

# Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



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## The Old Paths

When the wheels start to fall off the social order, there's usually a plausible reason why.

The cure is available—but only if we have the humility to embrace it. And therein lies the problem.

*“Thus says the Lord: ‘Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, “We will not walk in it.”’”*  
(Jer. 6:16).

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This appeal was written to a generation going through calamitous times. Internally, their social order was disintegrating; there was “oppression in [their] midst . . . violence and plundering . . . grief and wounds” (v. 6-7). Externally, they faced a looming threat of invasion from a foreign power: “disaster appears out of the north, and great destruction” (v. 1). In the midst of this chaos, self-serving prophets fed the people a false hope, promising “Peace! Peace!”—when it was obvious there was no peace (v. 14). Their entire social structure was crumbling before their eyes, and they were powerless to prevent it: “Our hands grow feeble. Anguish has taken hold of us” (v. 24).

But all was not lost—at least, not yet. God assured them that relief was available, but it would come at a cost.

They would have to return to “the old paths” of God’s word, and walk in it. “Then you will find rest for your souls” (v. 16).

But for these people, that was asking too much. At heart they were “stubborn rebels” (v. 28) to whom the word of the Lord was an object of reproach (v. 10). Their devotion to sin was so complete, they no longer knew how to blush (v. 15). The *last* thing they wanted was some invisible deity telling them how to live their lives. So they rejected God’s offer: “We will not walk in it . . . we will not listen” (v. 16-17). With that rejection, their fate was sealed; God would bring calamity upon them, “the fruit of their thoughts” (v. 19).

The scenario described by Jeremiah in this chapter was not unique to ancient Judah. It is repeated every time a nation abandons the basic moral standard that undergirds civil society, and replaces it with godless hedonism and selfishness. No civilization can survive such an exchange intact.

We are witnessing such a transition in our own culture today. Large seg-

ments of our population have decided they are too smart for faith, and have abandoned God as the arbiter of right and wrong in their lives. The ripple effect of this mindset has already begun to bear fruit in a myriad of ways: the breakdown of the family, a declining work ethic, increased corruption in the upper classes, and a growing level of distrust and cynicism among the rest. We’re in trouble, and we sense it.

Yet we feign ignorance of the cause and cure. We know something is amiss, but we refuse to acknowledge any role that God’s moral standard might have in the matter. The mantra of our generation is, “We will not walk in it!” So the downward spiral continues unabated. There can be only one outcome.

The “old paths” are not merely “the way things were in grandpa’s day.” Truth be told, grandpa may have played a role in setting up the current climate of lawlessness. No, we have to go further back, all the way back to the simple standard of morality outlined in God’s word. Only there will we be able to find the rest our souls desperately seek.

— David King