

Chapter III–26: *The Life of Old People*

Today we are going to talk about old people and old age. Old age has got a lot of talks in Dagbon here, and so I will start and talk to my extent, and I will talk about the part I know. Truly, the talk of old age is very big, and no one knows its end. We don't buy old age. It is God Who gives it. As for an old man, even God Himself said we should respect an old man. There are four types of people in this world God said we should respect: an old man, a chief, a rich man, and a maalam who has sense. These are the people God says we should give respect to. It is the one God likes whom He gives chieftaincy to, and it is the one God likes who has got sense, and it is the one God likes who becomes rich. And God has said again that the person He likes is the one who becomes an old person. If God doesn't like somebody, he won't become an old person. We don't buy old age. Old age is in the heart, and how old age comes, it reaches a person. As you grow old, you will know that old age is getting you. You will go to some place and they will give you respect, and you yourself will know that it is because of the old age that they give you the respect. And it is your work that is going to show that you are an old person. Anything that people want to do, if they don't see you, they won't do it. And any work you want to do, you will do it the way God wants, because it is God Who makes an old person. And if somebody should disregard old age and demean you, then he too will be demeaned; because if someone demeans an old person, he has demeaned God.

And how I'm telling you this, I have told you about our chiefs and how they get chieftaincy. If you see a chief whom God has not made a chief, and it is that he has forced himself to become a chief, no one will give him respect. There is no day he will talk and anyone will hear. He is for the town, and in that town, no one will fear him. And you will see someone who is not a chief, but he's a chief. And you can see a maalam who is very, very good, and he is fit to be a person, but God has not given him sense. You will see that his face is very, very handsome, but God has not given him sense. He can read very well, but he cannot say anything. But if it is a maalam who has sense, you will go to a maalam who has sense, and this maalam will talk to you and it will look like what an old man told you. And again, you can also look at a person who gets money. It is not force that gets money. And it is not "I'm very handsome" that lets someone get money. And it is not "I am fit to be a person" that gets money. And it is not "I know how to find" that gets money. And if you have a lot of sense, it is not that the sense will give you money. And it is not that you are a fool that will let you get money. It is the one whom God likes. You can see a rich person, and he doesn't look as if he

should be a rich person, but God gives money to him. You can see a rich man who is very short. You can see a rich man who will have only one eye. You can see a rich man who is a fool: even when he is going to count his money, he doesn't know how to count it; he will go to pay a debt and pay more than the debt. But God has given money to him. And so God, what He wants is what He does.

And so it is the same way with old age. The white hair and white beard do not make someone an old person. And someone may not be old, but he is old. His hair is not white and his beard is not white, but he talks the talks of old men and he does things that look like an old person has done them. As for his old age, it is God Who is making it and Who gives the tongue and the heart to that person. And so as God is giving, He says that these gifts, it is He God Who gives them. If God does not give you old age, and you force yourself that you are an old person, you will decrease yourself. Why do I say that? To us Dagbamba, there are many types of old age, but if you follow it, you will see that it divides itself into two. The white hair and white beard, that is old age, but it is not old age. Our old Dagbamba have a proverb: if you eat some medicine which says no one can knock you, you should sit down quietly. You shouldn't enter into troubles. If you interrupt somebody's trouble, people will beat you and the medicine will not be there. It won't work because you are taking it to enter troubles. And so if God makes you an old person, you should catch yourself, cool your body, and hold yourself. And then you will be an old person. God can give someone white hair, and this person will take his white hair to enter someone's talk, and children will be beating him. He is not holding himself; he enters people's troubles. And so we don't call such a person an old person; we call him a useless old man.

As for the person God has given old age, he holds himself well. Anyone who sees him will give him respect. He doesn't spoil things; he is always repairing things. If a good talk comes, he will do it and make it nice. If a bad talk comes, he will make it good. If he cannot do it, everybody will know that he entered it to make it good, but only it was more than he. If they bring some talk to him which is stronger than his strength, he will do to his extent, and people will know that he has done his extent. Even if some talk is there and he cannot do it, he will say he can do it. As he is saying that, he is not the one saying it: God says that you should do it, and He God will help you. If you don't take a load and put it on your thighs, you cannot carry it. You have to put it on your thighs before you will know if you can carry it or you cannot carry it. If you have not taken the load and you are sure you cannot carry it, then it is that you don't want to carry it. But if you come to take the load to go, and if you cannot carry it, what will happen? You will let it fall. And if it spoils, that is all. And there are some old people, those who take the load and put it on their thighs to see, they are the ones we call

old men. As for them, when they are inside anything, it doesn't spoil. If it is going to spoil, they will make it good. And they are the true old men. But if old age reaches you and you say you are not old, then you are not an old person.

And the town where an old person is, if some talk should come, the old men can gather and consult, and it is in it that we know old age. As there is an old person, there is a child, too. And it is the child that spoils, and an old man will repair it. If children should spoil the way of living in a town, sometimes the children can sit down to make it nice again; and if not that, then there will be an old person who will repair it. Spoiling in which way? As we are sitting in this world, there are two things which can bring quarrels. We can quarrel because of money or because of a woman. Let's say there is a quarrel among people, it is the old men who can sit down and make it good. In our Dagbon, when you are going to stop people from quarreling, you don't ask the meaning of the quarrel. If you ask what is under the quarrel, you are going to dig up the quarrel again. And so you ask, "Who is senior?" That is what you ask. If it is children who are quarreling, you will ask who is older; and when they show you who is older, it is the one who is older you will call. When there is trouble and even you the old men sit down, you will get someone who is older to sit with you. And in our Dagbon, the one we call an elderly person is the one when some serious talk comes, he swallows it. That is eldership, and there is no eldership apart from that.

And so if it is children who are quarreling, you will get the older one and tell the two of them that they should eat patience. And you will say, "Wrong comes from the younger child, and wrong comes because he does not know." And so they should eat patience. In our Dagbon, everyone knows that it is the younger person who does wrong. Even formerly when a small boy was sitting with old people, if someone should spoil the air, when he goes "*Br-rp!*", whatever happens, they will say it is the small boy who spoiled the air, and they should make him leave. And the child cannot say he is not the one. And if people quarrel and the younger one is not right and the older one is also not right, you will take the blame and give to the younger one, and the younger one cannot say anything. And you will take the older one and add him to you the old men, and tell him that he should hold patience because he is older. And as the child doesn't know, it isn't that he is useless. If you see old people in a group and you have all gathered to make something good, if an old person comes to call someone's child useless, then it is that old person who is useless. He doesn't want to make the talk good, and such a person is not an old person. And so some people have white hair but we don't call them old people. If the useless old men enter inside a quarrel, they will spread it. But as for the people God has given old age, any matter or talk or anything that is going to spoil, they will prevent it, that God should come and make it good.

What is old age? Old age is: your eye has seen bad and you say you have not seen. And your ear has heard, and you say you have not heard. And your legs do not go by heart, and you don't enter talks by heart. And you become a dumb person, and you don't talk by heart. Why is it so? If you want to say that your eyes see much, you cannot hold people. And if you want to say that your ears hear much, you cannot hold people. And if you say that no one will tell lies about you, you cannot hold people. And if you say that you have no patience, you cannot hold people. And it shows that God has not taken you to be an old person. And the reason why I say all this is because in our Dagbon, it is an old person who holds people. When you hear people say that somebody is holding people, he is an old person. The way an old person is, he holds people coolly. He doesn't want anyone to get annoyed with him. He doesn't want to hold them and there will be suffering on any of them. And he does not choose: he gathers all of them and he holds them. In every old person's house, there are good people, and there are people who do bad, too. There is someone who likes quarrels, and there is someone who is a thief, and there is someone who tells lies upon others. And as the good people and the bad people are all there together, it is because of an old person. If he wants to be looking at them and asking them questions, he cannot hold them. Old age has come to reach him, and he is there for all of them. Inside every talk, he is their old person. And so you don't buy old age, and you don't learn it, and you don't get it with strength. It is God's gift.

And even, on the part of God, God can even like a person, but if God has not given him old age, he cannot hold people. If you see someone who is old, and he is fit to be a person, but if he doesn't have patience and his heart is not a heart that can hold people, then he is not an old person. There is a rich man you yourself know in this town, and he is very old, but he doesn't give himself respect; and so he doesn't look like a rich man and he doesn't look like an old man. His house is very nice, and he has given birth to many children, but if you go to his house, you won't see any child there. It is not that a time will come when you will go to his house and see a child. He has beaten all of his children and they have run away. They won't come near him. Some have gone to hire rooms, and some have built houses. And some have given birth to children and even grandchildren, and they are old. And you will ask this man's children's children about their grandfather, and they will not know him. If a person is old, and his holding of everything is spoiling, such a person is not an old man. He has given birth to children and he has money, but he is not a family head.

In Dagbon here, it is an old person who is a family head. And what we call old age and what we call a family head, if it is following the way, you will see that it becomes one. But truly, it is not the time a person was brought forth that will

make him the family head. Someone will be very, very old, and he will force himself to be the family head; and they will not give it to him. They know that they cannot come to him to consult him, and if they cannot consult him and he will hold people, then the family will spoil. And so the way that old age separates, it is the same with the family head. There can be somebody and his beard is white but his heart is not white, and whatever happens, he will not be an old person. Old age is in the heart, and it will be in the heart before it will come out to the open. And so the heart, and patience, and holding people, all of this is inside old age. Old age is like somebody who has money and puts it in a room and comes out and says he has no money: whatever happens, the money will come outside and say that this person has money.

And it is old age which will come out and a family will do work. That is why I said that when an old person is inside every talk, and he is there for everybody, then it is his work that will show that he is an old person and he is fit to be the family head. If it is a wife they have taken, he is the one they will consult. If it is a naming they are going to perform, if they don't see this old man, they cannot perform it. If it is a funeral, it is the same. In every area, when somebody dies or when somebody gives birth, and we want to gather and pray prayers, there are old men, and if you don't see these old men, you cannot do the work. Sometimes an old person will not be free and cannot come, and he will take his mouth and talk; and you will take what he said to the gathering. He does not come, but his mouth has shown that an old person is there. And so it is his old age that you have taken to do the work. And on the part of being the family head, the typical Dagbamba also have something, because it is the family head who does the work of the god of the family. And so with the typical Dagbamba, if an old man is sitting in his mother's house, then he is not an old person. Unless the children give old age to him, he has no way to perform the sacrifice. But if he is sitting in his father's house, and his father's children are there and his uncle's children are there, and his brother's children are there, as old age has reached him, he is there for all of them. And so the typical Dagbamba have this on the part of old age and the family head.

If old age reaches a person, and he is the old person in an area, whether the people there are the same family or not, as they are all living together in the same area, he is their old person. When they want to consult about anything, they will consult him. And any talk that is bad, he will remove them from it. In Dagbon here, we have nothing bad apart from someone who goes to collect someone's wife, or someone who goes to steal and they catch him. And if they have caught the fellow, they will ask, "Who is for you? Who is for you?" Whatever happens, because the old man is the old person in the area, that fellow will say that this old

man is for him. When he was going to do the bad thing, he didn't tell the old man, and the old man didn't know of it, but they will take it and come and put it on him. And they will tell this old man, "Your child has gone to steal, and we have caught him." Whether or not the thief is in his family, the old man will never say that he is not for the child. And if it comes to show that the one they caught is his grandson, or his nephew, or his brother, the old man will not refuse. As they are all sitting in the same area, every young boy is his grandson. When they come and tell him that so-and-so is his grandson or his child, it makes his heart white. And it is because of the old age that has reached him. It is because of the old age and the respect God has given him that he has agreed that he knows the bad person.

And if it is some talk that will go to the chief's house, he is the one who will go. If it is stealing, in the olden days it was to the chief's house they used to go. This old man will lead them, and when they go, the chief will say, "Because of the old age of so-and-so, I will leave this fellow, and he shouldn't do that again." If it is stealing, that is what the chief will tell him. And if the chief would get four cedis inside the case, because of the old age they can tell him to pay two cedis. And some time ago, if a thief had no money, they will say they should whip him with the whip we call *barazim*, twelve strokes, or twenty strokes, or forty strokes; but because of the old man, they will say they will not whip him, and they will leave him. The old man did not tell the boy to steal, but it is just because he says he knows the child. And if it is that someone in his area goes to collect somebody's wife, because in our way of living somebody can go and do that, they will say, "This old person's grandson has gone to collect this fellow's wife," or "This old person's son," or "This old person's brother." And when they go to the chief's house, this old person will agree to lead them; and he will say, "It is somebody who holds people who does wrong. If you don't have people, will you do wrong? If there is a house and there is nobody in the house, will death go to that house? Death does not enter an empty house." And so the old person, whatever happens, he will collect it. And if the chief was going to say something, because of the old man he will stop everything. And so if you hear that bad has come, it goes to someone who holds people. And if it is something good that comes, it goes to someone who holds people.

And so an old person has no rest any day. He has no rest because he might not know of some bad thing, and they will take it to give to him. And he cannot refuse it. A stranger can come and enter somebody's house, and they might not bring him to greet this old man. Maybe this stranger will get stomach sickness and die, or get head pains and die. Whatever happens, they have to go and tell the chief, and they will take the name of the old man and go, and they will say that the old man has sent them. And they will go to the chief's house before they will

come and tell the old man, “We have done wrong to you, and this is the wrong we have done to you. A stranger has come to meet us, and he had head pains and died. And we could not stop going to the chief, and so we have taken your name to tell him. And so we have told lies upon you.” As I have told you that if you are an old person, you shouldn’t say that no one will tell lies upon you, is this not it? This is one of the lies they will tell upon an old person. Did the old person know of the stranger? Did he know of their going to the chief’s house? Did he know what they talked there? They said that it was the old person who told them to go to tell the chief. And whatever happens, the old person will collect it. When God makes someone an old person, if he doesn’t know something and they give it to him, he will agree and say he knows it. If he says he doesn’t know it, then he’s not an old person. And if it is that they talk and say bad about somebody, an old person doesn’t know how to do that. It is people who know how to tell lies upon somebody.

And even according to our custom, if you see that what an old person says is coming to be lies, you don’t mouth-argue. If you do that, you have given him shame. And so if you put it down that someone is an old person, then he is an old person. It is because the respect of an old person is so much. And God has given him the respect, and you are living together. And the respect of an old person is so much that if a stranger should come to your area, and there is an old person, you will take this stranger and go and greet the old man before you will even take him to greet the chief. And sometimes you won’t even take the stranger to greet the chief. You don’t know tomorrow, but as you have greeted the old man, whatever happens, you will not get a worrying talk.

And so it is old age that lets someone hold people, and somebody who holds people is an old person. And that is how we live in Dagbon here. If you are an old man and you have your house, the number of people you have are there. And if you are not an old man and you have your house and your children, then you are an old person in your house. You have your house and you have your wives, and you are giving birth to children, and you are holding them and they are giving you respect, and some of your family will come to be consulting you: has your old age not come? You are an old person in your house. All your people will respect you because you feed them. If not you, they cannot get food to eat anywhere. And so the person who gives you food to eat, you see him as your old person. Even if you are not an old person, if you have your house, the respect your children will give you is there. And it is you who has searched for the respect, and they are giving it to you. You don’t let them suffer on the part of clothes. If someone wants to get a wife from outside and bring to the house, there will be no suffering inside it. If he is going to search for a wife, it comes from you the one who has got the house to

be holding your children. As for all of them, they will be looking at you; they will not look at any other person. And as these children are looking at you, you will also look at the old man who is in front of you. Because if you are somebody, there is somebody who is more than you. And so old age, old age, its talk is too much. When you and your people eat today and tomorrow and you are all satisfied, whenever you come out and shout, then you are an old person in your house, and you are a chief in your house, and you are a rich man in your house. Anything that happens, your people know only you. If you have been going out to borrow money to come and feed them, they know only you. Even if you have been stealing and feeding them, and no one has caught you, your people know only you. Have you seen? If you are not an old man and you have your house, you are an old man. And so every talk about old age has got its extent.

And so in our Dagbon here, it is an old man who holds people in the house. And if this old man is very, very old, it is his children who will farm for him and give him, and work and give him. What they get, they will give it to him, and he will be feeding the house and holding everyone in the house. A child has no way to say that he is feeding the house. As they are living together, whatever happens, the old person is for them. And so it seems as if his children are looking after him, but we don't say that. As he is an old person, he is holding them, because if there is no old person, there is no living together. And if it comes to a time that this man dies and leaves his wife and children, you will see that they will find another old person, maybe this man's brother or maybe among themselves, and they will take him to be their old person. If they don't do that, their way of living will spoil. But if they get an old person to be for them, if any talk comes, he will do its work, and if any bad talk comes, he will make it well.

And on the part of a woman whose husband has died and left her with children, and her children also have children, she will stay in the house. And all the children will be respecting this old woman because of the suffering she was suffering in her husband's house. When a man is feeding children, a woman is also feeding children. It can even happen that a man will not have money, and it is this woman herself who will be feeding them. And so if a woman has children and the husband dies and is not there, leaving her alone, if God lets the children get, they will give her respect like the respect they would have given the father if he were alive. And if the children do not get, they will still respect her up to their extent. There is no way for anyone to say he will not respect her. They will respect her because when they were young, she was suffering for them. Even if her cowife's children are there, and her cowife is not there — let's say she's dead or she has gone out and gone to another house — and she and her cowife's children are all gathered in the one house, they are all going to respect her because

she was also suffering for all of them. And this old woman, all her grandchildren will respect her. Even her husband's brothers who are in other towns, some of them can come and give her respect. And their respect shows that she has given birth to children, and so it is good for her husband's brothers to respect her so that the children will also see it. This is how they respect the old woman.

And as for a woman, if you don't respect her, it has got some talk. If a woman has given birth to children, and the children don't respect her, she has some something she can say so that all of them will die. It's like a curse. If she says it, it will finish all of them. How a woman's mouth is, if a woman gives birth to children and the children are not doing good works to her, she can tell them, "What you are doing against me, if I talk, it will eat you." Someone will have a mother and fear her. As I have told you that in Dagbon, we don't play with our mother's house, and we fear the mother's house. There are some people who will give respect to an old woman in the house because of this talk.

And so on the part of a woman who has given birth to children, this talk is very, very strong. I have told you that in Dagbon here, there are three people we fear inside the family. You see your mother; you see your mother's brother; you see your father. We fear their mouth, and we fear for them to find our fault. If they find your fault, and it is not that you are able to beg them to leave your fault, then when they are not there again, nothing of yours will stand. And in Dagbon here, it's like that up to now. When such people become old, we will give them respect because of the suffering they suffered for us, and we give them respect because of their old age. And we will hear their mouths. And we won't allow them to suffer.

And there is something again on the part of an old woman who has never given birth to children. If her husband is not there, there are many people who will keep her in the house. And in the family, they won't say that she has not given birth. If she is holding a good way of living, and she was doing good works for her husband's brothers, and good works for all the children, then everyone in the house will be looking at her the way they were looking at their own mother and father when they were alive. And she will get a lot of respect, and we have that in our families.

But if an old woman has not got good character, and she has not given birth, they will leave her useless. There are some people like that: no matter how they respect her, she will take her mouth and be saying talks and following them. And you will see that the children will be running away. Sometimes they can run away and leave their old mother, and she alone will be sitting in the house, and she won't see the respect. Some old women are like that, and they have their houses and they sit there. And it is such a woman's character and her work that show that

she should be like that. She is just like the useless old man I talked about. As for such an old woman, her matter is hard. Someone who has not given birth and also has bad character, it is always night for her. She is like a blind person, because as for a blind person, it's always night every day. This is its way.

And so on the part of old age, there are differences between a man and a woman, because a woman's heart is different than a man's heart. There is a proverb that says, "A woman cannot cut off the head of a snake." If a woman says she is the head of a house, if a snake comes to enter the house, will it be the woman who kills it? And what it shows is that there are some works which a woman cannot do. A woman cannot talk a talk that will stand. If she talks today, and she says it is true, getting to tomorrow, if some talk should follow behind it, she will deny her talk and say that she didn't say it. That's why I told you that a woman is like a watch: if you have a watch and you hold it and say that you trust your watch, maybe someday you will see that you don't trust your watch again. If a woman does something good now, in a little time she will do something bad to spoil the good thing she did. And so in our Dagbon, we say that a woman does not become old, and if you look in any town to see the women who are old and holding people, and you also look to see the men who are holding people, you will see that the men are many more than the women. It's not because of anything. It is the heart. Old age is holding people, and there is an old person inside everything, and so women too have old people. But the old age of a man is more than the old age of a woman. A man will be old and will hold people, but a woman does not be old and hold people.

And truly, how the old age of a woman is, a woman whose husband has died can sit in the husband's house and hold people, but if old age reaches a woman like that, and it is coming to be the family head, she will take it and give it to the man who is following her. And so a woman does not become a family head. No matter how sensible a woman is, from the time she was a child in her father's house until the time she has married and become old, a woman remains in a man's house. And I have never heard anyone say, "This woman is the family head." And so some women may be family heads, but they cannot do its work and it will be following the way. A woman cannot talk and people will hear, but a man can talk and they will hear. If it is the giving of a gift, and she says she will take her granddaughter to give to a man, they will get a man to add himself to her before they will give the girl out. But men can gather and give a girl to somebody, and there will be no woman among them when they sit. If you see a woman who is a family head, then it means that she is either a *Magaazia* or a *Jinwara*. As for her, she sits. She sits in her house, and her children and her grandchildren will gather in her house with her. But even when they gather like that and something happens

on the part of the family, they are going to search for a man. Or if it is old age talks, they will search for a man. Whatever the old age of a woman, she cannot talk anything and it will catch on the part of the way of living of the family. And so in our Dagbon, a woman does not become family head.

In Dagbon here, if a woman becomes the family head, and any talk comes, if it is sickness, or death, or madness, or whatever happens, people will say that it is the woman who has killed the fellow. People will say, “Can’t you see that they have taken a woman to be the family head? She will eat and finish the whole family.” And so a woman does not become old to us; people fear women because of the medicines they have. Some old women here becomes witches, and so we fear women who become old because they kill people. That is why a woman does not become the family head. Does a wolf eat the butcher’s chieftaincy? This is how it is. If a goat is missing, they say that a wolf has caught it; if a cow is missing, they say that a wolf has caught it. How can a wolf eat the butcher’s chieftaincy? Whatever medicine a man has, we have never heard that a man has taken medicine to kill somebody. If a man takes a knife to cut and kill somebody, it will go to the chief’s house; but if somebody dies in a family and it goes to the chief’s house, they will call soothsayers, but we have never seen a soothsayer look and catch a man.

And so an old woman does not become an old person to us here. But if it is family talks, I can say that women know a lot. And truly, an old woman can show her grandchild a lot about the family. A woman doesn’t forget. If a woman brings forth twenty children, she knows the day and the month each of the children was born. Even if she doesn’t write, she knows. But it is only a few of the men who don’t write who will know that. And so the women talk a lot about the family, and they show the children much about it. And I have said that although old women do not become family heads, they have their respect. And you yourself have seen it. The house where you stayed for some time, Alhaji Iddi’s house, you have seen how Alhaji Iddi respects his mother. Alhaji Iddi’s father suffered for Alhaji Iddi, and he suffered to get a house, too. And the time Alhaji Iddi was coming to be strong, his father died. And Alhaji Iddi’s mother is there. And so there is a way for Alhaji Iddi to do for his mother. All the benefits and respect he would have been giving his father, Alhaji Iddi has taken all of it and given to his mother. And you know, giving birth to children is just like playing the lottery: you don’t know who will gain from the children. And so Alhaji Iddi, and all his brothers and sisters, it was the mother and father who were suffering for them. And now Alhaji Iddi’s mother is there, and they are giving her respect. And so this is how it is.

And there are some Dagbamba, if they have their elder, to leave him without food for even one day is not there. As the old person wears clothes, there

will be no dress of his that is torn. If his something tears today, they will give him again. On the part of food, some people raise guinea fowls and catch them and give to their elders. They will get meat and put it on a stick like a kebab, and they will put it on fire, and they will give him. That is an old person's food. When they make soup, it will be sweet. As the old person is eating the sweet food, he will be praying to God for those people who are giving this food to him, and those people will not become useless. If you do that for an old person, if he is not there again, even if you don't have a child, God will get somebody from your family, and that child will do for you what you were doing for the old person.

With us Dagbamba, and how we live, there are some people who are there and they don't have a child, and you will go to his house and think he has many children. No one will show you that he has not got a child in that house. If somebody is not living like a human being, it shows that he has no child, and we Dagbamba, we fear, "This fellow: he has no child." The family can gather their children, and the children will be up to ten, and it will look as if he has given birth to all of them. On the part of his eating and his clothes, it will look as if he has given birth to children. If that person is not there again, the money they will take to perform his funeral will be very great. To us Dagbamba, somebody who eats suffering on the part of family talks, and he has no child, and those who have given birth to us have given us to him, we are going to perform his funeral on the part of God and the suffering that fellow suffered for us and for the dead people. And we Dagbamba have that. Even in the olden days, we had that, and coming to these modern times, it's still there.

And we Dagbamba have some talk. Truly, when we have our old person, it is not all of us who give him and he will eat plenty. There is an old person somewhere, and the eating is worrying him. When that old person is not there again, we will come and spoil the thing we are going to spoil. The food we were supposed to give him, we will spoil it, and it will be more than a thousand times the amount we were supposed to give him. When he was there, to get and eat was worrying him, and so if such an old person dies, we will buy cows and make his funeral, and say it is for the old person, even though when he was sitting down, to get meat to eat was difficult for him. Some Dagbamba are like that.

Let's say that today I give birth to my children, and among these children, none of them gives me things. If they get, it does not look as if I am a human being. It is poverty that is killing me. The children have, but they won't give me so that I will eat. They won't let their wives cook and carry a lot of food to give me to eat so that it will make me good. And they will be showing themselves that they are big men. Such children, on the part of their money, when their father is there, the money will be there. If their mother is there and she says some talk,

when he is not there again, the talk will eat them the way fire burns. In Dagbon here, it was there a long time ago, and even now, it is there. Everything has changed, but it is still working. Or if the father says, “If I also did that to my father or my mother, then you should do that to me. But if I didn’t do that to my father or my mother, then your eyes will come to see. What is behind my back, after me, your eyes will see it.” As for that, it is still there with us Dagbamba, and it is not something to argue about. If the father is not there, their living will be just like that: all their money will finish and leave them; they will give birth to children, and the children will not sit down even one day to look after them; the children will even run away and leave them. As they were sitting down and not doing anything for their father, their own children will pay back their debt. Such children, we don’t call them useless. We say that such children have paid back their father’s debt, the debt their father ate from their grandfather. In Dagbon here, it is still like that.

And so inside a family, if it is the talk of an old person, it doesn’t die. What an old person talks, he knows it. And as he knows it, he has not thrown it away. Whatever happens, if the family is a good family, even if that old person is not there, every day he is there. His work will not finish. It is like a book he has written. Anyone who takes the book will say that it was this person who wrote it. Here it is: is he dead? And so any family that is good, it will never finish. Every day, it is adding and increasing. It started like that a long time ago, and up to now it is still increasing. This is how it is.

And so old age has got a lot of talks. And what I am telling you, I’m going to join it and talk you about some of some of my elders in drumming and how their old age reached them. I have told you that it is God Who gives old age. An old person is not the one who has a white beard. A white beard is like a white horse: it has white hair but it is not old. This is how it is. And so it is good if I follow this talk to talk about our old people in our area here and in our drumming, and you will see how it separates.

As we are sitting down, and how old age comes, an old person is older than a child. An old person knows what was there yesterday and what was not there yesterday, and a child does not know it. But if someone is not older than a child, but he has heard the talks of yesterday, then he is older than a child. And so we have a proverb which says that a child who sits with old people is also an old person. You yourself, John, when you come to my house and we are sitting, if any person is coming to me to call a drummer, you have seen that he will call me his grandfather. Why does he call me his grandfather? We drummers have heard the talks of old people, and we talk the talks of old people. And what I am saying, there can be a drummer somewhere who can talk more than I about our drumming

or about our Dagbon chieftaincy, and such a person is an old person, because if he were not following old people, he would not have heard it. And so any person who talks about old things is an old person.

As for the talks about old age, everyone will know it to his extent. And I myself, as I am sitting, it seems that I am an old person. Why do I say that? There are many times when you come to my house and you see many people there. Some of them are older than I. Even inside my own family, those with whom I go to beat the drum, there are some who are older than I. And the people you see at my house, if it is that we are going to wrestle, some of them will put me down. And as for money, some of them have more money than I. And if it is handsomeness, some of them are more handsome than I. But if it is patience and holding people, maybe they don't have it more than I. Anything that comes on the part of the drumming we do, if it is for the town men or the town women, if not me, then me. Even if I go to somewhere and I'm not here, if they want to do some work on the part of drumming, they do the work at my house. If they drum and get money, they will come to my house before they will share it. And so that is old age. But I have not chosen myself for them to make me an old person. They themselves have said I am an old person. And I myself don't know what has brought it. Am I an old person? The heart: that has made me an old person. And patience: that has made me an old person.

As for this sharing of money among the drummers, since I entered it, it is about thirty years now. I told you that it was my senior brother Sheni who put me inside the sharing of the money. He himself said it. He was beating the drum and singing, and I was following him and beating the *gungɔŋ*, and he said I should be sharing the money. And I said that I was a child and I could not share it. And he said he had watched everybody and it is I who can share it. And it is thirty years now. Sometimes, as we are farming, I go to the farm and stay there for some days; they will go to beat the drum and come to share the money, and they will quarrel and beat one another inside it. But in all the thirty years I have shared the money, I have never seen anyone quarrel. As we are sitting now, if we go to Savelugu, we all have our houses there, and I will go to my side. And the Savelugu drummers, if they want, they can grow white beards, but when we meet and we beat the drums, I am the one who will share the money to them. Sometimes I will say I cannot do it, and they will say I should do it. Even at Nanton, my home town, it is like that there, too. When I get there, I am an old man. Even my brothers who are senior to me, when I get there and anything on the part of old age comes, I am the one who does it. And it is they who tell me I should do it. And all this shows that I am not the one who has given old age to myself. It is God Who has given it to me. If God has made you small and you want to be big, you will lose. And if God

makes you big and someone says he will make you small, whatever he does, he cannot make you small. And so old age, it is God Who gives it. It is not the one who has a white beard.

And so an old person, if you sit for five minutes with an old person, it's better than sitting for five hours with someone who is not old. An old person will tell you yesterday's talks. When he talks about the olden days' talks, he has seen some of them and he has not seen some of them. And he will tell you tomorrow's talks, and the talk that is to come and he tells you it will happen, he himself has not seen it. But what is happening today, an old person will sit down and watch it, and he will know that in some time to come it will be more than that. Inside the watching of old people, in Dagbon here, we have that. And what we have seen is that an old man's talk does not remain useless. I have told you that it is old age you will take to do work. And what you take to do work does not die. And so the mouth that an old man takes to talk, and he talks tomorrow's talks, you will see that the talk does not die. And so old age does not die. Old age is like talking. Talking does not die. If talking were dying, nobody would have sense. And old age comes to resemble this. What an old man talks, if it is tomorrow's talks, you will see that it will come and stand.

And what I am saying, I have seen it in my family, on the part of my brothers, Sheni and Alhaji Adam. And I think I have already told you much about them, and I will join their talk to the talk of old age. How an old man lives, Alhaji Adam's father Alhassan became old, and everybody knew that he was old. In the area where he was living, every old man and every child liked him. All the children in the area used to eat food in his house in the night. Where the vegetable oil mills are now, that was his farm; and any time he took his hat and was going to the farm, there would be about thirty children following him. And among those children, maybe about eight or ten would be his housechildren. It was because of his old age and because he was good, that was why the children used to follow him. He didn't know how to shout on a child, or even upon an old man. The way he used to talk to the children, that was how he used to talk to an old man. He didn't know how to speak to somebody and the fellow would become annoyed. And the reason why the children used to follow him to the farm was that when they got to the farm, they would not do any work. Those who were doing the work were already there. And these children, he would let them roast yams, and the children would eat the yams and even leave some to bring home. And his medicine was that when he came to the farm, there was a mango tree, and he would come and sit under the mango tree. And the children would gather around his waist. Some of them would be roasting yams, and some would be wrestling and putting one another down in front of him. And what I'm saying, it's not that

somebody said it and I heard it. My eyes saw it, because my brothers and I were the ones who used to make the yam mounds and sow the yams. When we were in the farm and our father was coming, we would see the number of children and just wonder. And it was just because his heart was always white.

And the same way that my drumming started at Savelugu, his town was Tolon. He was the son of the chief of drummers at Tolon, Tolon Lun-Naa Mushee. And he was called Alhassan Lumbila. And Alhassan gave birth to Alhaji Adam, and Alhassan was Sheni's senior father. Sheni's real father gave Sheni to Alhassan, and so Sheni was with him. And Alhassan Lumbila was our oldest drummer. He was in this Tamale here, and from here to Choggo to Sagnerigu to Lamashegu and even up to Kanvili, he was the senior of all the drummers. And even in Tolon, whenever anything happened, they would come and take him and go. If it was that a drummer died, if Alhassan didn't go, they wouldn't bury the fellow. And it was because he was a very, very old person, and he used to respect himself, and God gave him respect, too; and so he was the family head.

Alhassan had four wives at the time he died. He had six wives and two of them left him, and the other four were there when he died. And I can count them. Alhaji Adam's mother was senior, and she was called Fatima. Shebli's mother was next, and she was called Shetubila, little Shetu. Fuseini Jeblin the guṅṅoṅ beater's mother was third, and she was called Suyri. And Yisifu Alhassan, the one also beating guṅṅoṅ, his mother Ayishetu was the fourth; she was the one who used to carry water, and so she was the Komlana. They were all there when he died. If Alhassan had not been a good person, he would not have been able to hold four wives until he died. And I think in my heart that when Alhaji Adam's father died and they performed his funeral, his children and grandchildren were one hundred and thirty. I'm talking only of the ones his penis gave birth to and they also gave birth to. And I think that up to now, they will be more than two hundred, going to three hundred. And so his own children and his children's children — not his brother's children or his sister's children — if you want to count them, you will be counting them and become tired and stop. And it was because of his old age and his white heart that he gave birth to children like that, and he was holding them up to the time he died.

It was Alhaji Adam's father Alhassan who came and sat in this Tamale before this town knew drummers. Drummers used to come and go, but there was no drummer sitting in this town. It was Alhassan who sat here before other drummers also came to sit in this town, and it was his white heart and his good works that brought them here. And the time that he was here, that was the time of Gukpe-Naa Iddi, and Alhassan was here before the Gukpeogu drummers followed

Gukpe-Naa Iddi. The Gukpe-Naa's elder drummer is called Toombihi, and Toombihi and the Gukpe-Naa's chief drummers, it was their children who used to go to the chief's house early in the mornings to wake him from sleep. And we were not going early mornings to wake Gukpe-Naa Iddi from sleep. As we were not doing that, sometimes we would go to the market to beat the drums. And one time, Toombihi told the police to drive us from the market because we were not waking the chief from sleep, and so we were not praising the chief and giving respect to the chief. And the police drove us from the market and we came home. When Alhassan saw us and we told him what happened, Alhassan didn't go anywhere apart from Toombihi's house to take him to the chief's house. And Alhassan said he wouldn't ask anyone apart from the chief whether it was he the chief who had given Toombihi the way to drive he Alhassan's children from the market or whether it was Toombihi himself who had given himself that strength. And Gukpe-Naa Iddi could not say that it was he. And he said that he didn't even know that we were not coming early mornings to wake him from sleep, and that any time he heard the cry of the drums he thought that it was all of us who were beating the drums. And so he didn't know that no one was praising him. I was there myself, because I was in the market when they caught us, and I went along to the chief's house. And when we came home, it was Toombihi himself who came and begged Alhassan and said he would not do that again. And that is old age.

Alhaji Adam's father Alhassan was there like that. When he was alive, if any drummer came to this town, if it was a festival day and they came to beat the drums, when they were going home, whether Alhassan saw them or not, they would take some money from the drumming and give it to a child to come and give to him. And if it was a funeral, and drummers came from other towns to perform the funeral, they would count money for him. We have that in Dagbon here. Just because he was the first person to be a drummer here, and somebody was coming from another town to eat the sweetness of this town on the part of being a drummer, they could not eat behind him, even if his eyes have not seen them. It was not because of anything. It was just that he was a good man, and he was an old man, and they gave him respect. This is how the work of an old person is.

And the way of living that Alhassan had, Alhaji Adam is also having it. If you have your way of living and you bring forth your child, or they give a child to you to bring up, whatever happens, the child will take your way of living. This child who comes to you while you are alive, and even if you come to be dead, and if he's actually your blood, he will get your way of living. If he doesn't get all of it, at least he will get part. If a child is given to you to bring up, and you die and are not there, you won't bring up anybody, but if you are there, the child will get

your way of living. And truly, if you are the old person in your area, every child will get some of your way of living. And the way Alhassan's heart was always white with people, Alhaji Adam's heart is also white like that. And truly, Alhaji Adam's heart is white like that even into his stomach. Whenever Alhaji Adam sees anybody, his heart is white. Alhaji Adam is the kind of person who, if you have a quarrel with him, within fifteen minutes he will forget about everything. That is all. Even if you don't talk to him, he will talk to you. He will just come and bring some talks to you as if nothing has happened. That is how he is. And so Alhaji Adam does not take any talk to put inside his stomach. Even if you do him wrong, he will tell you on that day that you have done him wrong, and when he tells you, that is all. That was how his father was. When Alhassan shouted, inside his shouting, you would see that he was laughing. He didn't want to say something and you would be annoyed. That is how Alhaji Adam is too, because when an elephant brings forth its child, even if the child is not up to the elephant itself, it will be up to a hippopotamus.

And so Alhaji Adam has collected his father's ways. And I have told you that in this Dagbon here, if it is age, even some time ago, if you asked anybody which drummers are old, you would hear the name of Alhaji Adam. And I think there were two drummers in the whole Dagbon who were older than Alhaji Adam, and they were friends of Alhaji Adam, too. They were Dimabi Lun-Naa and Tampion Sampahi-Naa, and even if you asked them, they would tell you that Alhaji Adam is older than they. I think you know Dimabi: when you reach Tolon, it is behind the Tolon-Naa's sitting shed, about one-and-a-half miles; Dimabi is a small village near Tolon. Dimabi Lun-Naa was Alhaji Adam's junior father, and he was senior to Adam. And Tampion Sampahi-Naa was a Tampion drummer, and he died a few years ago. And Dimabi Lun-Naa is also dead; he died in 1979. And I think that those who are remaining now and they are very old are only Alhaji Adam and Nanton Lun-Naa. But as for Alhaji Adam, we don't look upon him as a very old man. He has collected his father's ways, but he has never collected his father's work for even one day.

Why is it so? It is not because of anything. Alhaji Adam's father used to tell him certain things, and today we have seen some of them come true. Alhassan told Alhaji Adam that as he Alhassan is there and we were beating the drums to help him, that one day Alhaji Adam would be there and no one will beat the drum to help him. And today we have seen it all. And the talk that Alhaji Adam's father talked, if you ask to see which of Alhaji Adam's children from his own penis is beating the drum, there is no one. Among his grandsons, there is no one. I am his brother; Sheni is his brother; Fuseini the gungon beater is his brother; Yisifu is his brother. Alhaji Adam does not have a son or a grandson who is

beating the drum. And if it were not that I am in the house, no one will beat the drum and help Alhaji Adam. They would give him, but it would not be enough for him. And you know Adam: any amount we give him, he will never be annoyed about it. But I can say that as we are sitting with our drumming, as Alhaji Adam's own child is not there and if I am not there, they will beat the drums and share the money, and if they give Alhaji Adam money, the money will not be enough.

I don't have to say what has brought it. Our Dagbamba have a proverb which says: they remove the white matter from the eye and show it to the eye. And the talk his father talked, is that not it? This is how it is. If you are praising or respecting somebody, you are looking at how he will come to die, and his children will also come to praise and respect you. They remove the white matter and show a person, "This is white matter." What is he going to take it to do? It is the same eye which is going to see it. It is not the ear that is going somewhere to hear it. It is eye-seeing. And so if you give respect to somebody and his children are there, these children themselves will know that, "As this person is respecting our father, if our father comes not to be there, we are going to respect this person." Or the father will say to his children, "As this person is respecting me, you have seen it. I am not the one who is going to say it." And so I have given you a proverb, and it is inside every proverb.

It is not lies I am saying. It was last Sunday they beat the drums and came, and I took money and gave to a child to go and give Alhaji Adam. And he sent someone to greet me and say that he has seen the cedis I gave the child to give him. And he said he was begging God for me. And he said to people that it is because I am there that they beat the drums and give him money, and he is benefiting. And apart from that, the respect they used to give him when his father was there, today that respect is not there again. And it was Alhaji Adam himself who said all this. And so what Alhaji Adam's father told him before he died, today we have seen all of it. In Dagbon here, of all the talk we fear, we fear the talk of an old man. When he is alive and he tells you something, what he talks does not eat you unless he dies. And so what Alhaji Adam's father told him, we have seen it.

And I can also say that Sheni has become like a chief. You see Alhaji Adam and Sheni. I have told you that they have the same grandfather. One man gave birth to Alhaji Adam's father and to Sheni's father, and Alhaji Adam's father was the elder. And so that is the relationship between them. And so it is Alhaji Adam's father Alhassan I have been talking about. And they gave Sheni to Alhaji Adam's father, and Sheni was living in Alhaji Adam's house. Now Sheni has built his own house, but in the past, he was in Alhaji Adam's house. And when I

first arrived here, I went to Sheni and I was with him, and I was beating the gungon. And Sheni suffered a lot for Alhaji Adam's father. If not those of us who are the children from that compound, nobody knows that Sheni was not the real son of Alhaji Adam's father. Those outside didn't know that Sheni was Alhassan's brother's son. And Sheni gave a lot of respect to Alhassan. It was Sheni who used to take us to Alhassan's farm. Sometimes, before it was daybreak and we would go to Alhassan's farm, we would meet Sheni already in the farm. And inside our drumming, there was a time when Alhaji Adam stopped drumming, and it was Sheni who used to beat the drum to help Alhassan. And Alhassan used to say that God should also allow, and someday Sheni would also get people who beat the drum and help him. And what Alhassan said, we have seen it again. Today, Sheni's children beat the drum and help him, and some of them are doing the white man's work, and they also help him. And Alhaji Adam's children are there doing the white man's work, and they help him, but Alhaji Adam's children don't help him the way Sheni's children help. And if it is respect, Sheni's children give him more respect. And it is all from Alhaji Adam's father, and if we look, we see that Sheni has also heard the talk of an old person.

And as Alhaji Adam has collected Alhassan's character, I can say that Sheni has also collected it. When Sheni sees a person and his heart is white for that person, his heart is white even up to his hat. Anything you want, if only Sheni can do it, he will do it for you. And you John, you yourself know Sheni's white heart. You yourself told me: Sheni can come to greet you, and after greetings you will say that you will accompany him a little on the way back to his house but you will be talking and even come to reach there, and when you are coming back he will also accompany you back to your house again. You have seen it. And if you try to find what brings it, what will you get? You will not know what is happening. And if you watch it, you will only get to know that it is just that you respect one another and your hearts are white for one another. As for my brother Sheni, he gives respect.

You just look at Sheni: from the time we were just starting our work, sometimes Sheni has been giving you some small money when he sees you, and you would be coming to me to show me the money Sheni gave you. And I told you that when Sheni gives you money, it is good, because he is showing you that he is the elder. It is his old age he is showing you. Truly, the talk about old people here is plenty. You know, as for old men, whenever you go and greet them, even if you are greeting them early in the morning and day has not yet broken, he will ask his wife to fetch you water to drink. Even though it may be very cold and there is no need of water, he will invite you to take water. And how will you drink water at that time? And so a Dagbana or anybody, it is just by force

that you will take a little water into your mouth. You don't want the water, but it's not that you don't like it. And so you will just put it into your mouth. As you have taken the bowl to your mouth, he will not know whether you are drinking or not. Your throat will be rolling up and down, and then you will throw the rest of the water from the bowl. That is all. At that point, the old man will get to know that, truly, you are a person. And so sometimes you will give somebody a gift and he will also give you a gift. The last time we went to Yendi to greet Namo-Naa, didn't he give you a guinea fowl? It is money he used to buy it. And when you last went to Yabyili, didn't the tindana just give you a sheep? And so it is just like the way Sheni gives you money: you don't refuse it. And so with old people, their everything is just respect.

Even I myself, as I am sitting, if Sheni does not see me for a week or ten days, he will come to my house and ask of me. But I am following Sheni, and if it is according to the way, I should be going to his house. Why should I be going to his house? He is older than I; he has got more children than I; and he is the one I followed to beat the drum. And so I should be going there. It's not that I say I won't go. But it just happens that the number of times he comes to my house, I don't go to his house like that. And the reason why Sheni comes, it is because of his old age, and it is because he has heard the talk of the old people. Our old men say that if a small boy does not visit an old man, then the old man should visit the child. If it were to be the useless old person I have talked about, he would say, "If a child does not visit me, what do I want from him?" But an old man, if old age is really with him, he knows that if an old person feels pity for a child and gives respect to a child, then the child will also give respect to the old person. And it is a child who will get up to hold an old person. And so Sheni has patience, and he was giving respect to his senior father; and if it were not that it was an old person who brought him up, Sheni would not have that way of living.

And so Sheni is holding old age, and I can even say that Sheni is older than Alhaji Adam. The old age that Sheni is holding, Alhaji Adam does not hold it. And the respect that Sheni gets, Alhaji Adam does not get it. Alhaji Adam has collected some of the works of his father, but Sheni has collected more. Sheni and Alhaji Adam, according to our custom, when we are beating the drum, they go round and stretch their hands, and people give to them. And as people give to them, Sheni gets more than Alhaji Adam. Sheni gives a lot of respect outside, and people give him respect outside, too. And Sheni knows people, too. He knows those people whom Alhaji Adam knew in the old days, and he knows the present day people, too. Sheni has not stopped beating the drum on market days, and it is this market drumming that shows us people. The people Alhaji Adam knew in the olden days, now some of them have given birth to grandchildren. And today

Sheni knows their children and their grandchildren. And those who knew Alhaji Adam also know Sheni. And today's people know Sheni but they don't know Alhaji Adam. Do you see? If Alhaji Adam and Sheni go to a place, and if it is the getting of gifts, Sheni will get more than Alhaji Adam. And Sheni has more respect, and he has more old age, too.

And so Alhaji Adam has not collected his father's work. And it's not that Alhaji Adam is not great. If you also go to ask Sheni, he will tell you that Alhaji Adam has got a lot of respect. But the respect that Alhassan was having, Alhaji Adam has only been able to get a part of it. And it is not anything that has decreased Alhaji Adam. It is his father's mouth. And what brought it is this talk that has come now to Dagbon, and we are divided into two. Alhaji Adam has entered into it, and he is on the side of the Andani house. Alhaji Adam's wife is Naa Andani's granddaughter, Naa Andani's last, true granddaughter. There are some people who have Naa Andani's granddaughters and they don't mind the talk, but Alhaji Adam has entered it, and it has decreased his respect. And what has made Alhaji Adam like that is an old man's talk.

All the works Alhassan was able to get, it was because he was not choosing. All the drummers in this town, and all the drummers in all the towns I have said, Alhassan took all of them to be his children. And the way any drummer used to greet Alhassan, drummers can come to this town today and not come to greet Alhaji Adam. Alhaji Adam is standing on the part that they are not there, and so their eyes are not satisfied with him. And we who are here and helping Alhaji Adam are standing on the part of the Abudu house. We are Alhaji Adam's people, but his heart is not with us. Alhaji Adam is elder to all of us in drumming, and so how is it that your heart will like something and somebody's heart will also like it, and you will come together to do its work, but you will not gain from it? Alhaji Adam himself has even been telling us that drumming is where everything of his is, but he does not get the benefit of it. If you go to Alhaji Adam's house and ask him how many people are helping him, he will say that we are the people who help him. And what we give him, he is never annoyed. Any amount of money he gets, he will not be annoyed. But it is not enough. Apart from the drumming, and what has decreased Alhaji Adam's respect: most of the rich men or the big men in Dagbon are from the Abudu house; they were all Alhaji Adam's friends, and now Alhaji Adam is not on their side. Will it stand? Will you get and give to your enemy?

What has brought all this is Alhassan's mouth. The talk Alhaji Adam's father said, that is it. And so it is not Alhaji Adam's fault. Alhassan was not choosing people. And truly, as for old age, it was with him. But Alhaji Adam has not collected his father's work. Alhassan told Alhaji Adam that one day Alhaji

Adam would no longer benefit from the drumming, and we have seen it. And so an old man's talk does not remain useless. When an old man says anything, it will happen. We see it, and it happens here like that. The talk Alhaji Adam has entered and it has decreased him, it is his father's talk that brought it. Do you see? No one dies without a reason. As for death, if someone dies, they will say that this thing killed him or that thing killed him. But even if it were not this thing or that thing, he will die. Because of death, no one is going to remain in this world. And so an old man's talk does not remain useless. This is how it is.

And I think I have talked to my extent, and we have finished the talk on old age. And the talk we have talked, it is going to benefit everybody. Somebody who is a Dagbana, or somebody who is a Ghanaian, or somebody from some other town, or those with white skins: if only they hear. Any person who is a person or a human being, and he talks from his mouth, and hears, and sees: when he reads this book, he will know that we have talked talks inside it. We haven't taken it to talk for only one person. And we haven't talked it for only one tribe. And we haven't talked it for only the black man's talks. Everybody's talk is inside it. If it is old age, everybody has got an old person. If it is on the part of children, everybody has a child. And it is also long-long-ago talks, in every tribe, there is something like that. And so this talk is everybody's talk. And it is also God Who says we should talk it. And it is also from you John, because somebody can have something good to sell and will not know how to sell it. And somebody will come, and wake him, and buy a little of it, and go, and it will come to benefit all of them. And so our talk is like that.