

# 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*



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## At Ease in Zion

There is nothing wrong with enjoying the good things of life that God has given us — unless we allow those things to blind us to more serious duties.

“Woe to you who are at ease in Zion, and trust in Mount Samaria, notable persons in the chief nation, . . . Woe to you who put far off the day of doom, who cause the seat of violence to come near” (Amos 6:1, 3).

Life was good for the ruling class in the northern kingdom of Israel. Read the next few verses, and a portrait emerges of a people who never had it so good. They ate lamb and beef (v. 4), and drank wine in abundance (v. 6). They anointed themselves with the finest fragrances (v. 6), then stretched out on luxurious couches (v. 4) and sang along with exotic musical instruments (v. 5). Ah, life was good!

But this life of ease blinded these elites to a looming threat. While they were enjoying the pleasures of their wealthy lifestyle, they were “not grieved for the affliction of Joseph [Israel]” (v. 6). That is, they were indifferent to the social ills that threatened the future of the nation. Spiritually, morally, and politically the country was facing a day of doom, and was on the verge of imploding. But the people at the top

were so intoxicated with their worldly comforts, they had become indifferent to this impending collapse of the social order. They had the means and the opportunity to heal their nation, but chose to ignore the problems. A national disaster was about to break upon their heads, yet they couldn’t see it.

One of the great ironies of history is that the physical blessings God provides a nation can ultimately contribute to its downfall. The problem is not with the prosperity itself, but with the false sense of security it breeds. People become so accustomed to their comfortable surroundings they see no need to involve themselves in the more unpleasant duties of life.

Amos was not saying that it is wrong to eat gourmet food, listen to music, relax on a Lazy-Boy recliner, or wear fine perfume. But there comes a time when such niceties must be sacrificed for more important things, like talking to a friend who is dealing with a serious personal problem, or running an errand for an elderly widow, or passing out literature in a neighborhood, or hav-

ing a Bible study with a teenager who is struggling to find her way in life. These are the activities that make a real difference in our world; but fulfilling them requires that we get out of our comfort zone occasionally, and sacrifice our personal comforts for the good of others.

Modern Americans enjoy all the luxuries the ancient Israelite rulers enjoyed, plus a lot more they never dreamed of. And like them, the luxury is fogging our brains. Our obsession with the good life is stunting our spiritual discernment and blinding us to the cancer that is eating away at the heart of our society. Our nation is hurting, and we are too busy enjoying our creature comforts to see the danger before us.

Within thirty years of Amos’ warning, the nation of Israel crumbled before an Assyrian army, and the survivors were marched off into captivity. The life of ease these people once enjoyed was replaced by one of servitude. But it didn’t have to end that way, if they had only taken the time to address the problems in their society while they had the chance. Let us not make the same mistake.

– David King