



# Crown of Honor

"You shall stand up before the gray head  
and honor the face of an old man..."

**May 2025**  
Family Month



# Acknowledgement

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“Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” 2 Corinthians 9:15  
God continue blessing you.

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# Introduction

Every wrinkle tells a story, every look conveys a lesson, and every gesture embodies the wisdom of a life well-lived. Our seniors are far more than just markers of time; they are the heart of our families, the guardians of our cherished traditions, and the architects of the paths we tread today.

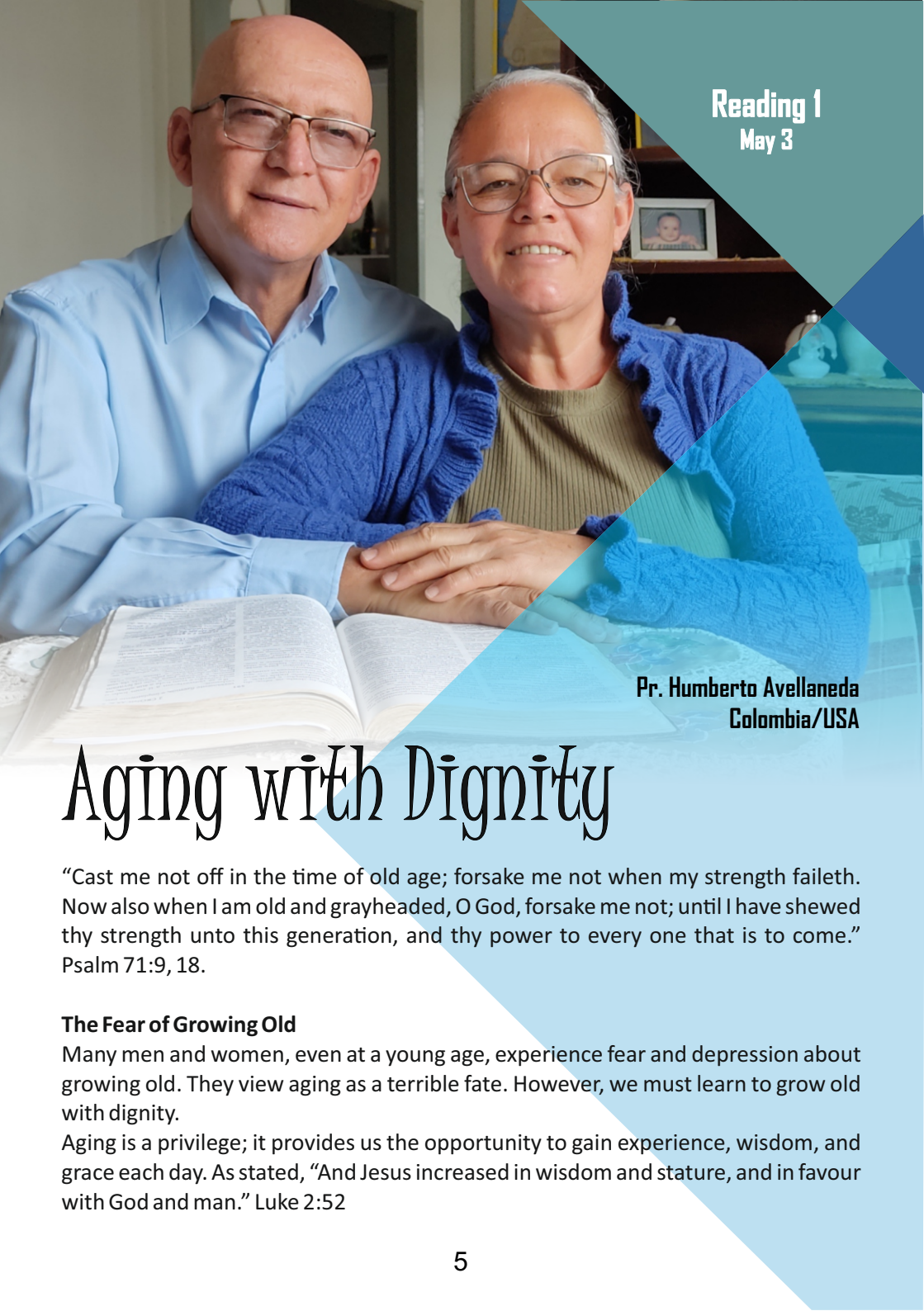
With these readings, the Family Department seeks to honor the needs of the elderly and reinforce the profound connection we share with them. We have a moral obligation—not just as children, relatives, or members of the Church—to provide not only care but also genuine love and unwavering respect. We will delve into the emotions that define this stage of life: the gratitude, the worries, and the transformative lessons that shape us all along the journey.

Looking to the future, we will offer valuable tips to prevent challenges, enhance well-being, and ensure that our elders are treated with the dignity they richly deserve. Caring for our seniors is not just a duty; it's a heartfelt tribute to their lives and a foundation for building a more compassionate future.

This magazine is designed for everyone—it's for seniors and for you. Our goal is to inspire you, ignite your passion, and reinforce that in our love for the elderly, we uncover the true essence of life and the living embodiment of the gospel.

These readings, specially prepared for 2025, are meant to be shared every Sabbath in May. The Family Department truly hopes these readings will become a source of blessing for every church and every family.





Reading 1  
May 3

Pr. Humberto Avellaneda  
Colombia/USA

# Aging with Dignity

“Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth. Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.”  
Psalm 71:9, 18.

## **The Fear of Growing Old**

Many men and women, even at a young age, experience fear and depression about growing old. They view aging as a terrible fate. However, we must learn to grow old with dignity.

Aging is a privilege; it provides us the opportunity to gain experience, wisdom, and grace each day. As stated, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.” Luke 2:52

“David marked that although the lives of some while in the strength of manhood had been righteous, as old age came upon them they seemed to lose their self-control. Satan stepped in and guided their minds, making them restless and dissatisfied....

“David himself was deeply troubled and distressed by thoughts of his own old age. He feared that God would forsake him and that, like other miserable aged people he had observed, he might face reproach from the enemies of the Lord. Aware of his concerns, he earnestly prayed, 'Cast me not away in the time of my old age; when my strength fails, forsake me not.'" —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 422.

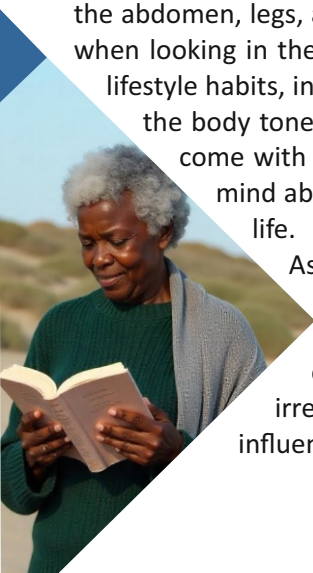
Dear brothers and sisters, the Bible presents aging as a normal and natural part of life in this world. There is honor in the aging process, as it is often accompanied by greater wisdom and experience. Proverbs 16:31 reminds us, “The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” Similarly, Proverbs 20:29 states, “The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head.” Aging should not be seen as something to fear or dread; rather, it is about learning to grow old with dignity.

God wants us to remember that life is short, coming and going quickly. James 4:14 cautions, “Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”

What about the beauty of youth? It is temporary and ultimately fleeting: “Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain.” (Proverbs 31:30, fp). The apostle Peter compares our lives to the grass of the field: “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away.” 1 Peter 1:24.

As we age, external changes to our bodies become more apparent—such as wrinkles, dark circles, and crow's feet on the face, as well as increased flaccidity in the abdomen, legs, and arms. These changes can lead to feelings of unhappiness when looking in the mirror. It becomes increasingly important to adopt healthy lifestyle habits, including regular physical exercise and a balanced diet, to keep the body toned and healthy. It is essential to prepare for the changes that come with aging. Ultimately, what matters most is to maintain an open mind about these changes and to acknowledge that aging is a part of life.

As we age, the wisdom gained from life experiences can empower and strengthen us. This is an opportunity to reflect on our lives and choose the experiences that help us become our best selves. Aging is a natural, gradual, continuous, and irreversible process of biological changes over time, but it is also influenced by historical, cultural, and socioeconomic factors.



Do not fear getting older; instead, think of those who have lost their lives too soon and never had the chance to live, share, or enjoy. You are a child of God, filled with blessings and the hope of eternal life. While we all face the inevitable process of aging, how we approach this crucial stage can significantly impact both ourselves and those around us.

**Here are some key aspects to consider for aging with dignity:**

1. Psalm 118:24 reminds us: “This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” Adopting an attitude of **gratitude and joy** for each new day and stage of life can transform our perspective and help us face challenges with optimism.

2. The Bible encourages us to seek wisdom and share it with others. Proverbs 1:7 states: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; fools despise wisdom and instruction.” **By generously sharing our experiences and knowledge**, we can positively influence the lives of those around us.

3. Jesus taught us to be merciful, as mentioned in Luke 6:36: “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” By **practicing empathy and compassion towards others**, we demonstrate God's love in action and build meaningful relationships.

4. Our bodies are gifts from God, and it is essential to take good care of them. 1 Corinthians 6:19 reminds us: “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” **Taking care of our physical and mental health** allows us to continue serving others and enjoying a fulfilling life.

5. Galatians 6:5 tells us, “For every man shall bear his own burden.” By **taking responsibility for our lives**, we demonstrate maturity and strength. As we become as independent as possible according to our abilities, we can accomplish many things at our age.

6. The companionship and support of others are essential for our emotional well-being. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 encourages us: “Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.” **Cultivating meaningful relationships brings us joy**, comfort, and spiritual edification.

7. The Bible calls us to serve others with generosity and love. Romans 12:6 states, “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether

prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.” By **contributing to the welfare of our church**, we leave a lasting legacy and honor God's purpose for our lives.

## **Purposes of life**

Let us always remember that each day is a precious gift from the Lord—an opportunity to share love, wisdom, and compassion with those around us. Let us move forward with confidence, knowing that we are called to be a light in the midst of darkness and to leave a lasting legacy of love for generations to come.

May every wrinkle be a testament to shared smiles, every gray hair a reminder of acquired wisdom, and every day an opportunity to live with grace and gratitude. Aging with dignity is a journey of spiritual and personal growth that leads us to a closer relationship with God and a positive impact on the world around us.

Many people feel worried, anxious, or even terrified about aging, often due to its associations with negative experiences such as wrinkles, gray hair, fatigue, memory loss, and aches and pains. Regardless of our health, we all desire to age with dignity and to maintain our joy. Achieving this partly depends on our attitude and our ability to adapt to this new stage of life.

Proverbs 24:10 states, “If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.” Proverbs 15:15 adds, “All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.” There are many things we can do even in old age. God has used older individuals to accomplish great works, and as the proverb says, we can have “a constant feast” and serve God meaningfully.

“When John was old and gray-headed, he was given a message to bear to the persecuted churches. The Jews made several attempts to take his life, but the Lord said: 'Let him live. I who created him will be with him and will guard him.' Constantly this aged disciple bore testimony for the Master. In beautiful language, with a musical voice, speaking in a way that impressed the hearts of all who heard him, he told of the words and works of Christ. He was sent as an exile to Patmos, but Christ visited him in his exile, and communicated to him the grand truths found in the Revelation.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 288.

## **Forgiveness is essential for aging with dignity**

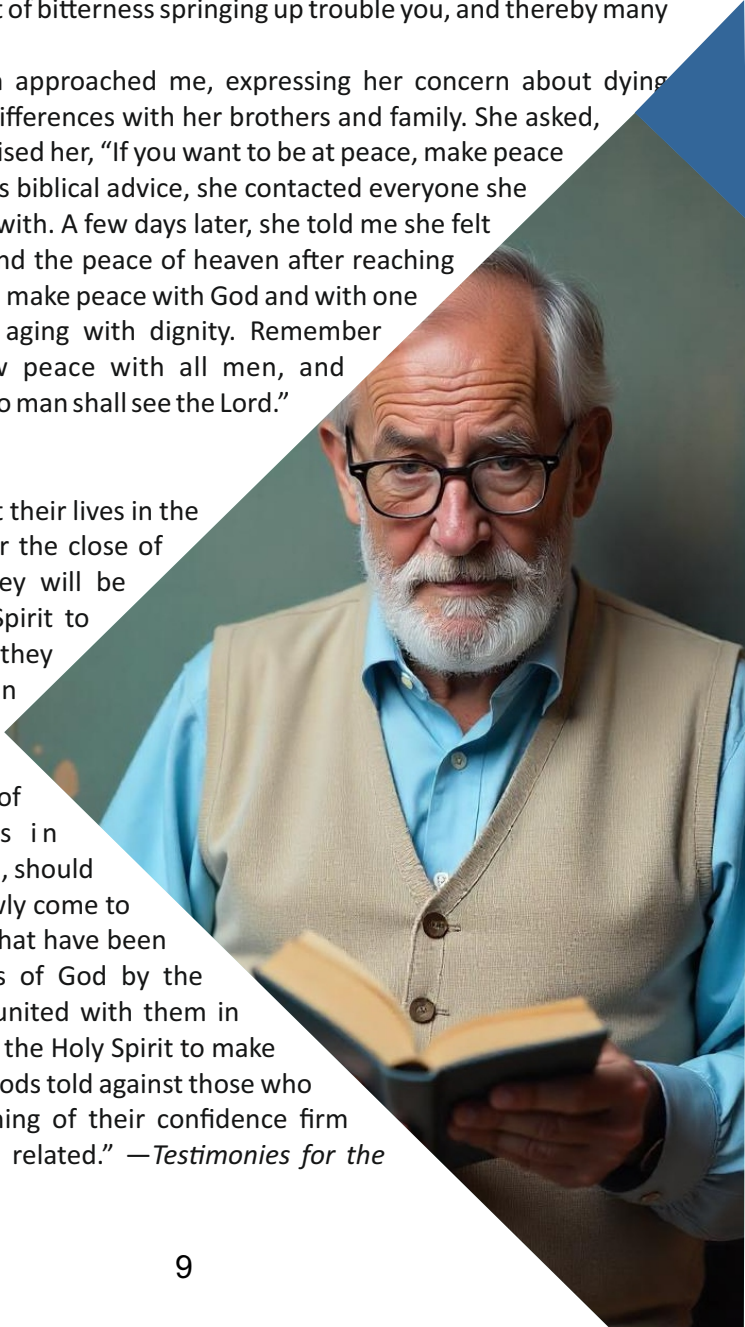
According to Luke 17:3, 4, “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.” Forgiveness comes from God and brings peace, happiness, and a long life.” Additionally, Colossians 3:12, 13 advises us: “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another,

if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.” Embracing forgiveness prevents bitterness, which can harm any relationship. As we age, it is vital to resolve any misunderstandings with family, friends, or church members. Hebrews 12:14, 15 states: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”

Once, an elderly woman approached me, expressing her concern about dying without reconciling her differences with her brothers and family. She asked, “What should I do?” I advised her, “If you want to be at peace, make peace with them.” Following this biblical advice, she contacted everyone she felt she needed to speak with. A few days later, she told me she felt tremendous happiness and the peace of heaven after reaching out. Indeed, it is crucial to make peace with God and with one another; this is part of aging with dignity. Remember Hebrews 12:14: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”


## Conclusion

“As those who have spent their lives in the service of God draw near the close of their earthly history, they will be impressed by the Holy Spirit to recount the experiences they have had in connection with His work. The record of His wonderful dealings with His people, of His great goodness in delivering them from trial, should be repeated to those newly come to the faith. The trials also that have been brought on the servants of God by the apostasy of some once united with them in labor, and the working of the Holy Spirit to make of none effect the falsehoods told against those who were holding the beginning of their confidence firm unto the end, should be related.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, p. 288.



May the Lord bless and sustain our seniors, granting them wisdom to preserve their physical, mental, and spiritual faculties. God desires for them to remain steadfast, contributing to the salvation of those at risk of being swept away by evil. He wants them to keep their armor on until it is time to set it aside, for their reward is near. Remember the words of the apostle: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7, 8). May God bless us always. Amen.





**Reading 2**  
**May 8**

**Pr. Habimelec Hernandez**  
**Venezuela/Chile**

# Emotional Orphan

"Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth."  
Psalm 71:9

The life of an older adult is filled with invaluable experiences and stories that could greatly benefit younger generations. Listening to these stories can help reduce the common mistakes often repeated by the young.

"Growing old is like climbing a mountain; as you ascend, your strength diminishes, but your perspective becomes freer, your vision broader, and your outlook more serene." Old age is not a burden; it is an opportunity to share the wisdom and experience accumulated over the years.

When we neglect and ignore this reservoir of experiences and insights, we not only diminish the elder individual as a person but also inflict upon them a pain that many have termed "emotional orphanhood." Unfortunately, some people perceive old age exclusively as a time of biological and psychological decline, leading to

prejudices and stereotypes that portray older adults as less capable of solving problems, more rigid, less interested in the world, and struggling with memory issues.

### **What is an Emotional Orphan?**

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 describes love with attributes that can significantly improve elder care, such as being patient, kind, not envious, not boastful, not proud, not dishonoring, not self-seeking, not easily angered, and not holding a grudge. Implementing these qualities in caregiver interactions can create environments where older individuals feel truly valued and loved, rather than abandoned.

Emotional orphans may exhibit some (or all) of the following characteristics: they often feel as though everything depends on them, believe that God is distant or non-existent, and yearn for acceptance while being unsure of how to achieve it.

### **Common manifestations of being an emotional orphan include:**

**Depression.** A prevalent mental disorder characterized by a persistently low mood or loss of interest in activities over extended periods. Individuals who have experienced abuse, loss, or stress are more vulnerable to depression, and it's noted that women are more likely to experience depression than men.

**Loneliness.** This is characterized by ongoing feelings of isolation, disconnection, or emotional estrangement from others, often accompanied by low self-esteem, insecurity, or social anxiety.

**Anxiety.** This condition involves excessive feelings of worry, fear, or restlessness. Symptoms may include sweating, irritability, fatigue, poor concentration, sleep disturbances, difficulty breathing, rapid heartbeat, dizziness, and chronic tiredness.

**Distress.** Feeling of fear or general discomfort, often accompanied by physical symptoms such as chest pressure, tachycardia, palpitations, sensations of suffocation or shortness of breath, sweating, and tremors.

**Uncertainty.** This emotion arises from a lack of clarity, leading to doubt or indecision. It is one of the more challenging emotions to manage, as it can create a feeling that everything around us is unstable, leaving us unsure of what to hold on to in order to move forward. It is also a form of provocative thinking. Some people compare it to a kind of beneficial stress. When you are uncertain, your body reacts to what your mind is conveying. It's essential to remember that the mind and body sympathize with each other. Managing danger, encountering something new, or dealing with a problem can be very challenging.

At this reading, it is important to emphasize, "**We must not forget the elderly.**" They possess a wealth of wisdom and experience to share with us, and they deserve

our respect and attention. By taking the time to listen to them and assist them, we can enrich our lives and learn from their experiences.

Elderly individuals have the right, dear brothers and sisters, friends, to not be discriminated against because of their age. They have the right to be considered valuable and productive, both in society and within the family. They have the sacred right to be valued and, above all, to be respected. As stated in Psalm 71:9 "Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth."

The sacred scriptures also provide a recommendation that would be a tremendous blessing if taken to heart: "Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee." Deuteronomy 5:16.

A long time ago, specifically in 1998, I visited a dear 89-year-old woman on the island of Curacao. We affectionately called her Tantán. Although she was bedridden with very limited mobility, she possessed something rarely seen in younger people in better health. Whenever I visited, she would say, "Glory to God! Now I'm going to sing my hymns in the company of my brother." Her favorite hymn was "Amazing Grace." She encouraged me with her acceptance of God's will and how she managed her old age. She frequently said, "I am happy because Christ lives in my heart, and what I desire most in the world is for Him to call me to rest so that I can soon see Him face to face, just as He is."

I have no doubt that many elderly individuals today share that same longing. However, I am also sure that there are others who are uncertain about what lies ahead regarding their problems, anxieties, insecurities, and loneliness. Therefore, today we appeal to you to reach out to these individuals and tell them that there is a loving God who is far more powerful than their concerns. Jesus reminds us, "Take heed that ye



despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 18:10.

The patriarch Job exemplified the talent and gift that God placed in his hands, as shown in the Scriptures: “I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out.” Job 29:15, 16.

### **The Role of the Family and the Church**

The Bible often speaks about the role of the church community in supporting individuals, including the elderly. In 1 Timothy 5:3-4 we are instructed: “Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.” This passage highlights that the family has a responsibility to care for its elderly members. It suggests a model where care is not only an individual duty but a communal practice that reflects Christian values of love and service.

Additionally, in Acts 6:1-6, the apostolic church addressed the care of widows by appointing deacons to ensure an equitable distribution of food and care for other needs. This example demonstrates that the church actively engages in social care, emphasizing that responsibility for the elderly should be a concern of the entire church, not just individual families.

### **Love as a Principle**

Jesus summarized the law and the prophets with two commandments: to love God and to love your neighbor as yourself (Matthew 22:37-40). This principle of love is foundational when caring for the elderly. Loving an older person as yourself means considering their unique needs, desires, and dignity. It involves more than just meeting basic needs; it includes providing companionship, listening, and ensuring they lead fulfilling lives.

### **Shared Wisdom**

The wisdom of the elderly is highly valued in Scripture. Job 12:12 states, “With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding.” This passage suggests a respect for the insights and experiences that come with age. Interacting with elders, seeking their advice, and listening to their stories is not only beneficial to younger generations, but it also affirms the value and contributions of older people.

Proverbs 16:31 adds, “The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” This saying highlights that aging



is a dignified process and that there is honor in the wisdom that often accompanies age.

### **The Usefulness of the Elderly Has Not Ceased**

“The aged also need the helpful influences of the family. In the home of brethren and sisters in Christ can most nearly be made up to them the loss of their own home. If encouraged to share in the interests and occupations of the household, it will help them to feel that their usefulness is not at an end. Make them feel that their help is valued, that there is something yet for them to do in ministering to others, and it will cheer their hearts and give interest to their lives.” — *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 204.

### **Home Environment Desirable**

“So far as possible let those whose whitening heads and failing steps show that they are drawing near to the grave remain among friends and familiar associations. Let them worship among those whom they have known and loved. Let them be cared for by loving and tender hands.” — *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 204.

### **Nursing Homes Are Not the Remedy**

“The matter of caring for our aged brethren and sisters who have no homes is constantly being urged. What can be done for them? The light which the Lord has given me has been repeated: It is not best to establish institutions for the care of the aged, that they may be in a company together. Nor should they be sent away from home to receive care. Let the members of every family minister to their own relatives. When this is not possible, the work belongs to the church, and it should be accepted both as a duty and as a privilege. All who have Christ's spirit will regard the feeble and aged with special respect and tenderness.” — *Testimony Treasures*, vol. 2, p. 509.

### **Sweetens and Refines Life**

“The presence in our homes of one of these helpless ones is a precious opportunity to co-operate with Christ in His ministry of mercy and to develop traits of character like His. There is a blessing in the association of the old and the young. The young may bring sunshine into the hearts and lives of the aged. Those whose hold on life is weakening need the benefit of contact with the hopefulness and buoyancy of youth. And the young may be helped by the wisdom and experience of the old. Above all, they need to learn the lesson of unselfish ministry. The presence of one in need of sympathy and forbearance and self-sacrificing love would be to many a household a priceless blessing. It would sweeten and refine the home life, and call forth in old and young those Christlike graces that would make them beautiful with

a divine beauty and rich in heaven's imperishable treasure.” –*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 204.

### **Young and Old Should Unite Forces**


“How touching to see youth and old age relying one upon the other, the youth looking up to the aged for counsel and wisdom, the aged looking to the youth for help and sympathy. This is as it should be. God would have the young possess such qualification of character that they shall find delight in the friendship of the old, that they may be united in the endearing bonds of affection to those who are approaching the borders of the grave.” –*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 161.

### **Conclusion**

Elder care, guided by biblical principles, is a multifaceted responsibility encompassing respect, honor, love, and practical care. It involves commitments from both individuals and the community and is deeply rooted in the Christian call to love and serve others. By adhering to these principles, Christians not only obey God but also contribute to a society that reflects His love and justice.

In caring for the elderly, Christians are called to reflect the compassionate heart of Jesus, ensuring that the final years of a person's life are marked by dignity, respect, and love. This care is a testament to the value of each person's entire life, created in the image of God, and a witness to the world of the transforming power of Christian love, ensuring they never feel like a burden or emotional, spiritual orphans. Amen.





Reading 3  
May 9

Sis. Elizabeth Cerdan  
Peru/Spain

# I Will be with You

Today I want to share the story of a woman from the Bible named Naomi. Her name means "pleasant" in Hebrew, but her story was anything but pleasant. Naomi faced devastating losses. She left her homeland, lost her husband, and then her children, enduring ten tragic years. She transitioned from being a citizen to an immigrant, from a wife to a widow, and from a mother to a heartbroken woman. Can you imagine how Naomi must have felt? She found herself with no family, no home, no wealth, and no position in society. In ancient Israel, widowhood was regarded as a disgrace and often elicited pity. (Deuteronomy 24:19).

## The Pain

Losing a loved one is an immense pain that can paralyze, suffocate, and distress us. Grief is a natural human response to loss, and we should never suppress it. Crying is an essential process; I remember when I lost my father at just 13 years old—I

struggled to cry, and that experience marked my life. Crying is inevitable and necessary for healing wounds and renewing our lives.

Naomi must have felt very alone and unprotected. Many of us, feeling similar or even worse than Naomi, can see no way out and struggle to find the path to happiness, comfort, and the goodness of God. However, the truth is that He is always by our side, regardless of our situation.

## **The Grief**

Grief is a difficult and complex process, especially when it comes to losing a loved one. When faced with such loss, we may experience a roller coaster of emotions and overwhelming challenges. The grieving process doesn't follow a linear path; it can manifest differently at various times and can last from one to four years. We may encounter moments of anger, guilt, profound sadness, and eventually, acceptance—though the latter can take much longer. Therefore, it is vitally important to allow ourselves time in the grieving process.

Sister White shares her experience: "My husband died in Battle Creek in 1881. For a year, I could not bear to be alone. My husband and I had done ministerial work side by side, and it was difficult to understand why I was left alone to carry forward the responsibilities we had previously performed together. Instead of recovering during that first year, I came close to death. But I do not want to dwell on that time any longer." —*Daughters of God*, p. 219

**Next, let's examine the stages of grief.**

### **Restlessness and Disturbance**

Initially, there is shock and disbelief that accompanies the news of the loss. Often, the reality of the situation takes time to set in, and the bereaved may feel dazed, unable to fully process what has happened. They might struggle to believe it.

After initial shock, the reality must be faced. The absence of the loved one becomes a painful reminder at every moment. The longer it takes to accept the loss, the longer it will take to process the grief. Pain and death are consequences of sin present in the world. Confessing our pain to God will help us accept His transforming grace, as expressed in Psalm 62:8: "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah."

### **Anger**

We can feel anger towards various people and situations, including God, doctors or medical personnel, and even ourselves.

We may ask ourselves questions like: Why did God allow this? Why didn't He intervene? Why didn't they do this or that? Why didn't I say or



do something differently? This anger can lead to explosions of rage, despair, and even depression. It's important to manage this anger carefully, as the Scriptures remind us in Ephesians 4:26, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

## **Blame**

Guilt is a natural, common, and complex feeling experienced during grief. It can arise for various reasons, such as unresolved issues in a relationship, failure to meet the expectations of others, or the desire to rebuild one's life. This guilt can lead to isolation and emotional torment. Therefore, it's crucial to recognize that we did the best we could. Guilt can interfere with the grieving process, prolonging it and hindering our healing. It's important to:

### **1. Recognize your feelings**

Accept that guilt is a natural part of the grieving process. Acknowledge your feelings of guilt and allow yourself to experience them without judgment.

### **2. Identify the origin of the guilt**

Try to pinpoint what specifically is causing your feelings of guilt. Does it stem from something you did or didn't do before the loss? Or is it a response to situations beyond your control? Understanding the source can help you address it more directly, as David did in 2 Samuel 12:13.

### **3. Talk about your feelings**

Sharing your feelings of guilt with someone you trust can help lighten the emotional burden. A close friend, family member, or therapist can provide additional support and perspective.

### **4. Forgive yourself**

Guilt often stems from feelings of regret or self-reproach for past actions. Try to forgive yourself for any mistakes or decisions you believe contributed to the situation. Remember that everyone makes mistakes, and we all have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the righteous one (1 John 2:1).

Remember that grief is a unique process for each person; there is no "right" way to feel or cope with it. Be kind to yourself as you work to understand and process your feelings.

## **Acceptance**

Acceptance in grief is an emotional, personal, and individual process that involves recognizing and coming to terms with the reality of a significant loss. This could include the death of a loved one, the breakup of a relationship, the loss of a job, or any other type of adversity.

In our story, Naomi accepts her loss and changes her name from "Pleasant" to "Bitter." As stated in Ruth 1:20, she does not settle for being a victim; instead, she begins to explore what she can do. Feeling sad and lonely, she decides to return to

Judah. She left with her husband and two children, but now she returns alone, accompanied by her daughter-in-law. Filled with courage and ready to accept her destiny, Naomi goes back to her homeland. Naomi's determination to see her life clearly, to accept her circumstances, and to exert her influence in order to create a better life for her descendants—despite all the trials and losses—reflects the strength of a woman who is faithful to God. She is willing to accept whatever comes her way, trusting unconditionally in God, even amidst the bitterness that accompanies her loss. Through her example, we can find the strength and courage to overcome our own difficulties.

During this phase of acceptance, it is important to allow yourself to experience and process all the emotions that arise during grief. Don't judge yourself for how you feel; all emotions are valid and are part of the healing process. Try to find a sense of purpose and reorient yourself. This might involve seeking new opportunities for personal growth, contributing to your church or community, or engaging in activities that bring you joy and fulfillment. Lastly, accept that you have no control over many aspects of life. Acknowledging this can help free you from unnecessary feelings of guilt. Focus on what you can control—your responses to your emotions and the choices you make going forward.

## **Adaptation**

Adaptation is a process of social adjustment to one's environment, essential for finding a new way of living after experiencing significant loss. Naomi's story teaches us that in our darkest moments, there is always hope and the potential for redemption. No matter how broken we may feel, God can redeem and restore us. In His infinite mercy, He left us the Book of Ruth, a narrative filled with hope, where Naomi transforms from a desperate woman into a joyful one, moving from sadness to happiness and from emptiness to abundance. The Lord can turn bitterness into blessing.

Naomi shows her love for her daughters-in-law, who are also widows, by urging them to return to their homeland. She believes that asking them to stay by her side would be a great sacrifice, as it would entail leaving their own land and relatives behind. Understanding their plight, she encourages them to return and rebuild their lives, freeing them from the obligation to care for her. She offers them the opportunity to choose their path so they can find rest (*menujah*). In Jewish culture, rest often referred to marriage (Ruth 3:1), something Naomi could not provide since she had no more children. This illustrates Naomi's kindness; seeking the welfare of others is the fundamental law of life on earth and in heaven. Naomi balances strength and sensitivity, perseverance and determination, patience and diligence in her efforts to ensure everything works out.



Let us also embark on the journey toward heavenly Canaan so that, along the way, we can inspire others to say: “Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.” Ruth 1:16.

**Here are some ways you can cope with grief:**

**1. Accept the reality of the loss.** Coping begins with acknowledging the reality of what you have lost. While it may be painful, facing the truth allows you to process your loss and rebuild your life on a stronger foundation.

**2. Seek support.** 1 Timothy 5:3-16 reminds us of our responsibility as a church toward widows; this reflects the true gospel referenced in Isaiah 58. Dear friend, you do not have to face grief alone. Connect with friends, family, support groups, or a therapist. Talking about your feelings and experiences can help you feel less isolated and find healthy ways to adjust to your new reality.

**3. Establish new routines and goals.** Adjusting to grief involves creating a new normal in your life. This may mean establishing new daily routines, setting new personal or professional goals, and discovering new ways to experience joy and fulfillment.

**4. Give yourself time.**

Adjusting to grief is a process that takes time. Don't rush yourself or judge yourself for not adapting more quickly. Allow yourself the time and space you need to heal and regain a sense of peace and purpose in your life.

**5. Take care of yourself.**

During the adaptation process, it is crucial to care for your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. Prioritize your communion with God, practice self-care, and seek healthy ways to manage stress; such as exercising, eating well, or participating in activities that bring you joy. Remember that adaptation is a unique and personal journey, with each person finding their own path to healing



and renewal. Be kind to yourself as you work to create a new way of living after loss.

## **A New Relationship**

After experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one, you may find yourself wondering how to begin a new relationship. Here are some tips to help you approach this new chapter in your life:

**1. Give Yourself Time to Heal.** It's essential to take the time you need to heal and process your emotions before starting a new relationship. There is no set timeframe for grieving, but being emotionally ready to open up to someone new is important.

**2. Self-Examination.** Before entering into a new relationship, take time to reflect on what you want in a partner and what you've learned from past experiences. This self-reflection can help you establish clear expectations and make more informed decisions about future relationships.

**3. Communicate Your Needs and Boundaries.** When you're ready to start dating again, it's crucial to communicate your needs, expectations, and boundaries openly and honestly. This helps lay a strong foundation for a healthy relationship.

**4. Go Slow.** Don't feel pressured to rush into a new relationship. Take your time getting to know the other person and building a meaningful connection before making any commitments. Moving slowly allows you to establish a solid base for a long-lasting relationship.

**5. Maintain Balance.** As you open yourself up to a new relationship, ensure you maintain a healthy balance between your personal life, relationships, and your well-being. Continue taking care of yourself while exploring this new connection with someone else.

**6. Accept Your Emotions.** It's normal to experience a range of emotions when entering a new relationship after grief, including anxiety, fear, and uncertainty. Allow yourself to feel these emotions and seek support if needed as you navigate this new stage of life.

Dear brothers, Noemi's example inspires us to begin moving from wherever we are towards the path that the Lord intends for us, with the faith that God is with us, providing strength. "As we walk with Jesus in this life, we may be filled with His love, satisfied with His presence. All that human nature can bear, we may receive here." –*The Desire of Ages*, p. 331. We must find rest in Jesus. When we are hurt and wounded, let us seek solace in the Lord and trust in Him. Remember, "These light afflictions will be a transforming power, refining, purifying, ennobling, and fitting for the courts above." –*Daughters of God*, p. 218. Dear reader, it is my wish and prayer that you find love, happiness, and inner peace in Christ Jesus. Amen.



**Sis. Carmen Dolores Perez Alvarez**  
**Spain**

# Honoring our Parents

The commandment "Honor your father and your mother" is one of the Ten Commandments found in the Bible, specifically in Exodus 20:12 and Deuteronomy 5:16. This commandment has a deep and complex meaning, encompassing respect, obedience, care, and gratitude toward parents.

Remember that they welcomed us with all their enthusiasm and love when we were born. They took us by the hand, spent sleepless nights, and showered us with care. Throughout our childhood, they faced a thousand challenges, and in most cases, they endured everything with love and care. Their prayers, moments of dedication, application of discipline, advice, and perseverance were countless, all of which added to an incalculable value for our lives and were worthy of gratitude. As we grow and become young people and adults, almost without realizing it, we grow older. We continue to be busy with so many matters in our lives, and, unfortunately, we do not plan to foresee what we will do with our parents when they need help.

But it is necessary to reflect on how we do things and how we want to fulfill the commandment that God has given us. Love and respect for parents are fundamental pillars of the Christian faith. Our Lord Jesus, entrusting his mother, Mary, to the apostle John before he died, gives us a sublime example of this filial duty. This gesture reveals the deep connection between mother and child and sets a precedent for all Christians since honoring and caring for our parents is a divine calling. Throughout history, the Church has interpreted this passage as an invitation to children to care for and protect their parents, especially in times of need. This duty is founded on the fifth commandment. It is necessary to understand how children can honor their parents today and consider the spiritual and emotional benefits of fulfilling this duty. The relationship between parents and children is one of the most fundamental in the life of every human being. In it, children not only receive care and education, but they also have specific duties to fulfill towards their parents. In both the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White, we find clear instructions about the obedience, respect, love, and care children should have for their parents.

### 1. Obedience to Parents

A Divine Mandate, the Bible emphasizes the importance of children's obedience to their parents. This principle has existed since the Old Testament, specifically in the Ten Commandments.

In Exodus 20:12, we read: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long on the land the Lord your God is giving you." This command is not only a moral instruction but also a promise of blessing. To honor parents is to obey them, to respect their authority, and to submit to their guidance. In the New Testament, the apostle Paul also emphasizes this teaching: "**Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.**" Ephesians 6:1.

In Colossians 3:20, it says, "**Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.**" This obedience and gratitude toward parents are also ways to please God.

"In the sanctuary of the home, Jesus received his education, not merely from his parents, but from his Heavenly Father. As he grew older, God opened to him more and more of the great work before him. But notwithstanding his knowledge of this, he assumed no airs of superiority. Never did he by disrespect cause his parents pain or anxiety. He delighted to honor and obey them. Although he was not ignorant of his great mission, he consulted their wishes, and submitted to their authority."

—*Youth's Instructor*, August 22, 1901.

## 2. Respect and Reverence

Respecting parents is another essential instruction in children's and their parents' relationships. Respect means not only obeying but also valuing their teachings and opinions. Lack of respect is a problem mentioned in the Bible and is condemned by God. Proverbs 30:17 reads: "The eye that mocks its father, and despises the teaching of its mother, the ravens of the valley pluck it out, and the young eagles devour it."

In the Spirit of Prophecy, we also find the following:

"Parents are entitled to a degree of love and respect which is due to no other person. God Himself, who has placed upon them a responsibility for the souls committed to their charge, has ordained that during the earlier years of life, parents shall stand in the place of God to their children. And he who rejects the rightful authority of his parents is rejecting the authority of God. The fifth commandment requires children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age. It also enjoins respect for ministers and rulers and for all others to whom God has delegated authority."

—*Patriarchs and Prophets*,  
308.

Obedience and respect are two inseparable qualities. Respect is the inner attitude that leads to obedience and genuine love for one's parents.

## 3. Caring for parents in their old age

This aspect is another essential duty. In the Bible, the command to honor parents also implies caring for them when they need it. The apostle Paul also mentions this duty and writes: "**But if any widow has children or**



**grandchildren, let them first learn to be godly to their own household and to make amends to their parents; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God."** 1 Timothy 5: 4-6.

Caring for parents in their old age is a way of repaying the love and sacrifices they made for us.

"The obligation resting upon children to honor their parents is of lifelong duration. If the parents are feeble and old, the affection and attention of the children should be bestowed in proportion to the need of father and mother. Nobly, decidedly, the children should shape their course of action even if it requires self-denial, so that every thought of anxiety and perplexity may be removed from the minds of the parents.... Children should be educated to love and care tenderly for father and mother. Care for them, children, yourselves; for no other hand can do the little acts of kindness with the acceptance that you can do them. Improve your precious opportunity to scatter seeds of kindness". –*The Adventist Home*, p 360.

#### **4. Gratitude and Love**

These two aspects form the basis of the family relationship.

Jesus Christ rejoiced in loving and thanking the Father, as we see in John 11:41: "Then they took away the stone, and Jesus looked up and said, Father, I thank you that you heard me."

Gratitude is an expression of joy; it is recognizing and appreciating everything given to you with joy and love.

Children should also cultivate a spirit of gratitude toward their parents. This gratitude is expressed not only in words but also in acts of love and generosity. Gratitude is a virtue that opens the heart and allows children to see their parents' sacrifices and efforts.

Gratitude, respect, and love contribute to creating a home where God dwells and are blessings to both children and parents.

#### **5. Prayer and Intercession for Parents**

In addition to obedience, respect, and care, children must pray for their parents. Prayer is a powerful way to sustain parents spiritually, especially when they are going through difficulties or getting older.

The Bible teaches us to pray for one another, including family. In Ephesians 6:18, Paul says, **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and being watchful thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."**

#### **6. Be a good example and live with integrity**

Children have a duty to be positive examples for their parents, showing



by their actions that the values taught have been learned and practiced. Children's integrity honors their parents and God. Proverbs 23:24 mentions: **"The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, and he who begets a wise child will delight in him."**

## **Conclusion**

The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy clearly define children's duties toward their parents. Obeying, respecting, caring, praying, and being a good example are responsibilities that strengthen the family relationship and please God.

Fulfilling these duties brings blessings and peace to homes and is a living testimony of divine principles. Thus, children who honor their parents

They follow the example of Jesus Christ, who obeyed Mary and Joseph during his life on Earth.

"And he went down with them, returned to Nazareth, and was subject to them. And his mother kept all these things in her heart." Luke 2:51.

This obedience and love reflect the relationship God desires for us to have with Him as our Heavenly Father. Amen.



**Sis. Martha Angulo Macaros**  
**Colombia**

# Life Goes On

It was a cool morning with the first hint of dawn. In a warm environment, a mother was enduring the agonizing pains of childbirth. The hours passed slowly in that modest country house. In the back of the room, the figure of a midwife could be seen, sweating profusely from her efforts. Finally, in the early hours of the day, Rosulita was born, crying loudly with her first contact with the outside world. She was both restless and joyful. However, after giving birth to her baby, her mother—who had already had four children—became very ill and died shortly thereafter. Life continued, filled with unexpected surprises. At the age of four, her father gave her away to a teacher. This left Rosulita feeling sad and disoriented, as she never expected such an action from her own father. Yet, with great courage, she attempted to adjust to her new life.

The future held more challenges for her. At the age of eleven, she ran away from her hometown due to personal danger. With little savings, she traveled to the city of



Cali, Colombia, where she faced racial discrimination while seeking work. These were tough years, and by the age of thirteen, she had her first daughter; by seventeen, her second; and by twenty, her third.

As a woman of faith and prayer, she navigated each stage of her life with love, courage, and resilience. In her adulthood, she embraced the gospel and got married, experiencing happiness for a time. Unfortunately, tragedy struck again when, one summer evening, her husband disappeared from home. Overcoming the loneliness and anguish of his absence proved to be immensely difficult, as she dedicated twenty years of her life searching for him, believing he had been kidnapped. Eventually, after two decades of waiting, she received confirmation of his death. Following this heart-wrenching experience, another challenge emerged: her youngest daughter was diagnosed with a terminal illness, suffering for six years before passing away. Despite these painful experiences, Rosulita, now a vibrant elderly woman, did not allow suffering and loneliness to bring her apathy. Instead, she learned to fill her emotional voids and found solace at the foot of the cross of Calvary.

This story aligns with global statistics indicating that loneliness is an emotion experienced by people across all demographics—regardless of age, belief, gender, or education. While some view loneliness as a painful but valuable opportunity for spiritual growth, for others, it becomes a period of intolerance, frustration, and persistent isolation, leading to a loss of trust in others and a diminished joy in life.

### **Loneliness from the Loss of a Child**

As discussed, loneliness can touch any person at any stage of life. The inspired text reminds us that “Children are the heritage of the Lord” ... “Children are committed to their parents as a precious trust, which God will one day require at their hands.” –The Adventist Home, pp. 159, 161. However, since sin entered the world, humanity is enveloped in nostalgia. Almost every household faces the challenge of having a sick child, whether suffering from cancer, stroke, multiple sclerosis, or contagious diseases like monkeypox and respiratory illnesses such as COVID-19. These conditions can devastate lives in a short amount of time.

The servant of the Lord states, “Satan is the originator of disease; and the physician is warring against his work and power. Sickness of the mind prevails everywhere.” –Mind, Character, and Personality, vol. 1, p. 12. Additionally, the Word of God highlights that King David was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). He was humble, considerate, faithful, respectful, and helpful. However, in a moment of weakness, he fell prey to lying and adultery, even orchestrating the murder of his loyal soldier, Uriah. He betrayed his friendship and showed insensitivity to Uriah's pain by placing him at the forefront of battle while withdrawing military support.

Yet, even though every sin has consequences, God chose to save David from total destruction (John 15:14-17). He sent the prophet Nathan to deliver a message that would prompt the king to reflect on his actions and repent of his wrongdoing (2 Samuel 12:7-25). The biblical text expresses in Romans 5:20-21, "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." "For a whole year after his fall David lived in apparent security; there was no outward evidence of God's displeasure." –Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 723. After this time of divine mercy, the child became seriously ill.

These were crucial moments in the royal house. Inside, a man was prostrate on the ground, fasting and dressed in sackcloth, moaning and crying profusely. He had great financial resources to find the best doctors for his son. Many were brought in, but none could heal the little boy. This illness was of a different kind, one that only God could reverse. Days and hours passed without any favorable news, and by the end of the week, his son died.

The bitter experience of that week, filled with deep anguish and loneliness, became David's moment of conversion. He gave himself to God wholeheartedly, and Jesus became his loving Savior, as expressed in the Word of God. Psalm 32:3-5 says, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah." In his words, only peace is evident. There are no judgments against God, nor expressions of grievance about the injustices of life. He does not blame or insinuate against anyone, not even the mother of his son, as is common in some cases. He did not continue to blame himself for his great sin. At the feet of his Savior, he learned to ask for forgiveness, to forgive, and to forgive himself. He filled his pitcher with fresh water and pure oil, finding satisfaction in divine grace.

### **Loneliness can also stem from the loss of material goods and friends**

But life goes on, and the world continues to experience permanent anguish; wars erupt everywhere. Every moment, thousands perish due to the internal conflicts plaguing their countries. The news verifies the fulfillment of the prophetic Word: "Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the LORD, that thy children shall come again to their own border." Jeremiah 31:15-17.

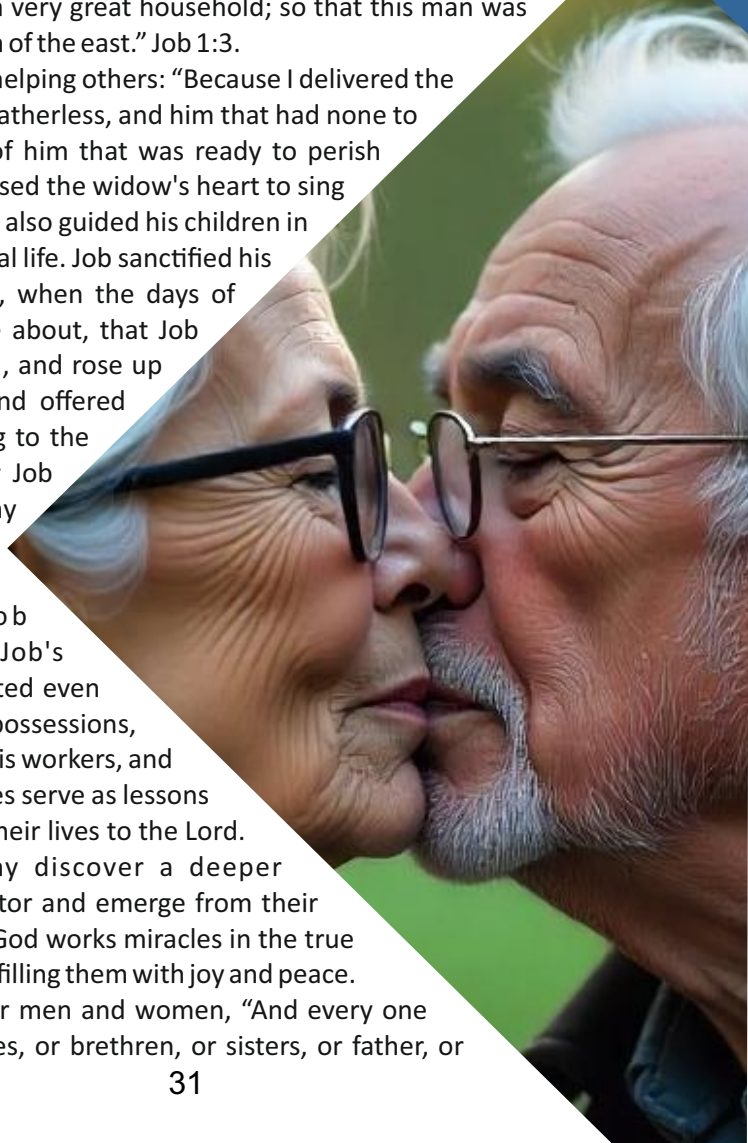


The ambition for unlimited power arises for two reasons: the first is the pursuit of money. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Timothy 6:10). The second reason occurs when human beings cease to honor God as their Savior, Creator, and Sustainer of all that exists.

Despite the existence of greedy individuals, the biblical account highlights a very wealthy man named Job, who lived in Uz. Although Job was materially rich, his true happiness stemmed from his dedication to service. He honored the Lord with all his possessions, which included "His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east." Job 1:3.

Job exalted his Savior by helping others: "Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." Job 29:12, 13. He also guided his children in seeking the path of eternal life. Job sanctified his children. "And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually." Job 1:5. Job's testimony of faith persisted even after he lost his material possessions, his children, his friends, his workers, and his health. His experiences serve as lessons for those who dedicate their lives to the Lord.

In times of trial, many discover a deeper connection to their Creator and emerge from their struggles strengthened. God works miracles in the true conversion of their souls, filling them with joy and peace. God promises to all elder men and women, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or



mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life." Matthew 19:29. God does not lie to His children; He fulfills His Word in His time and in His way. He assures, "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you : I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." Isaiah 46:4.

Job received his inheritance in both this life and the life to come. Therefore, beloved grandparents must understand that God sustains His beloved children, seeing every pain and anguish, whether from natural disasters, fires, accidents, or crimes. If it were not for such trials, we might not truly know the great God of love that we have. Job learned this, as his difficult moments refined him, providing answers to his doubts and preparing him through the Holy Spirit for eternity.

In summary, I want to emphasize that our heavenly Father suffered the death of His own Son out of love for you, dear elder. Likewise, Jesus experienced the profound loneliness of separation when He bore the weight of humanity's sins. They exemplify our path; thus, you must lay your loneliness and pain at the foot of the cross of Calvary, as Rosulita, King David, and Job did. You are more than a conqueror and victorious through the power that comes from God. "The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands." Psalm 138:8. Amen.

**Pr. Wesley Alves Gomes**  
**Brazil/Spain**

# An Inheritance for the Lord

This reading contains a lesson that may be overlooked. To ensure clarity on this topic, I would like to begin by asking: What does it mean to be a steward? Please take a moment to share your answers before reading any further.

It is my pleasure to greet “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 1:2, 3.

We can conclude that a steward is someone who administers the property of others. While this is a concise definition, let's delve a bit deeper. According to the inspired thought, "That which lies at the foundation of business integrity and of true success is the recognition of God's ownership. The Creator of all things, He is the original proprietor. We are His stewards. All that we have is a trust from Him, to be used according to His direction. [...] Whether we recognize it or not, we are



stewards, supplied from God with talents and facilities and placed in the world to do a work appointed by Him.

“Money is not ours; houses and grounds, pictures and furniture, garments and luxuries, do not belong to us. We are pilgrims, we are strangers. We have only a grant of those things that are necessary for health and life.... Our temporal blessings are given us in trust, to prove whether we can be entrusted with eternal riches.”

—*The Adventist Home*, p. 367.

With this understanding, the subsequent reading will be easier to comprehend.

### **The Resources Are from the Lord**

From Adam to the present, God has claimed ownership of humanity. Everything we possess is a result of His divine generosity. We dedicate our firstfruits, tithes, and offerings to God in recognition of His sovereignty.

There is a responsibility that many, who profess a strong faith, often neglect. This occurs when they approach the end of their probationary period and choose to dispose of their assets—houses, land, money, etc.—in a way that does not glorify God.

The following ordinances address this matter: “There are aged ones among us who are nearing the close of their probation; but for the want of wide-awake men to secure to the cause of God the means in their possession, it passes into the hands of those who are serving Satan. This means was only lent them of God to be returned to Him; but in nine cases out of ten these brethren, when passing from the stage of action, appropriate God's property in a way that cannot glorify Him, for not one dollar of it will ever flow into the Lord's treasury. [...] Property is often bequeathed to children and grandchildren only to their injury. They have no love for God or for the truth, and therefore this means, all of which is the Lord's, passes into Satan's ranks, to be controlled by him. Satan is much more vigilant, keen-sighted, and skillful in devising ways to secure means to himself than our brethren are to secure the Lord's own to His cause. [...] Our brethren should feel that a responsibility rests upon them, as faithful servants in the cause of God, to exercise their intellect in regard to this matter, and secure to the Lord His own.” —*Testimony Treasures*, vol. 1, p. 556.

“Those who think to ease their consciences by willing their property to their children, or by withholding from God's cause and suffering it to pass into the hands of unbelieving, reckless children for them to squander or hoard up and worship, will have to render an account to God; they are unfaithful stewards of their Lord's money.” —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 118.

Quotes from Ellen G. White, like this one, can be painful and unpleasant, as they

seemingly direct us to prioritize the church over our family. However, it is important to analyze some aspects of the law of inheritance that Ellen G. White references in her writings.

### **Elements of Inheritance Law**

Let's briefly examine some aspects of the law of inheritance as it applied to the people of Israel.

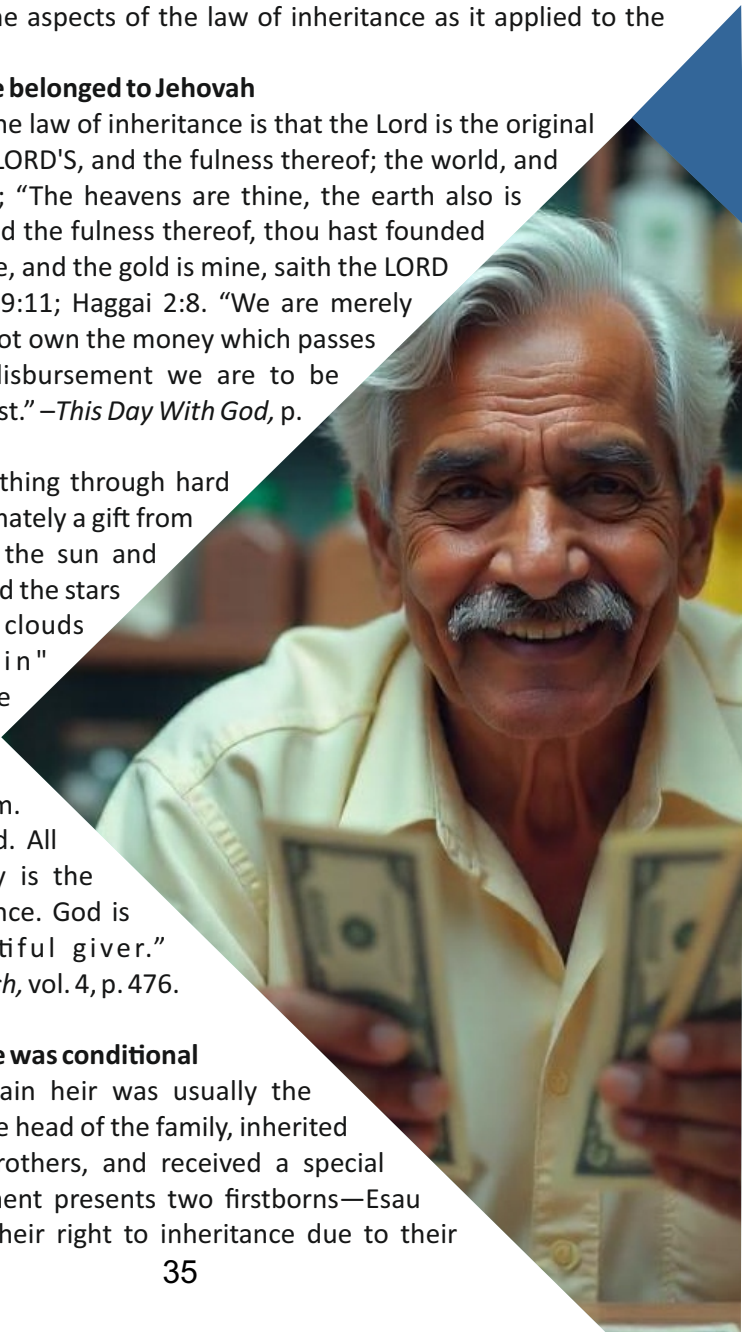
#### **a. The Inheritance belonged to Jehovah**

The primary element of the law of inheritance is that the Lord is the original owner, "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."; "The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them."; "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts." Psalms 24:1; 89:11; Haggai 2:8. "We are merely stewards of God; we do not own the money which passes into our hands. In its disbursement we are to be collaborators with Jesus Christ." —*This Day With God*, p. 349.

Even if we achieve something through hard work or struggle, it is ultimately a gift from God. Therefore, "before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars are darkened, and the clouds return after the rain" (Ecclesiastes 12:2), we must direct our assets to the cause of the Lord, as everything belongs to Him. "All things belong to God. All the prosperity we enjoy is the result of divine beneficence. God is the great and bountiful giver." —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 476.

#### **b. The Inheritance was conditional**

In biblical times, the main heir was usually the firstborn, who became the head of the family, inherited twice as much as his brothers, and received a special blessing. The Old Testament presents two firstborns—Esau and Reuben—who lost their right to inheritance due to their



unfaithfulness (Genesis 25:27-34; 49:4). Additionally, inheritance could be squandered, as in the case of the prodigal son.

Conditions for receiving the inheritance primarily revolved around fidelity. The Spanish Civil Code outlines specific reasons (such as abandonment, mistreatment, and injury) for disinheritting a person. Unfortunately, some people argue, “Will he place the means which God has lent him to be used in His cause, in the hands of wicked men, just because they are his relatives? [...] They have no love for God or for the truth, and therefore this means, all of which is the Lord's, passes into Satan's ranks, to be controlled by him.” –*Testimony Treasures*, vol. 1, p. 556.

### **c. Inheritance should not leave the Tribe**

Numbers 36:9 states, “Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance.” The purpose of this precept was to protect the inheritance of the tribes and ensure that it benefited the original recipients.

When Ellen G. White states that “by willing their property to their children, or by withholding from God's cause and suffering it to pass into the hands of unbelieving, reckless children for them to squander or hoard up and worship,” she suggests that the inheritance will be given to those outside the community of faith and will not remain with the people of God.

To appropriate the goods that God has entrusted to one's custody is a very serious error. Many people understand the principles of truth, yet they fail to make the Word of God their guide. What belongs to the Tribe (Church) of God is often redirected to other tribes. As reformers, it is our duty to manage our assets according to what God has established, rather than following the system devised by the enemy.

### **d. The Children of Concubines Did Not Receive an Inheritance**

Can I choose not to leave an inheritance to my children, grandchildren, or relatives? Do not feel pressured to do so; understand the reasons God provided for these guidelines. Know that the days will come when “In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves” Ecclesiastes 12:3. Before that time arrives, there are clear instructions from God for you to follow.

The children of concubines did not receive an inheritance, but they were not abandoned; they received gifts. Genesis 25:6 states: “But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away”. Isaac, the legitimate son, was Abraham's heir, and through him would come the promises of the covenant, the land, and Christ himself. However,



Abraham bestowed gifts upon the children he had with his concubines to ensure they could live stably.

The children of Christian reformers are not the children of concubines. Unfortunately, and with much sadness, many do not follow in their parents' footsteps or make Christ their Savior. However, this should not justify leaving them without gifts and presents. Ellen G. White writes: "If parents, while they live, would assist their children to help themselves, it would be better than to leave them a large amount at death." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 122.

The inheritance belongs to the people of promise (the church), but God set conditions for children to receive gifts: "While they have sound minds and good judgment, parents should [...] make disposition of their property. If they have children who are afflicted or are struggling in poverty, and who will make a judicious use of means, they should be considered. But if they have unbelieving children who have abundance of this world, and who are serving the world, they commit a sin against the Master, who has made them His stewards, by placing means in their hands merely because they are their children." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 121.

#### **e. Inheritance to the Closest Relative**

This principle is outlined in Numbers 27:8-11: "And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter. And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren. And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren. And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it: and it shall be unto the children of Israel a statute of judgment, as the LORD commanded Moses."

There is an interrelation with the "Goel" of Leviticus 25:25. The "Goel" was responsible for redeeming goods and even a person. The book of Ruth tells the story of a "Goel". Jehovah is the great near kinsman of His people; He is the one who ransomed them, providing complete redemption because the price paid was comprehensive. Elders without children or relatives should have their property passed to the nearest kinsman, the "Goel," the One who redeemed your life. They must understand that "God's requirements come first. [...] Before any part of our earnings is consumed, we should take out and present to Him that portion which He claims." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 477.

Of the closest relative it was said that "whoever does the will of my Father, he is my brother and sister" Mark 3:35.

## It is a Sacred Subject

This topic can evoke a defensive reaction and may leave some feeling angry, as it is often believed that the Church desires to claim their property. However, it is important to present it as a matter of "It is written" or "thus saith the Lord." The writings of Ellen G. White capture the essence of the principles surrounding the law of inheritance.

Some individuals avoid addressing this issue, while others may refer to those who, "the almond tree shall flourish" Ecclesiastes 12:5, using euphemisms to avoid causing offense. E. G. White stated, "Many manifest a needless delicacy on this point. They feel that they are stepping upon forbidden ground when they introduce the subject of property to the aged or to invalids in order to learn what disposition they design to make of it. But this duty is just as sacred as the duty to preach the word to save souls."—*Testimony Treasures*, vol. 1, p. 556.

There should be no hesitation in discussing this point because the enemy has no qualms about leading the children of God to:

1. Assert that everything they have belongs to Him, as if they had obtained their possessions solely through their own efforts.

2. Place their assets in the hands of their children: "But many place their means in the hands of their children, thus throwing upon them the responsibility of their own stewardship, because Satan prompts them to do it."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 118.3. Ignore God's claims on all they possess, taking actions that can lead to disastrous consequences for themselves and their beloved children. "Money left to children frequently becomes a root of bitterness. [...] And instead of the means left exciting gratitude and reverence for his memory, it creates dissatisfaction, murmuring, envy, and disrespect. Brothers and sisters who were at peace with one another are sometimes made at variance, and family dissensions are often the result of inherited means."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 121.

### A Short Recommendation

Psalm 71 is often referred to as the old man's prayer, in which David pleads with the Lord not to forsake him. David observed that many elders around him were abandoned and exposed to ridicule and disgrace. Please reflect on Psalm 71:9, 17, and 18. This cry reflects the same concerns that many elders in the Church have today. It is the duty of the Church to care for those who have dedicated their lives to the Church for many years, providing them with a dignified and honorable old age. Despite being worn out and incapable, they must be treated with tender love and respect.

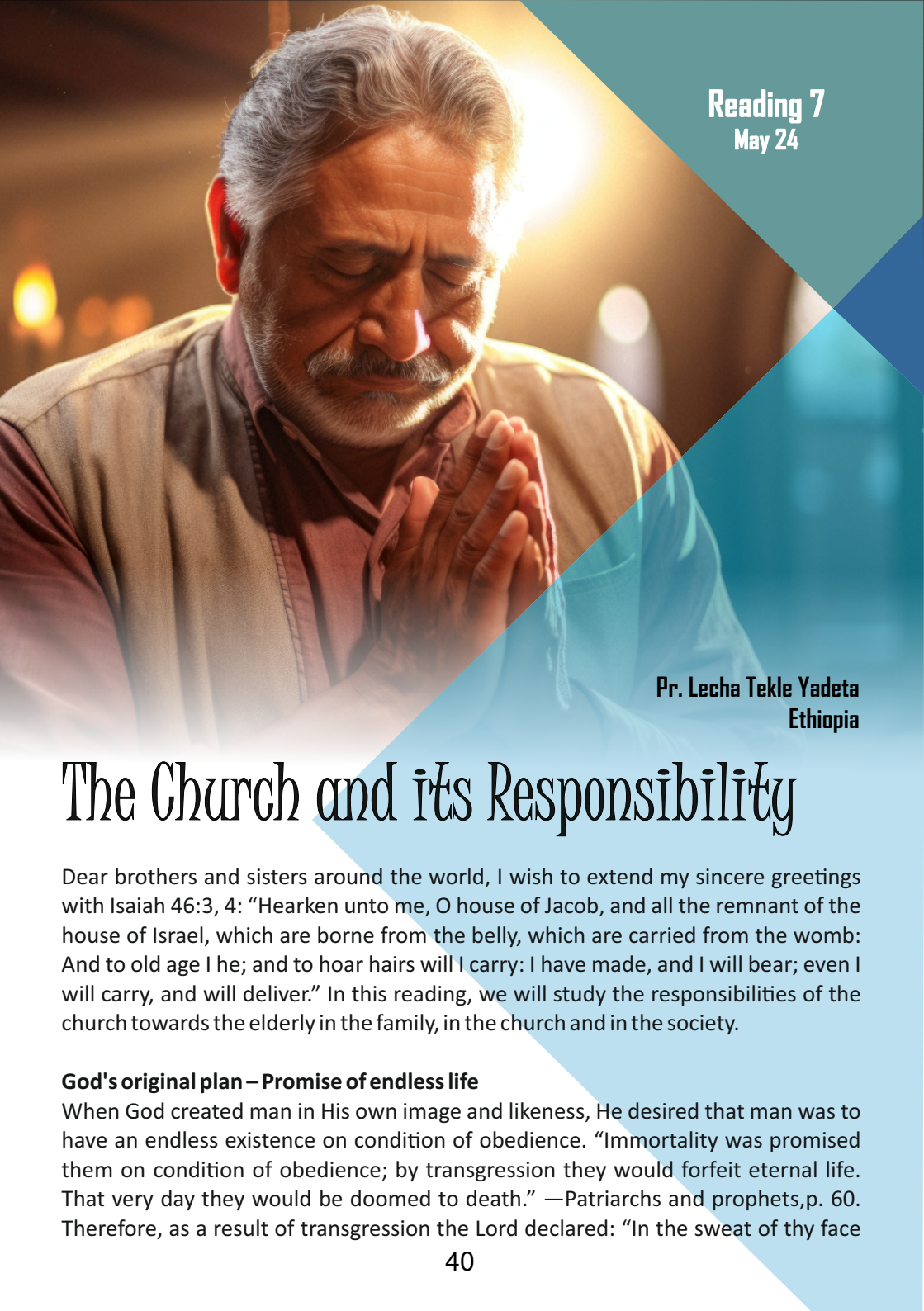




## **Act as Faithful Stewards**

The time will inevitably come when "Or ever the silver cord be loosed, [...] Then shall the dust return to the earth..." Ecclesiastes 12:6, 7. It is crucial to counsel Christians that they "Christians [...] should not neglect the disposition of their means, [...] they should have their business in such a shape that, were they called at any hour to leave it, and should they have no voice in its arrangement, it might be settled as they would have had it were they alive. [...] A neglect on their part to answer the calls of the cause of God in carrying forward His work shows them to be unfaithful and slothful servants." –*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 117.

Do not ignore this important point. Do not seek excuses to justify the greed in your heart by claiming arrangements were made to use your resources for charitable purposes. Returning only a small portion of what God has entrusted to you is a form of theft. You are withholding from God what you owe Him, not just in life, but also in death. Let us strive to accumulate treasures in heaven, for "where our treasure is, there our heart will be also." Amen.



Reading 7  
May 24

Pr. Lecha Tekle Yadeta  
Ethiopia

# The Church and its Responsibility

Dear brothers and sisters around the world, I wish to extend my sincere greetings with Isaiah 46:3, 4: "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne from the belly, which are carried from the womb: And to old age I he; and to hoar hairs will I carry: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver." In this reading, we will study the responsibilities of the church towards the elderly in the family, in the church and in the society.

## **God's original plan – Promise of endless life**

When God created man in His own image and likeness, He desired that man was to have an endless existence on condition of obedience. "Immortality was promised them on condition of obedience; by transgression they would forfeit eternal life. That very day they would be doomed to death." —Patriarchs and prophets, p. 60. Therefore, as a result of transgression the Lord declared: "In the sweat of thy face

shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou [art], and unto dust shalt thou return.” But we can understand the wisdom of God in prohibiting man not to partake of the tree of life and in shortening our life on this earth.

A society is composed of people of different age groups. The children and the youth have an opportunity to learn very important lessons from the elderly in the society. Elderly people have their own valuable wisdom and life experience. “For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers.” (Job 8:8). Let us imagine for a moment the experience of a world devoid of elderly people. You may tell to your group/church the disadvantage of such a society. The same is applicable to a church devoid of senior people.

But as people grow older, their bodies will experience some limitations. Not everyone is privileged to close his/her earthly life like Moses. “And Moses \*was+ an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.” (Deuteronomy 34:7). The muscle loss strength, the bones grow weak. For instance: “And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see,...”. Genesis 27:1. Solomon in his wisdom pictures the elderly in a proverbial language portraying how in old age the body organs loose vitality and experience feebleness: “In the day when the keepers of the house [back bone] shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders [teeth] cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows [eyes] be darkened, And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low [ears], and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird (lack of sleep), and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; 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.” Ecclesiastes 12:3-5. That is a situation where their children and the body of Christ can step into lovingly caring for seniors. It needs to be noted that this is an important mission.

### **God's primary provision to care for the elderly**

In our fallen state the Lord has made a provision whereby the human family should take care of each other especially in both extremes of life. Naturally, parents take care of their children. The reverse happens when parents grow older and fall in need of help. When this happens, the Cycle of care shall be full circle. But in some cases, seniors are strangely neglected by their children as well as by the church. As a result, seniors undergo hard times before the close of their temporal life.

### **Understanding the fifth commandment**

“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which

the LORD thy God giveth thee.” Exodus 20:12. We thank God for this fifth commandment (but the first commandment) on the second table of Stone. One of the greatest ways we can honor our parents or elderly ones is to care for them when it becomes more difficult for them to care for themselves. “The fifth commandment requires children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age. It also enjoins respect for ministers and rulers and for all others to whom God has delegated authority.” — *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 308.

The family acts as the main source of communication for the elderly and to satisfy their needs. Taking care of the elderly is an expression of care, faithfulness, and contributes to their psychological balance. Let us look at few examples in Old and New Testament: “Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre.” (Genesis 25:8, 9). “And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, [being] old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.” Genesis 35:29.

### **The Lord Jesus and His mother Mary**

“When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own.” (John 19:26, 27). “As the eyes of Jesus wandered over the multitude about Him, one figure arrested His attention. At the foot of the cross stood His mother, supported by the disciple John. She could not endure to remain away from her Son; and John, knowing that the end was near, had brought her again to the cross. In His dying hour, Christ remembered His mother. Looking into her grief-stricken face and then upon John, He said to her, 'Woman, behold thy son!' then to John, 'Behold thy mother!' John understood Christ's words, and accepted the trust. He at once took Mary to his home, and from that hour cared for her tenderly. O pitiful, loving Saviour; amid all His physical pain and mental anguish, He had a thoughtful care for His mother! He had no money with which to provide for her comfort; but He was enshrined in the heart of John, and He gave His mother to him as a precious legacy. Thus He provided for her that which she most needed,—the tender sympathy of one who loved her because she loved Jesus. And in receiving her as a sacred trust, John was receiving a great blessing. She was a constant reminder of his beloved Master.

“The perfect example of Christ's filial love shines forth with undimmed



luster from the mist of ages. For nearly thirty years Jesus by His daily toil had helped bear the burdens of the home. And now, even in His last agony, He remembers to provide for His sorrowing, widowed mother. The same spirit will be seen in every disciple of our Lord. Those who follow Christ will feel that it is a part of their religion to respect and provide for their parents. From the heart where His love is cherished, father and mother will never fail of receiving thoughtful care and tender sympathy.” —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 752.

### **The church and care for the elderly**

“Whenever they are able to do so, it should be the privilege of the members of every family to minister to their own kindred. When this cannot be, the work belongs to the church, and it should be accepted both as a privilege and as a duty. All who possess Christ's spirit will have a tender regard for the feeble and the aged.” —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 204. Naturally it is a blessing to have elderly people in the church, but the older they get, the more difficult it is for many of them to attend church services. This may affect their spirituality. Some of them may have health and financial challenges.

Some experience new birth in their old age. This shows that though the body is weak, the mind can be renewed. Their relationship with God can grow. The service of the church is broad. Apostle James says: “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” James 1:27.

### **Care for the elderly workers**

“Rise up in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord.” (Leviticus 19:32). “The history of John affords a striking illustration of the way in which God can use aged workers. When John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos, there were many who thought him to be past service, an old and broken





reed, ready to fall at any time. But the Lord saw fit to use him still. Though banished from the scenes of his former labor, he did not cease to bear witness to the truth. Even in Patmos he made friends and converts..." —*Reflecting Christ*, p. 280.

"Reverence should be shown for God's representatives—for ministers, teachers, and parents who are called to speak and act in His stead. In the respect shown to them He is honored." —*My Life Today*, p. 285. In order to provide some assistance to our beloved elderly ones, it is very important to talk with them to better understand their needs and respond accordingly. The church may provide care for the elderly through:

- Home visits. Like all Christians, seniors need the companionship and encouragement of other believers to strengthen their faith. It is important to appoint members to visit the elderly who are unable to attend church services. This is to sing, pray, and read the word of God for them. It is also important to involve them in the service. They may offer prayers, share their life experience, etc.

- Offering communion service at home.

- Financial assistance as the need arises to pay for utility bills.

- Offer health care services especially in cases of chronic illnesses.

- Provision of meal or cooking, home repair assistance, clothing, transportation, visitation, Shopping, cleaning the yard, washing,... You may add more possible ways to the list.

## Conclusion

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed [are] the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Revelation 14:13). "God Honors the Faithful Aged. There are living upon our earth men who have passed the age of fourscore and ten. The natural results of old age are seen in their feebleness. But they believe God, and God loves them. The seal of God is upon them, and they will be among the number of whom the Lord has said, 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.' With Paul they can say, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished by course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also which love his appearing.' There are many whose grey hairs God honors because they have fought a good fight and kept the faith" (*Letter 207*, 1899). May the Lord help us to understand our duty to our beloved seniors. Amen.

**Pr. Adalicio Fontes de Souza**  
**Brazil/Portugal**

# Crown of Honor

“The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” (Proverbs 16:31). The wise man offers three insightful reflections on aging, wisdom, and justice in the biblical context.

## **Crown of Honor**

In the biblical context, "crown" often symbolizes glory, reward, or distinction. The crown of honor is a powerful metaphor that elevates gray hair, associating it with something deserving of respect. In Israel, living a long life was considered a blessing from God, as reflected in Exodus 20:12 and Psalm 91:16.

## **Gray Hair**

This term refers to white hair, a sign of aging. Gray hair symbolizes divine

experience, representing accumulated wisdom and a person's closeness to God through a life of obedience. Old age was frequently associated with wisdom, experience, and blessings in ancient Hebrew culture. Unlike some contemporary societies that may prioritize youth, the people of Israel regarded older people as valuable sources of knowledge and guidance.

### **Path of Righteousness**

This phrase represents a life of righteousness, obedience, and alignment with God's principles. Growing old is not enough on its own; the true glory of old age lies in living a life of faithfulness to God. This text emphasizes the importance of living wisely and justly to prepare for an honorable old age. Respect for older people is often based on how they have lived; those who follow the "path of justice" become examples worthy of imitation. For those who have not yet reached old age, this message serves as a reminder to live according to the "path of justice" to attain a respectable old age. It encourages society to honor older people, especially those who have lived exemplary lives.

Throughout the Bible, similar passages stress the importance of valuing our more experienced brothers and sisters: Psalm 92:12, 14, "The righteous flourish even in old age, like the cedar of Lebanon, ever vigorous and fruitful." 2 Timothy 4:7, 8, Paul reflects on his life as a "good race" and anticipates receiving the "crown of righteousness." Exodus 20:12, "Honor your father and your mother." 1 Timothy 5:1, 2, Paul instructs the church to treat older individuals respectfully, much like one would treat parents. Leviticus 19:32, "You shall rise before the gray-headed and honor the aged, and fear your God; I am the LORD." The phrase "I am the Lord" emphasizes authority. God bases this command on His identity, highlighting that respecting elders stems from God's holy character rather than merely cultural norms. Furthermore, this command is linked to the fear of God, "and you shall fear your God." This indicates that honoring elders is not only a social concern but also a spiritual one. Disobeying this commandment can be seen as a lack of respect for God, who establishes holiness through His laws.

### **Teach Respect and Courtesy**

"And God has especially enjoined tender respect toward the aged. He says, 'The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.' Proverbs 16:31. It tells of battles fought, and victories gained; of burdens borne, and temptations resisted. It tells of weary feet nearing their rest, of places soon to be vacant. Help the children to think of this, and they will smooth the path of the aged by their courtesy and respect, and will bring grace and beauty into their young

lives as they heed the command to 'rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man.' Leviticus 19:32." –*Education*, p. 244.

In His infinite wisdom, God has made it clear how important it is to nurture respect and courtesy in our relationships, especially toward the elderly. White hair should not be seen as a sign of fragility but as a mark of honor, representing lives that have faced challenges, taken on significant responsibilities, and resisted temptations. Every line and mark reflects the lived experiences, lessons learned, and valuable contributions made to families, society, and often to the church. We can implement this teaching in various ways within our homes, schools, churches, and communities. For instance, parents can encourage their children to offer their seats to the elderly, help them with simple tasks like carrying bags, or listen patiently to their stories. Teachers can promote projects or seminars that involve interviewing elderly individuals, creating opportunities for young people to learn about the past and the wisdom it brings. In the church, we can organize events where young people spend time with older members, thereby strengthening intergenerational ties.

### **Taking advantage of the experience of the elderly**

"The most tender regard should be cherished for those whose life interest has been bound up with the work of God. These aged workers have stood faithful amid storm and trial. They may have infirmities, but they still possess talents that qualify them to stand in their place in God's cause. Though worn, and unable to bear the heavier burdens that younger men can and should carry, the counsel they can give is of the highest value." –*Reflecting Christ*, p. 280.

"The Lord gives special grace and knowledge to the aged men who have had an experience in the work from its earliest





history, and have watched it develop in its various lines of progress. Let these men be appreciated and respected. Let not the fact he lost sight of that in the past they have sacrificed everything to advance the work. Because they are growing old is no reason why they should cease to exert an influence superior to the influence of the men who have had far less study of the Word, far less experience in divine things, far less knowledge of the communications of Christ to His people.” —*The Retirement Years*, p. 34.

## Example of John

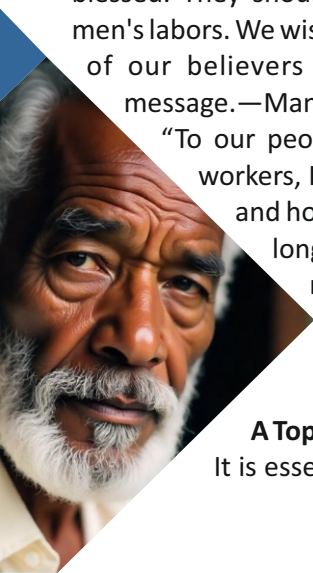
The story of John serves as a powerful illustration of how God can use older workers. When John was exiled to the island of Patmos, many saw him as someone past his time of service—an old reed, a weakling, broken, and on the verge of crumbling. However, the Lord, in His wisdom, chose to use John in an extraordinary way.

“This was the spirit and life of the message that John bore to all in his old age, when he was nearly one hundred years old. The standard-bearers are holding fast their banners. They are not loosening their hands on the banner of truth until they lay off the armor. One by one the old warriors' voices become silent. Their place is vacant. We see them no more, but they being dead yet speak, for their works do follow them. Let us treat very tenderly the few aged pilgrims remaining, esteeming them highly for their works' sake. As their powers are becoming worn and enfeebled, what they do say is of value. As precious testimony let their words be treasured. Let not the young men and the new workers discard or in any respect show indifference to the men of hoary hairs, but let them rise up and call them blessed. They should consider that they have themselves entered into these men's labors. We wish that there was much more of the love of Christ in the hearts of our believers for those who were first in the proclamation of the message.—Manuscript 33, 1890.” —*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 223.

“To our people as a whole, and to our younger and less experienced workers, I am instructed to say, 'Let it be plainly seen that you respect and honour our aged workers, the men of grey hairs, who have seen long and faithful service in the cause of God, and who are recognized and honoured in the courts of heaven as labourers together with God.'—Letter 152, 1903.” —*The Retirement Years*, p. 38.

## A Topic of Vital Importance

It is essential that we do not discourage our pioneers and pastors or





make them feel that their contributions are insignificant. Their influence can still be powerful in the Lord's work. God continuously watches over His faithful and dedicated standard-bearers, assuring them that they are under the protection of One who neither sleeps nor rests. They are guarded by tireless sentinels and cared for by the Lord. At the age of 82, the servant of the Lord accepted invitations to preach at camp meetings, conference committees, and churches. Demonstrating remarkable determination and dedication, she crossed the entire North American continent to participate in the 1909 General Conference session.

“Ministers who have faithfully done their work are not to be forgotten or neglected when they have become feeble in health. Our conferences are not to disregard the needs of those who have borne the burdens of the work.” —*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 33.

Men and women who have devoted their lives to this noble cause are sometimes treated as if they have lost their value or passed their expiration date. As an organization, we have a moral and spiritual obligation to recognize and appreciate these workers, who often sacrificed their lives and the well-being of their families for this mission. It is deeply saddening to realize that many of our elderly pastors are neglected and left behind, despite their invaluable contributions over the years.

### **Show kindness even to unjust parents**

“If children think that they were treated with severity in their childhood, will it help them to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, will it make them reflect His image, to cherish a spirit of retaliation and revenge against their parents, especially when they are old and feeble? Will not the very helplessness of the parents plead for the children's love? Will not the necessities of the aged father and mother call forth the noble feelings of the heart, and through the grace of Christ, shall not the parents be treated with kind attention and respect by their offspring? Oh, let not the heart be made as adamant as steel against father and mother! How can a daughter professing the name of Christ cherish hatred against her mother, especially if that mother is sick and old? Let kindness and love, the sweetest fruits of Christian life, find a place in the heart of children toward their parents.

“Children, let your parents, infirm and unable to care for themselves, find their last days filled with contentment, peace, and love. For Christ's sake let them go down to the grave receiving from you only words of kindness, love, mercy, and forgiveness.” —*The Adventist Home*, pp. 362, 363.

## It is a privilege to care for elderly parents

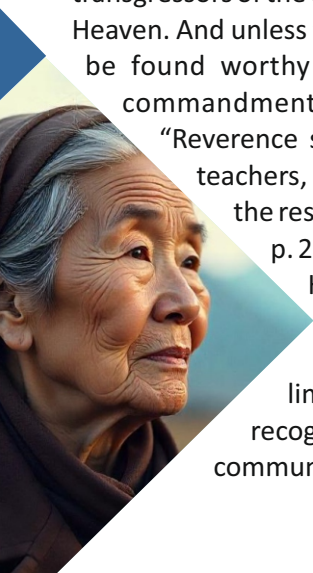
"The best way to educate children to respect their father and mother is to give them the opportunity of seeing the father offering kindly attentions to the mother, and the mother rendering respect and reverence to the father. It is by beholding love in their parents, that children are led to obey the fifth commandment." —*The Retirement Years*, p. 53.

"Parents are entitled to a degree of love and respect which is due to no other person. God Himself, who has placed upon them a responsibility for the souls committed to their charge, has ordained that during the earlier years of life, parents shall stand in the place of God to their children. And he who rejects the rightful authority of his parents is rejecting the authority of God. The fifth commandment requires children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age." —*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 308.

This quote highlights the importance of respect and emotional care for parents in old age, in addition to material provision. It also emphasizes that honoring parents brings joy, not only to them but also to children. This gesture is valued both in society and in "*the books of Heaven*." It is a clear and powerful reflection of family values and filial responsibility.

What can give greater sorrow to your heart than the manifestation of neglect on the part of your children? What sin can be greater in a child than to cause displeasure to an aged and helpless father and mother? Those who cause displeasure to their aged parents are recorded in the books of Heaven as transgressors of the commandment, as are those who do not reverence the God of Heaven. And unless they repent of their evil ways and forsake them, they will not be found worthy of a place in the inheritance of the saints. The fifth commandment goes beyond respect for our parents. It also states, "Reverence should be shown for God's representatives—for ministers, teachers, and parents who are called to speak and act in His stead. In the respect shown to them He is honored." —*Counsels for the Church*, p. 252.

Honoring the "*face of the elderly*" involves more than superficial gestures: it means valuing the journey, history, and teachings that the elderly can share. This honor is not limited to words but is an invitation to genuine attitudes that recognize the role of the elderly in the family, society, and the community of faith.



“The true minister of Christ should make continual improvement. The afternoon sun of his life may be more mellow and productive of fruit than the morning sun. It may continue to increase in size and brightness until it drops behind the western hills. My brethren in the ministry, it is better, far better, to die of hard work in some home or foreign mission field, than to rust out with inaction. Be not dismayed at difficulties; be not content to settle down without studying and without making improvement. Search the Word of God diligently for subjects that will instruct the ignorant and feed the flock of God. Become so full of the matter that you will be able to bring forth from the treasure house of His Word things new and old.”  
—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 221.

May we reflect on these words and put them into practice in our daily lives, honoring those who came before us and strengthening the bonds of mutual love and respect that God teaches us in His Word. May God bless our attitudes and guide us toward a prosperous life, lived in total obedience to our elders and Him, our heavenly Father. Amen.

**International Missionary Society  
Seventh-day Adventist  
Reform Movement  
General Conference**

**Family Department**

