

# Wings

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



September 17, 2017

## The Pessimist and Reality

Pessimism is not a minor character flaw, but a deep-seated inability to see the world as it really is. Changing that distorted perspective requires some serious heart surgery.

*"And he recognized it and said, 'It is my sons' tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces'" (Gen. 37:33).*

*"And they told him, saying, 'Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.' And Jacob's heart stood still, because he did not believe them" (Gen. 45:26).*



When Joseph was seventeen years old, his envious brothers plotted to rid him from their lives. They sold him into slavery, then doctored his tunic to make it appear he had been killed by a wild animal. Daddy Jacob bought the lie in a heartbeat. "Without doubt" Joseph was dead. He spent the next several years in a state of deep depression over his loss.

Thirteen years later, Joseph was the prime minister of Egypt. Through a curious sequence of events engineered by God (Gen. 45:8), the brothers were reconciled to him. They hurried back to Canaan to inform their father that long-lost Joseph was not only alive and well, but ruler of Egypt. To Jacob it sounded like a bad joke. "He did not believe

them," and it took a good deal of persuasion from his sons to convince him of the truth.

Jacob was quick to believe bad news, even though it was a lie, and was slow to believe good news, even though it was true. That's the classic definition of a *pessimist*.

Pessimists are gloomy and depressing to be around because they have a distorted view of reality. They see everything through a dark lens, and that negative perspective colors all their thinking and their interactions with others.

A pessimist is not someone who experiences an occasional "bad day" of sadness or discouragement. The pessimist lives in that state perpetually, regardless of what is going on in his life. Every hardship or difficulty is amplified into a grand narrative of his entire life. Even the good things that come his way are interpreted as further evidence that the deck is stacked against him ("It won't last"; "It's just the calm before the storm"; etc.). Those who try to bring encouragement into his life are brushed aside; no one can possibly understand

the depths of suffering he is experiencing! (Notice that Jacob "refused to be comforted" when his children tried to console him, v. 35). All the world must bend to his twisted view of reality.

How can a pessimist overcome his negative outlook on life? It requires a serious re-education program. The eighth chapter of Romans is a good place to start. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (v. 18). "All things work together for good to those who love God" (v. 28). "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (v. 31). "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (v. 37). These promises of God reveal a dimension of life that should sweep away the doom and gloom that infects our minds. Daily exposure to these promises can replace pessimism with optimism.

Satan wants us to believe the worst about this life, and will do everything he can to reinforce that perspective. Our challenge is to look past his lies and see life the way God intended us to see it.

– David King



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