

old age

Unit 19



● Long life

* Genesis 5:1-32

Who was the oldest man? _____ What age did he reach? _____

In the Bible, old age is regarded as a blessing and a reward. How can we achieve old age?

Ex 20:12 _____ Ex 23:25-26 _____

Deut 5:33 _____ 1 Kings 3:14 _____

Ps 34:11-14 _____ Prov 3:1-2 _____

Prov 3:16 _____ Prov 10:27 _____

● The joy of old age

* Proverbs 17:6 What are a crown to the aged? _____



* Genesis 50:22-26

To what age did Joseph live? _____

How many generations did he see? _____

* Job 42:16

Despite all his earlier problems, Job lived a long life. How many generations did he see? _____

* Psalm 128:6

Family is a great joy to older people. Within the church family this can be extended to many others.

Are you looking forward to being old? ☐ yes ☐ no

Why? _____

How well did/do you know your grandparents?

Are there people in your church or community whom you could adopt as grandchildren or as grandparents?

Heartsearch

● Opportunities of old age

* **Psalm 92:12-15** What can the righteous do in old age?

Old age can be a very productive part of your life.

* **Genesis 12:1-5, 16:16, 17:1-27, 21:1-7, 23:1-2, 25:1-11**

Abraham was quite old when God called him and he began to see the purposes of God in his life. You are never too old to start serving God in a new way!

How old was Sarah when Isaac was born? _____

* **Genesis 12:4-5, 13:1-14:24, 18:16-19:29**

How was Lot related to Abraham?

How was Abraham able to help Lot? _____

In old age we may have resources and influence that enable us to help younger members of our family.



* **Exodus 7:7** * **Deuteronomy 34:7**

Between what ages did Moses lead the Israelites?

What physical condition was he in when he died?

Why do you think God had to wait so long before Moses was ready to lead the people?

* **Job 12:12** What is a characteristic of old age? _____

* **Psalm 71:17-18** How can we use this?

* **Proverbs 20:29**

How can different generations help each other?

As a younger person, do you seek wisdom from older people? As an older person, do you have opportunity to help and advise younger people?

How old was Abraham when...?

- _____ he was called by God
- _____ Ishmael was born
- _____ Isaac was born
- _____ Sarah died
- _____ he died



● Experience of old age

Ecclesiastes 1:12-3:14 Old age is a time for reflection!

What facets of life has this old man experienced?

1:12-18 _____ 2:1-3 _____ 2:4-6 _____

2:7-11 _____ 2:12-16 _____ 2:17-23 _____

What were his conclusions? _____

What does endure (3:14)? _____

● Difficulties of old age

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

This is a cryptic poem describing some of the problems of old age. Can you work out what is being referred to?

v 1 _____

v 2 _____

v 3 _____

v 4 _____

v 5 _____

v 6 _____



As our bodies age, they become weak, perform less well and we may develop various health problems.

*** Genesis 27:1, 48:10 * 2 Samuel 19:31-35 * 1 Kings 1:1**

What common ailments of the elderly are mentioned?

Other problems of the elderly include *bereavement* as relatives, friends and contemporaries die. This can lead to *loneliness* and *isolation*. Various ailments may make it difficult to *communicate* and *move around*.

Heartsearch

As an older person do you experience difficulties and problems in these areas?

☐ health ☐ loneliness ☐ mobility

As a younger person are there things you can do to help older people with these problems?

● Responsibilities of old age

* **Psalm 90:10** What is our expected span of life? _____

Old age is a time to make arrangements for our departure. It is a time to pass on responsibility to the next generation. What did these people do?

Abraham (Gen 24:1-4) _____

Isaac (Gen 27:1-4) _____

Jacob (Gen 49:1-27) _____

Jacob (Gen 49:29-33) _____

Moses (Deut 31:1-8) _____

Moses (Deut 31:9, 24-25) _____

Moses (Deut 31:19, 32:1-43) _____

Moses (Deut 33:1-29) _____

Joshua (Josh 24:1-27) _____

David (1 Kings 2:1-4) _____

Paul (2 Tim 4:1-8) _____

Are there important things which you would like to do or say before you die?

Have you written a will? When do you intend to do so?

Are there things which your parents or grandparents said to you before they died? What has been the outcome?



Heartsearch

* **Hebrews 9:27** What else do we need to prepare for? _____

We need to ensure that we have faith in Jesus as our saviour. Those who believe in him will not perish but have eternal life (*John 3:16*).

* **Titus 2:2** What other responsibilities do we have?

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extra thought and discussion

• Working life and retirement

In the Bible, twenty was the age of adulthood when men could fight in the army and had community responsibility (Num 1:3, 14:29, 26:2-4, 32:11). Old age was reckoned to begin at sixty and this was

probably a common retiring age (Lev 27:1-8). Some of the Levite jobs required an age of thirty and partial retirement was at fifty (Num 4:3, 8:24-26 but also 1 Chron 23:24-27, 2 Chron 31:17).

• Respect and care for the aged

We are commanded to respect and honour the aged (Lev 19:32, 1 Tim 5:1-2, 1 Pet 5:5). Particular instructions are given to care for widows and the early church had special arrangements for their care (Deut 24:17-22, Acts 6:1-7, 1 Tim 5:3-16, James 1:27).