



# SHADOW MOUNTAIN LEADER Packet

## THE COMING GOLDEN AGE: "OLD AGE IN THE GOLDEN AGE" Selected Scriptures

### Getting Started

1. Most people would say they want to live a long life. What does *longevity* mean to you? Describe your ideal version of a long life. **We heard the story of 116-year-old Maria Branyas. She has enjoyed a long and healthy life. Her formula for life is "order, tranquility, good connection with family and friends, contact with nature, emotional stability, lots of positivity and [staying] away from toxic people."**
2. Your picture of living a long life may not be limited to the number of years you want to spend on this earth. You may also desire to live a life that is healthy and energetic. In what way are you attempting to do this? How is it going for you? **This discussion can cover everything from what people are making sure they do (eating well, exercising, taking vitamins, drinking lots of water, etc.) to what they are staying away from (stress, toxins, etc.).**
3. Perhaps, you have been limited by health challenges. What have you learned by navigating these physical restrictions? **Adapting to a physical disability that occurs as a result of an injury, illness, or the aging process can be challenging on numerous levels. The disability itself is likely to pose significant challenges that require many changes in a person's life, and even give them a new perspective on life.**

## Digging Deeper

1. When did you first realize that death was going to be part of your life experience? How has accepting death changed the way you live your life?  
**Accepting our mortality is only the beginning. In the human life cycle, everyone dies in the end despite every effort we put into avoiding talking about or planning for the inevitable. Accepting and coming to terms with the fact that death is a normal part of life can help you live more presently. Being conscious of our mortality helps us live each day with more gratitude and helps us appreciate our lives.**
  
2. Read (below) about the following biblical characters who lived *hundreds* of years. What external factors might have contributed to their long lives (e.g., genetics, climate, no ozone layer, etc.)? What about internal factors (e.g., stronger-knit community, healthy diet, more exercise in daily life, etc.)? **Perhaps the climate of the earth was so different in those early days that it allowed for increased longevity. Some believe there was a vapor barrier or canopy around the earth that made our atmosphere more conducive to long life—something akin to the ozone layer. Maybe this canopy collapsed or dissipated during the flood. Maybe something completely different is responsible. Perhaps the genetic pool was so young that people were more vigorous. Perhaps the grace of God was so fresh that His children lived for many centuries.**
  - Adam lived for 930 years (Gen. 5:5).
  - Seth lived for 912 years (5:8).
  - Jared, Adam’s great-great-great grandson, lived to be 962 (5:20).
  - Lamech, the father of Noah, was 777 when he passed away (5:31).
  - Noah, who was 600 years old when God flooded the earth, lived for another 350 years after that flood. He died when he was 950 (9:29).

3. Read Luke 5:12-13. How does this miracle of Jesus give us a preview of what He plans to do with disease and dying? In what way do you relate to the man with leprosy? **It's important to remember that leprosy was *the* dreaded disease of Jesus' day. It was the most feared of all afflictions. Not only was there no cure, but lepers died slowly from the continually escalating degradation of their bodies. Worse still, lepers were not allowed to be part of the Jewish community. They were cut off. Segregated. Isolated. Jesus responded to this man as the now-and-future King: He supernaturally healed the man. In the future, Christ will do for all what He did for the sick and handicapped in the Gospels. He will remove all sickness, deformities, and handicaps. Read Isaiah 29:18, 35:5-6 and Jeremiah 30:17.**

4. As you think about a new body and a life that is not just *long* but *eternal*, what would you like to do? Where would you like to go? Who do you want to do life with? **Pastor Jeremiah went on to say, "The lives of the redeemed who rule this world with Christ will return to pre-Eden levels. We will once again live forever!" It is as though history will come full circle! The quantity and quality of our years will once again reveal the goodness of our Creator and reflect His infallible design. Read Isaiah 65:20 and Jeremiah 30:19-20 for further reflection and conversation.**

5. The books of Psalms and Proverbs have much to say about the way to live a long and vibrant life. Which of the below verses speak to you and what is important during this season of your life?

Psalm 34:12-14

Proverbs 3:1-2

Proverbs 4:10

Proverbs 10:27

Proverbs 16:31

## Applying the Message

1. Read Philippians 1:19-26. How does this passage challenge you to continue pursuing a God-honoring, vibrant longevity as you seek to be obedient to Him and His calling on your life? **Another way to ask this question is, “What are you living for?” Your answer to that question will determine the direction of your life. If your purpose is vague or fuzzy, your direction will be fuzzy. It is important to be clear in answering this question. Your answer will need to acknowledge death and what lies beyond. It might also include consideration of the uncertainty of life so that whenever death may come it doesn’t thwart your purpose.**
  
2. How might you start practicing a new habit of living as an act of worship to God? In what way will this increase your ability to lead and love others well? **When we want to build new habits, we can get remarkable results by making one tiny change at a time. In the beginning, get just 1% better each day. Accumulating God-honoring habits involves deciding the kind of person you believe He wants you to be and then empowering your vision with a process of small wins emerging from habits. One step at a time, we can create a powerful habit-forming system as these new behaviors inform our way of learning, doing, and being in the world.**