will justify any excess; but seeking comfort from nearer communion with God, not from any undue indulgence. Faith works by, and must be seen in love, of God for himself, and of men for God's sake.

### **Life Application:**

When we live our lives for God, our journey here does not end until we take our final breath.

Noah, Moses, Abraham-some of our greatest biblical examples-all went on some of their greatest adventures at a time when most would be settling into retirement.

If you feel a little forgotten, overlooked or unappreciated, take time to remember that God will use you at any age, and any stage.

There is no age limit to the way He works, and His is a love that never grows old.

**To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:**

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Verse Concept: Matthew Henry's Concept Bible Commentary.