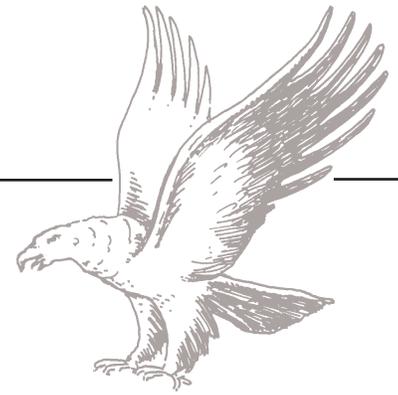


# Wings

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



January 25, 2015

## There Is Hope in Your Future

In the midst of an increasingly sick and twisted world, it's hard to see any good news coming our way. But Jeremiah reminds us that the future is brighter than we anticipate.

*“Thus says the Lord, ‘Refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded, says the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope in your future, says the Lord, that your children shall come back to their own border’” (Jer. 31:16-17).*



The Jews in Jeremiah's day had little to hope for. Years of sin and rebellion had taken their toll on the nation's character, and now they faced certain punishment. Their society had sunk into a toxic brew of violence, evil, and depravity. Foreign invaders pressed upon them, threatening destruction and death. As bad as it was, it would get worse—much worse—before it got better. The Jews were staring at a grand, final The End, beyond which lay a dark void.

Jeremiah's overall message to the nation was gloomy—but not entirely. In the midst of all the desolation, Jeremiah gave the people a promise they desperately needed to hear: “There is hope in your future.” They were, in fact, not facing The End, but a new beginning.

Jeremiah's words carry a message for our generation as well. Like Judah, we face a holocaust of our own making, brought on by the same self-destructive attitudes and behaviors that doomed Judah. But also like them, we must open our eyes to a vision of the future that lies beyond the immediate crisis.

Jeremiah's message of hope had three components. Consider how each applies to our circumstances today.

Jeremiah's first advice was to “refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears.” When it seems all is lost, the worst thing we can do is to allow ourselves to sink into depression. The future belongs to the strong and optimistic, not the weak and gloomy. When we yield to despair, we blind ourselves to that future and handicap any possibility of improvement.

Instead of weeping, Jeremiah says, we should redouble our efforts at doing what is right. “Your work will be rewarded” sounds good; but it assumes that we keep on working, even when it looks like nothing will come of it. Whatever the cost, we must never give

up in our efforts to carry out God's purpose. Critics may howl and enemies may attack, but we must press on, fully committed to doing the will of God.

Finally, our vision must take the long view of history. These Jews would die in captivity, but God's promise would be fulfilled in the next generation: “your children shall come back.” History moves in very wide circles, and some day the pendulum that brings one generation into selfishness and sin will eventually swing the other direction and for another generation usher in a golden age of righteousness. The wheels of justice turn slowly—so slowly that we cannot see the changes coming. But even if we have no expectation of seeing the outcome in our own lifetimes, at least we can do our part to ensure that our children and grandchildren will see it. Aren't they worth it?

Of course, that's the challenge, isn't it? The same selfishness that gets us in trouble to begin with, also prevents us from seeing the new dawn that awaits us afar off. There is hope in our future; we must learn to live like we believe it.

– David King