

# Wings

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



April 15, 2018

## Why Societies Disintegrate

The decline and fall of societies—and personal lives—is tragic, but doubly so when we consider that God has already provided a simple diagnosis of the illness that brings it on.

*“My people are foolish, they have not known Me. They are silly children, and they have no understanding. They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge” (Jer. 4:22).*



The nation to whom God spoke these words was close to total collapse, but its people were blind to their fate. In this verse, God revealed four attributes of the people that sealed their doom.

First, the people were *intellectually bankrupt*: they were “foolish . . . hav[ing] no understanding.” In the book of Proverbs the words “fool” and “foolish” are used extensively to describe people who cannot see the connections between *behaviors* and *consequences*. The people in Jeremiah’s day were too sophisticated to give any consideration to how their decisions would play out in the long term. So when their choices blew up in their faces—as they inevitably did—they claimed ignorance of the root cause. People who cannot, through experience or observation, reason their way to a healthy lifestyle, deserve the label “foolish.”

Second, these people were *psychologically immature*: “they are silly children.” Other translations use adjectives like *thoughtless*, *stupid*, or *senseless*. The minds of children are not fully developed, so we do not fault them for being irrational in their thinking. That’s why they need parents in their lives. But what do you call *adults* who never outgrow that state of stunted mental development, whose decisions in all areas of life are guided by emotions and feelings rather than logic and common sense?

Third, these people were *morally confused*: they were “wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.” The very definition of good and evil as antithetical opposites was twisted like a pretzel into a muddled mess in which each person created his own morality, governed largely by his passions and appetites. Not surprisingly, the outcome almost always glorified depravity and scorned virtue. The result was a moral landscape dominated by distrust and brutality.

Finally, these people were *spiritually lost*: “they have not known Me.” This

was the root of all their other defects. Instead of God, they looked to their idols—both literal and metaphorical—to chart their way through life. The idols, of course, could not deliver the results they were looking for. By casting God out of their lives, they abandoned the only source of guidance that could have prevented the disaster they were creating for themselves. When the inevitable failures and setbacks smacked them in the face, they refused to re-evaluate their decision-making paradigm. Instead, they doubled down on their descent into hell, a hell of their own making.

If all of this sounds eerily familiar, it should. It is a disturbing portrait of the same intellectual, psychological, moral, and spiritual chaos that is undermining our own nation today. The craziness is not just happenstance, but the outcome of a deliberate series of choices, multiplied by several millions. The end result—total societal breakdown—is as foreseeable as melting snow on a warm winter day.

Can this be turned around? Yes, but only by widespread genuine repentance.

– David King