

25—Adonijah’s View of David—Taking Advantage of the Aged

1 Kings 1

Our culture often focuses upon and debates many of the “-ism’s” which are viewed as unjust and unkind. So, we hear talk of “sexism” and the various ways such discrimination might occur in our culture. You have probably heard issues surrounding “racism” and the various ways one might show an unfair favoritism towards one race over another. Some political groups address the issue of “elitism” or “classism” where they target the favorable tax treatment the “1%” of rich people receive over the 99% of society. Yet, one area we may not address enough is the problem of “ageism.” It is possible to discriminate and take advantage of both the young and the old.



“Now King David was old, advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm.”

1 Kings 1:1 (NKJV)



more at-risk if they struggle with memory problems or place their trust in the wrong people to oversee their finances as they age.

This problem of ageism is present in the pages of the Bible too. Some young boys once “jeered at” Elijah and said, *“Go up, you baldhead! Go up, you baldhead!”* (2 Kings 2:23). Those boys were punished by God. Jesus once rebuked the “scribes” and “Pharisees” as “hypocrites” because they would “devour widows’ houses” (Matthew 23:14). They would use their religious position combined with the vulnerability of the elderly widows for monetary gain. This was sinful. Because God knew this was a temptation, He instructed Old Testament Israel: *“You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the Lord”* (Leviticus 19:32). Proverbs 16:31 says, *“Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life”* (Proverbs 16:31).

Sadly, sometimes it is our own children who may try to take advantage of their parents as they age. In the case of David, his own son, Adonijah, tries to take advantage of his situation as he is growing more feeble in his final days. Let’s use this lesson as a divine instructional on how to deal with the problem of ageism when we see it take place among our friends and family.

Discussion Questions:

1. Read 1 Kings 1:1-4. How is David described in his passage? Since there were no electric blankets, what is suggested to help keep David warm? What are some of the symptoms the elderly face as they become more sedentary?

2. Although David is not dead, Adonijah begins to make a play for the kingship since his father is home-bound (1 Kings 1:5-10). What does Adonijah do to try and claim the crown for his own? Who joins him and who does not?

3. When Nathan finds out about Adonijah's actions, what does he do to try and resolve this issue (1 Kings 1:11-30)? When we realize a friend or family member is being taken advantage of, how can this text be utilized by us?

4. This wrong of Adonijah was not just something which would have impacted David. It would have also impacted Bathsheba and Solomon (see 1 Kings 1:21, 31). Have you ever known someone whose entire estate or fortune was mishandled? How did it affect the intended heirs?

5. What does David do to try and rectify this situation (1 Kings 1:32-40)? How does this affect Adonijah and his companions when they hear the news (1 Kings 1:41-53)?

Key Lessons:

- The true man of God will be "just" and show "mercy" to those in vulnerable situations rather than take advantage of it (Micah 6:8).
- Sometimes a family does not know someone is being taken advantage of unless a witness intervenes into the situation. If you see something suspicious, speak up.
- David appointed the rightful heir to the throne and clarified the situation. Acting promptly to correct problems can save greater future problems from occurring.

Additional Notes: _____
