

## Where does an old lion go to die?

*Elohim Yeshuati (God my salvation).*

Message 3: [You are my anchor series](#).

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### The tale the lion king

To understand Psalm 71, which is sometimes called “The Prayer of the Aged believer”, and which we will cover in detail later, the Lord reminded me of something:

***“Where does an Old Lion go to die?”***

When he is young and the strongest, the male Lion becomes leader of his pride. This family or pride typically comprises of 15 members - the lionesses, young males and cubs and the lion king protects them from other lions as well as from enemies – such as hyenas and cheetahs.

But:

- When a lion king dies – **the pride scatters and is often taken over by another lion**, because the pride has lost its leader – the glue who was holding the family together.
- When a lion king dies – **conflicts arise**. The younger males wanting to take over the pride fight for the throne. This often leads to death among the young male contenders.
- When a male lion king dies – the pride, especially if there are no other strong male lions gets **attacked by predators** like hyenas who kill the young lions.

The death of the old Lion is therefore a very sad tale in the circle of life.

As for the old and dying lion, it will typically be abandoned by the pride – and having no more strength to hunt, will slowly starve to death. Those who were previously afraid of it, will start taunting it, bearing their strength – and may even attack.

When an old male lion is dying – he typically dies alone. Abandoned. He walks a few steps, confused, the savannah grass bowing. The wind gently blowing. He then collapses to the ground, takes his last few breaths, and closes his eyes. The King is dead.

### Elohim Yeshuati (God my salvation).

Now **imagine this old lion is you** – past the prime of your life. Past the days of your youth when your body worked and no parts ached FOR NO REASON, when you were well respected. You were the talk of town, you were the life of the party, you were the voice of wisdom. Then suddenly in old age, no one visits, no one cares – just like the old lion, you are all alone, abandoned and confused, collapsing to the ground.

My wife who is a home care nurse tells me many a heart-breaking tale of the sorrows of people who are old and the common troubles they face for example:

1. **The pain of loneliness** – when none of the children or relatives hardly ever visit. The friends you had, are either sick or dead. Part of this loneliness is also because the children often DON'T care to hear what their old parents have to say, they often despise them. That is why the bible says this: *“Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.” Proverbs 23: 22 (NIV)*. This means most old people are lonely because the young despise them, don't seek their wisdom and their company, believing they no longer need them.
2. **Shame at the loss of independence.** Sickesses of old age are really “humiliating” – cancer, dementia – loss of memory or nervous system diseases like Alzheimer's. These sicknesses often mean you lose your independence – including over private body functions and so old age often brings profound shame as the body degenerates and no longer functions like it used to – so you basically lose your independence, your strength, your beauty, your vitality, day by day.
3. **Fear due to limited finances.** In old age as you often no longer have the strength to go and work, if you didn't earn enough to save for comfortable later life, you are often at the mercy of the government or well-wishers. This means there are often real fears like will you have enough food? Will you have enough to pay the heating bill? Can you afford to pay for your medicine?

Now, when Jesus the Christ came on this earth, when he started his ministry, he certainly had vulnerable and forgotten people like the old in his mind. Here is an example what he said:

*“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to set the oppressed free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”*

Luke 4: 18- 19 (NIV).

Aren't these words of comfort right for the old ? For they are the ones who are often poor, in the prison of their bed, blind –physically and oppressed – due to fear from lack of money. Oppressed – by loneliness.

It is to such people who the Lord Jesus wants me to speak to in today's message. He wants me to tell them that the God who is my anchor is also their salvation – *Elohim Yeshuati* or “God my salvation.”

But how exactly is Jesus “God my Salvation”?

Well, Jesus' name in his original Jewish language of Hebrew is “Yeshua.” “Yeshua” in Hebrew means “Yahweh Saves” and Yahweh being the ancient personal name of God.

Now, names combined with El or Elohim amplify our understanding of God in His strength because Elohim (El), the Strong Creator, is what in our English Bibles is translated as “God;”

To Understand why Jesus or Yeshua is really “God my salvation” it is best to read the bible in the original language so you get the picture. Here is an example verse in a popular English version like NIV side by side with a Jewish version like NMV:

English version (NIV)	Jewish version (NMV)
<p><i>Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense<sup>[a]</sup>; he has become my salvation.”</i></p> <p><i>Isaiah 12: 2 (NIV).</i></p>	<p><i>“Behold, God-Elōhim (The Living Word) [The Many Powered] [is] my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord- [Yah] (Messiah Pre-Incarnate), Yehovah (Messiah Pre-Incarnate) [is] my strength and [my] song; he also is become my salvation [Yeshuah].”</i></p> <p><i>Isaiah 12:2 NMV</i></p>

Do you see how the revelation becomes clearer that God (Elohim) – who is the living word HAS become Jesus (Yeshuah) – my salvation?

### How do old believers die?

So then, if Jesus or Yeshua is God my salvation, it means an old believer does not die like a non-believer. How does an old believer live before they die?

**Old believers are not like old lions which are abandoned by their family** and left to starve to death. In old age, even if their family abandoned them, they are never alone for God is always with them and so – they prosper in all they do, bearing fruit in ALL seasons – including in the season of old age, because they trust in God and so remain planted by rivers of living waters – those rivers being the Holy Spirit (See Psalms 1 and John 7:37-39).

**Old believers are protected by Elohim – God of strength** and even when weak, even when afraid, when they are surrounded by enemies, they get their strength from God who promises that they shall soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not grow faint (See Isaiah 40: 31). Old believers are protected from their enemies by God their strength who is a shield to them from those hyenas, those evil prowling lions who want to tear down the faithful.

**Old believers are assured of God’s love– to the next generation.** God has made a promise and he cannot lie, he promises to those believers who love the Lord (see Exodus 20: 6) that he will show his love to thousands of their generations. Because of such assurance, the aged believer is always praising God and talking about him – even to these next generations of their children and their children’s children. Such a believer is not afraid of the inheritance they are leaving behind, for it is in safe hands – with descendants who also fear the Lord, having learnt the secret paths of God from their old God-fearing ancestor.

**Old believers never die so to speak** - for even if they die, they are resurrected by Elohim Yeshuati who said: *“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die. (See John 11: 25).*

## Psalm 71

The assurance of the old believer is the story of Psalm 71 which is below.

It is the story that the Lord wants you and I to know. This story is not just for you. It is for me as well for Elohim Yeshuati - God my salvation is also my anchor. Before I encountered the Lord Jesus in 2017, one of my greatest fears was death itself. And then in addition I used to fear getting a sickness like cancer as well as falling into poverty. Thank God who over the years has comforted me so that I may comfort others with same comfort that I received from him (See 2 Cor 1: 4). Thank God who gives us words such as from psalm 71.

So, as you read or hear Psalm 71, let me take you back to the tale of the old lion king. The one who was dying, but by a miracle imagine they are now being renewed in strength by Elohim Yeshuati – God my salvation. Psalm 71 is a psalm to teach you how to deal with the wonderful combination of problems AND praise<sup>ii</sup>. Here is the psalm.

### *Psalm 71*

- <sup>1</sup> In you, LORD, I have taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame.
- <sup>2</sup> In your righteousness, rescue me and deliver me;  
turn your ear to me and save me.
- <sup>3</sup> Be my rock of refuge,  
to which I can always go;  
give the command to save me,  
for you are my rock and my fortress.
- <sup>4</sup> Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
from the grasp of those who are evil and cruel.
- <sup>5</sup> For you have been my hope, Sovereign LORD,  
my confidence since my youth.
- <sup>6</sup> From birth I have relied on you;  
you brought me forth from my mother's womb.  
I will ever praise you.
- <sup>7</sup> I have become a sign to many;  
you are my strong refuge.
- <sup>8</sup> My mouth is filled with your praise,  
declaring your splendor all day long.
- <sup>9</sup> Do not cast me away when I am old;  
do not forsake me when my strength is gone.
- <sup>10</sup> For my enemies speak against me;  
those who wait to kill me conspire together.
- <sup>11</sup> They say, "God has forsaken him;  
pursue him and seize him,  
for no one will rescue him."
- <sup>12</sup> Do not be far from me, my God;  
come quickly, God, to help me.
- <sup>13</sup> May my accusers perish in shame;  
may those who want to harm me  
be covered with scorn and disgrace.

- <sup>14</sup> As for me, I will always have hope;  
I will praise you more and more.
- <sup>15</sup> My mouth will tell of your righteous deeds,  
of your saving acts all day long—  
though I know not how to relate them all.
- <sup>16</sup> I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, Sovereign LORD;  
I will proclaim your righteous deeds, yours alone.
- <sup>17</sup> Since my youth, God, you have taught me,  
and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.
- <sup>18</sup> Even when I am old and gray,  
do not forsake me, my God,  
till I declare your power to the next generation,  
your mighty acts to all who are to come.
- <sup>19</sup> Your righteousness, God, reaches to the heavens,  
you who have done great things.  
Who is like you, God?
- <sup>20</sup> Though you have made me see troubles,  
many and bitter,  
you will restore my life again;  
from the depths of the earth  
you will again bring me up.
- <sup>21</sup> You will increase my honor  
and comfort me once more.
- <sup>22</sup> I will praise you with the harp  
for your faithfulness, my God;  
I will sing praise to you with the lyre,  
Holy One of Israel.
- <sup>23</sup> My lips will shout for joy  
when I sing praise to you—  
I whom you have delivered.
- <sup>24</sup> My tongue will tell of your righteous acts  
all day long,  
for those who wanted to harm me  
have been put to shame and confusion.

## Conclusion

No one wishes to be an old person especially seeing all the weaknesses and problems that come ALL the time with old age BUT this psalm as you can see shows the journey of an Old lion turned believer – worried or ashamed about their failing strength and the enemies around them, but then they remember that God is strong and his faith never fails, even when theirs fades. With such hope and comfort, they start rising from the ashes and can continually praise God – including to the next generation, even when everyone else CANNOT see why they are praising God. This psalm therefore shows you how to properly be an old believer – unlike the old lion king who has gone to die.

An old lion king dies in the savannah grass and its body becomes the manure which makes the grass grow and then the antelopes eat the grass. Thus the old lion dies without hope But the old lion king can also die with hope – if such a believer calls on the name of the Lord – Elohim Yeshuati, “God my salvation.”

Such a lion, even if it dies – it will live again. Do you want to be such a victorious lion whose hope is in the Lion of the Tribe of Judah? Do believe this message?

## **The Message Jesus wants me to pass on to you**

If you are wondering, who is this God of my salvation – also the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, I will tell you.

This Lord Jesus, the son of God became a man like us. He was born without sin - born of a virgin, on this earth, when he came as the “God- Man” - Immanuel, he went about doing good and preaching the gospel: “repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is near” (Matthew 4: 17). This kingdom of heaven Jesus spoke of is the inheritance of those who wash their garments clean in his blood – the blood he shed when he died as a lamb for our sins and then was raised as a lion from the dead – and now he is alive forever, seated at the right hand of God – the Majestic King of the Universe.

This good news of being saved from our sin is what causes people like me to be so full of joy, we will sing songs of him, even when we are old and are taken to be with him in heaven, but full of days! This gift however is not just for me, it is for all - as many as God the father calls. He promises that anyone who repents of their sins, will be forgiven and they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

If you believe this and want to make the Lord your song in a new birth, then pray this prayer to become a Christian:

*"God of heaven, I confess that I am a sinner and have been one since birth, but I have heard that you can make me new, and you sent your son Jesus to die for me. He rose again and it is he who can give me his Holy Spirit. Please forgive me and welcome me into your Kingdom, teach me how to follow you. In Jesus' name, Amen"*

Lord Jesus, come, Maranatha!

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<sup>i</sup> See: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5761375/Frail-old-lion-pictured-starving-death-cast-family-South-Africa.html>

<https://www.ugandarwandagorillatours.com/safaris-blog/what-happens-when-a-male-lion-dies.html>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/psalm-71/>