

Honour the Face of the Old Man

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Leviticus 19:32 Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD.

Proverbs 16:31 The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.

- I. Once again, we need to re-emphasize that this is the moral law of God we are dealing with here.
 - A. The matter of honoring the elderly is not a religious thing, but a moral thing.
 - B. Failing to do so, then, is sin.
 - C. Neglecting to do so is sin.
 - D. This is basic moral law – foundational stuff that other moral concepts rest upon.
 - E. It is a thing that, when cast aside, brings on many other moral failures, as well.
 - F. Having a regard and reverence for the aged will influence the way you think and feel about many other things, too.
 - G. Those who act proudly against the ancient also act proudly against all authority.
 - H. Not only that, but they will also act proudly against everyone.
 - I. Failure to have a regard and reverence for the aged in your heart shows that you have a shallow, selfish, and very short-sighted view of life.

- II. The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.
 - A. Time changes our appearance and our countenance as we grow old and distinguishes us from others.
 - B. We do not usually have a problem knowing when someone is old.
 - C. Since this is the way God has ordained life to be why would people want to fight looking old so much?
 - D. Why do we treat it as such an undesirable thing to grow old?
 - E. We do that with a lot of good things; we consider things to be a curse that God means to be a great blessing – such as marriage, children, church, giving, etc.

Proverbs 20:29 The glory of young men is their strength: and the beauty of old men is the gray head.

- F. Why do we strive to hide the very thing that God commands us to honor?
 - 1. By hiding our gray hair and wrinkles and everything else that tells others we are aged and to honored.
- G. "...if it be found in the way of righteousness."

Ecclesiastes 4:13 Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.

- 1. This does not give us an option about rising up before the hoary head and honoring the face of the old man – it just acknowledges that a gray head can be found on an old fool as well as a righteous person.
- 2. This just simply says that the gray hair is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness.

3. If it is found on the head of a wicked, unrighteous person it only shows that he is an utter fool to have lived so long without learning what life and eternity are about.
4. If this is the case he is to be pitied.
5. We are still to rise up before them and honor the face of the old man – just like saying, “Sir” and “Maam” and “please” and “thankyou.”

III. When this pillar of moral law is rejected, neglected, and set aside in a society it is a very sure sign that they are near the end of their existences as a people.

Isaiah 3:5 And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable.

- A. The context of this verse is a description by God of the state of things in the land of Israel just before they were judged by God.
- B. This sin is accompanied by some other sins that are very familiar to us now in our land, and in our world.

Isaiah 3:8-13 For Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen: because their tongue and their doings are against the LORD, to provoke the eyes of his glory. The shew of their countenance doth witness against them; and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Woe unto their soul! for they have rewarded evil unto themselves. Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him. As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. The LORD standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people.

Isaiah 3:16 Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

- C. The aged are a source of knowledge and wisdom that is overlooked and wasted much of the time.
 1. Everyone seems to be fascinated with old pictures and antiques and old things and they let their imagination run wild looking at those things.
 2. At the same time they fail to realize that there are people around them that were alive in a different generation and a different time who could tell you all about it.
 3. Failing to get from them the knowledge and wisdom they possess when we know they will not be around much longer is terrible folly on the part of those who are younger.
 4. A people loses its direction and its identity when it fails to receive it from the previous generations that lived long enough to tell them about it.
- D. The aged are a necessary part of the social order for a family, a church, a nation.
 1. When there are no old people, it is a great void, just as when there are no children.
 2. They are a most important influence on the children and everyone younger than themselves.
- E. A young person cannot imagine how offensive it is to an older person to be disrespected and dishonored by those who are younger.

Job 30:1 But now they that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.

- F. The reason it is so offensive is because he has lived a long life and knows that he has forgotten more than these young people even know, and yet they are so proud and ignorant as to look at him as their inferior.
- G. If he is 60 and you are 20 he has seen the sun rise and set 14,600 times more than you have.
- H. If you are 20 and he is 80 he has lived 21,900 full days and nights that you have not lived.
 - 1. What has he done in all those days that you have not done yet?
 - 2. What has he learned in all those days that you have not learned yet?
 - 3. What has he seen in all those days that you have not seen yet?
- I. He has seen and heard things and lived in a world that you never knew anything about, and never will unless he tells you about it.
- J. He has encountered every kind of problem with people and animals and things that life can dish out, and you have only begun to learn of these things.
 - 1. He could help you to have a much better life if you would just sit down with him (or her) and let him talk to you a while.
- K. And if he is a righteous man; a man who has lived for God and truly sought to do his will in his life, he is a rare jewel that you should treasure more than all the money and riches in the world.
 - 1. If you would sit still and listen to him and let him try to communicate to you what he knows about God, and you would receive it, it would give you a leg up in earthly life, and in spiritual life that you can get nowhere else.

Rise up before the hoary head, honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God...