

The Last Scene of All
December 29, 2013
Ecclesiastes 12 & Psalm 71

This last Sunday of 2013 we come to the final message in a series of seven, each focused upon one of the seven stages of life named in Shakespeare's poem, "The Seven Ages of Man." Today's focus is the final stage: advanced age.

Two biblical passages come quickly to mind. First, Psalm 71, sometimes called "the old man's psalm," was written when David was "old and grayheaded" (v. 18). David prays to God regarding conditions faced by an aging man.

Ecclesiastes 12 describes such conditions in poetic symbolism. "*In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble,*" speaks of trembling hands. "*The grinders cease because they are few,*" speaks of difficulty eating due to loss of teeth; "*and those that look out of the windows be darkened,*" speaks of diminished vision (v.3).

Each of these passages includes content appropriate to advancing age. Also included are multiple lessons that pertain not only to long life on earth, but also to living acceptably to God for eternity.

1. "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth" (Ecc. 12:1).
2. "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecc. 12:13, 14).
3. Prayer: "Let me never be put to confusion" (Psa. 71:1).
4. "But I will hope continually, and will yet praise thee more and more." (Psa. 71:14)
5. "My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof" (Psa. 71:15).
6. "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" (Psa 71:18).