

THE BLOODY CHURCH HISTORY

*A Chronicle of Martyrdom, Inquisition, and the Call for
Reformation*

Second Edition 2026

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Reformation*

DR. Naloka Baker Frederick

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my late uncle, the Hon. Patrick Mwendha, and his wife Edith, for their selflessness and generous spirit of giving, which left a lasting impact on my successful future. My life appeared bleak after the loss of my mother during my childhood, yet they specifically selected me to shape me into the individual I have become today. Although Hon. Mwendha has passed away, his generous legacy continues to be honored in Bukooli and far beyond. May God bless them abundantly.

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Forewords

Foreword 1

I have reviewed this book contains a bold vision for Christians who desire to engage the world while remaining biblically loyal and culturally sympathetic to historical perspectives. According to the foregoing the goal of this book can be summed up as to give a sustainable telling and interpretation of the history of the followers of Christ. To put it another way, church history goal is to give an account of the church, or body of believers, covering their doctrine, development, growth, and persecutions throughout history. As his immediate supervisor for his PhD candidature in Apologetic Science, I attest that Dr. Naloka Baker Frederick demonstrated rich practical based research skills. He has authored three academic papers in International Journal of Science and Innovative Research Technology of which I was a co-author (www.ijisrt.com). I co-authored with him other books. This book will help teachers, students, church leaders and even the ordinary Christian who have a hunger to know the historical truth which is becoming rare.



Assoc Prof. Dr. Kitaka Eric

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Foreword 2

An accomplished apologist must study church history. This book assists believers in discerning God's hand at work throughout history. It reflects our shared knowledge of the faith's key precepts. Splitting fights are frequently the result of disagreements about secondary issues. The bibliography at the conclusion of the book provides some guidance and additional investigation in that direction of historical investigation.

As the Principal Supervisor of Dr. Naloka Baker for his PhD candidature and co-author of the three academic papers mentioned and other books, I strongly recommend scholars in Bible schools to make use of this book which will serve as primer in reversing the negative trend of false doctrine being preached by some church leaders due to rejection of critical thinking application.



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KYAMBOGO-KAMPALA-UGANDA 14-12 2023

Foreword 3

When studied or mere listening or reading the historical narratives spice up the bitter and the sweet ingredients of events as they evolved. The reader gets informed audacity to critique and judge the characters and the stakes each misused or exploited in shaping the history of Christianity. Thus, he is able to give credit where it is due or hold individuals, or centers of power and influence accountable albeit by sheer abstract decision in his mind-having found grounds for a “Case to answer verdict”.

Church History links the past factual narrative of Christian Gospel with the future proclamation of that Gospel at different times and situations that creates understanding of our great heritage and inspiration for its further proclamation and application in the contemporary Church.

Do not miss to read this Book with a rich content.



Bishop Dr. Fred Biryomumaisho Baguma O+256782008815

30th October, 202

Preface

The history of the church is a chronicle of how the Holy Spirit has worked in the lives of God's people throughout human history. Theologians frequently distinguish between the ancient, medieval (classical period 800 BC-500 BC, classical age, or simply antiquity, is the period of Mediterranean history), Reformation Period (1517 – 1648 A.D), and modern eras when discussing the history of the new covenant church.

The term "ancient period" in historical context, commonly known as "ancient history," generally extends from the advent of writing and documented history (approximately 3000 BC) to the collapse of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD. This era marks a time of considerable human advancement, including the emergence and decline of various civilizations and cultures.

The Medieval Period, commonly referred to as the Middle Ages, spans European history approximately from the 5th to the 15th centuries. It is generally regarded as commencing with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire and evolving into the Renaissance. This era is frequently categorized into the Early, High, and Late Middle Ages, each marked by unique features and significant occurrences.

Each of these overarching periods contains additional subdivisions, and various historians may employ distinct methods to classify time. For instance, the Ancient era is frequently segmented into the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age. The Medieval era encompasses the Early, High, and Late Middle Ages, while the Modern era is occasionally divided into Early Modern, Late Modern, and Contemporary, as noted by Twinkl.

This book chronicles the redemptive history of God's everlasting covenant, fulfilled by Christ and implemented by the Spirit of Grace, in his gracious providence. "If church history does not get your blood pumping, you had better check your spiritual pulse," as Jon Payne wisely stated. Just the sixteenth century offers a wealth of moving stories. Recall Martin Luther's fearless and courageous defense of the gospel against Rome's disastrous errors. Examine the obedient testimony of the English martyrs, such as Jane Grey, the Queen of England, Hugh Latimer (1487–1555), William Tyndale (1494–1536), Bishop John Rogers (1500–1555), and Thomas Cranmer-the Archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Ridley, who perished while praising God as he engulfed in flames. Alternatively, consider the valiant life of John Knox, who exclaimed, "Give me Scotland, or I die," while held as a slave in the hold of a French galley ship. "

The Apostle's Creed, the early ecumenical councils of Nicea (325) and Chalcedon (451), and the Westminster Assembly's preservation of worship and theology are historical documents that Christians ought to be familiar with. They ought to be knowledgeable about the Dordt Synod, eighteenth-century

revival movements, and Jonathan Edwards' American preaching. The preservation of orthodoxy (right doctrine) and orthopraxy (right practice) is achieved through studying the history of the Christian Church. We can be inspired and motivated to God's covenantal work by the "great cloud of witnesses," or the godly lives of Christians from the past. In doing so, we can "lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely... and run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

The history of the church would not be complete without looking at the causes, successions, and effects of persecution on the church during that period claimed to have survived the storms and fire of persecution.



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Introduction

The history of Christianity chronicles the evolution of the Christian faith from its initial practices and beliefs to its current worldwide forms, as well as its geographical spread from antiquity to the twenty-first century. Christianity began with the ministry of Jesus, a Jewish teacher and healer who lived in Jerusalem in the Roman province of Judea and prophesied the coming Kingdom of God. Jesus was crucified between AD 30 and AD 33. Apocalyptic Jewish Christians were among Jesus' early disciples. In certain regions, Christianity persisted as a Jewish sect for centuries before gradually separating from Judaism due to doctrinal, social, and historical differences.

The church was created by Jesus, who was born Jewish. Both Jewish and Gentile people were among his early followers, and Judaism and a Jewish conception of God's relationship with his people served as the foundation of the early church culture. Christianity grew more and more Romanized over time, rather than Jewish. What impact did this change have on the church's identity?

The religious movement grew as a grassroots movement and became well-established by the third century both inside and outside the Roman Empire, despite periodic persecution. The early centuries the church saw the writing of New Testament books and a loosely structured system of church government; however, the biblical canon was not formally established until 382. In 313 the first Christian emperor was born, Constantine I of Rome. By expressing tolerance for all religions and allowing Christian worship, he issued the Edict of Milan. Though he did establish Christianity as the official religion, he did offer vital assistance. To settle differences regarding the definition of Jesus' divinity, Constantine convened the first of seven ecumenical councils.

In Europe, Christianity had a significant impact on the advancement of Western civilization. Christianity was brought north and west by missionary activity in the early Middle Ages. The East-West Schism of 1054 resulted from the growing division between Eastern and Western Christianity during the High Middle Ages. In the 1200s, Western Christianity peaked and affected every facet of medieval life before starting to decline. The Protestant Reformation and its associated reform movements were sparked by growing criticism of the Roman Catholic Church and its corruption in the 1300s and 1500s. These reform movements culminated in the European Wars of Religion, the return of tolerance as a theological and political option, and the Age of Enlightenment. Along with its association with colonialism, Christianity played a significant role in the American Revolution, the abolition of slavery in the West, and the long-term effects of Protestant missions in the New World.

While new forms of Christianity have emerged and spread throughout the world in the twenty-first century, traditional Christianity has declined in the West. With over two billion adherents globally,

however, Christianity has emerged as the most populous and extensively practiced religion. The growth center has moved from the West to the East and from the North to the global South in the past century. To consider this topic, one must recall a number of bad occurrences. The horrible totals, computations, and instances that follow are not for the faint of heart. These atrocities should convince us not of the horrors of a certain religious system, but of the depravity of the sinful human heart, and cause us to turn to Christ for repentance and salvation, so that we might have new hearts and be cleansed of sin.

Chapter 1

WHAT IS CHURCH HISTORY AND ITS IMPORTANCE?

History: what is it?

A historical event is an incidence that occurred in space and time as a result of human action or inaction. Usually, such an incidence is an unchangeable, factual occurrence. Put another way, while there may be parallel and identical incidences because people behaved similarly in different times and places, history cannot be precisely repeated in a different location. Another way to conceptualize history is as the knowledge that a historian has gathered through study and reflection about an event (that actually happened in the past). History is essentially the account of what happened, when, why, and where it happened for any given piece of data that the historian wanted to understand—often—from the information that was available. This implies that history is the past as it has been understood in the context of the information gathered.

This makes history the historian's subjective reconstruction of the past using the information available to them at the time. In this light therefore, history can be defined as the event, or incident, inquiry or process and product; or information happening just once, both in space and time. History as an event is unchangeable, but history as research and interpretation is subjective, meaning it can change over time. Additionally, history is the reconstruction of the lives of the deceased by and for the living.

History is the written or oral accounts of a continuous, methodical record of significant public events organized chronologically, particularly those pertaining to a specific nation, people, individual, or institution. The components that make up history are not all-inclusive. Stated differently, it is challenging to create a thorough, organized, and widely recognized taxonomy of the entirety of human history. This is a result of the fact that various individuals define history in different ways. Galbraith, for example, took a scientific approach to the definition of history. This supports the assertion made by Hillary C. Achunike that history is a combination of science and governance. In the same way that Marc Bloch contended that history is the study of man in time. They refer to the corpus of knowledge that aims to reveal the truth as science.

History is scientific to a certain extent. The interpreted records of the socially relevant human past and sources are what is commonly referred to as history. Biblical interpretation demonstrates that there are two sides to history: divine and human agents. According to the former, history is God's revelation revealed in chronological order, revealing His countless wisdom, justice, and mercy one by one for humankind's eternal bliss and glory. In human terms, the latter view history as the chronicle of the human race and the progressive evolution (including aberrant and normal) of the physical, intellectual, and moral forces leading to the ultimate judgment of the whole with its everlasting rewards and penalties.

The goal of Church History

The goal is to present all of the historical information that has been gleaned from the historian's interpretation(s) of the available materials. To achieve this by reconstruct and analyze historical incidents or events through an objective process of historical research, which may involve careful examination and source criticism in an effort to dispel myths and legends. Church history must address the structures and procedures of numerous churches or denominations within Christendom. It explains how they came to be and how they affected one another.

Highlighting the unique characteristics that set the various denominations apart from one another is also within the purview of church history. These characteristics, which are typical of their narratives, are frequently conflicts and co-operation related to doctrine or ideology. Church history also takes into account the influence of the church on institutions and structures in society, such as politics, the economy, education, morals, and culture. Other structures that have affected or exerted influence on the church are also included in this context.

According to the foregoing, to put it another way, church history goal is to give an account of the church, or body of believers, covering their doctrine, development, growth, and persecutions throughout history. It usually spells out the socio-political, economic, and cultural elements that have at one point or another helped to support or irritate the church. Church history additionally aims to pinpoint individuals and/or groups (such as denominations and para-church organizations) that have made major contributions to the establishment of churches or the propagation of Christianity.

Finally, another aim of church history is to identify and characterize the key turning points in the development of the church throughout all eras, from its founding to the present. It is impossible to include every church denomination in every country during every age or for every period of more than two millennia within the confines of a brief historical outline.

The Importance of Studying Church History

Church history can still be helpful to learn about and comprehend, even though the Bible is the only source of truth and authority for Christians for "orthodoxy (right doctrine-2 John 9-12) and orthopraxy (right Practice-Philippians 4:9)". It can serve as a check on whether people are correctly interpreting Scripture and it also helps us recognize when we are straying from the truth. Isaiah 30:8 was instructed by God to write down in a book and present it to them so that it will be remembered for all eternity. Since it is the best way to recall the breadth of church tradition, everyone should study church history to adhere to church traditions (2Thessalonians 2:15). It is frequently very simple to see that some biblical in-terpretations that once seemed absolutely convincing (e.g. Job 22:28) were actually distortions of Scripture from the distance provided by time.

Understanding the distinctive features and historical roots of Christian doctrines helps us to better comprehend why the church is currently so weak and divided. With his extensive background in Pentecostal charismatic ministry, Pastor Kayanja accurately noted it in his book: **“The church has become weak, confused and entertains all kinds of messages for that reason. I believe if Timothy had stood to preach, he would not have deviated from how Paul preached....”** (“The Holy Spirit”, 77 DOGS VOL: 1V, Page 25). The Church will be like that until it went back to the old paths: *Behold, I say to you, walk in the ways, see, and ask to be shown the old paths, which lead to the good path. Walk in that path, and you will find rest for your souls. However, they declared, "We will not walk there." Additionally, I posted watchmen over you with the warning, "Listen to the trumpet." However, they retorted, "We won't listen."* Jerem 6:16–17.

For leaders, church history is especially crucial because it can reveal whether they are taking a dubious interpretive route. Some of the biggest lessons can be gleaned from the heretics of old, such as Marcion, whose ideas have become prevalent again. According to his teachings, the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament could not coexist. The modern Pentecostal church has been seeing a resurgence of this idea. But if leaders knew the consequences of this belief, they could dispel it before it leads people astray with erroneous doctrine. I implore you to inquire about the past era and get ready for their fathers to search for you, as we are merely a remnant of the past (Job 8:8).

For churches to understand where they are coming from, they must acknowledge their past. For instance, the majority of Pentecostals are unaware that their denomination was once a branch of Methodism. Similarly, few Methodists are aware that they were once an Anglicanism offshoot, and some Anglicans together with the Eastern Orthodox Church believers may not be aware that they broke off from

the Roman Catholic Church. Similarly, few Catholics are aware that they came from the born again Roman church which had been established by Apostles during the reign of Claudius (A.D. 41-54), Paul wrote to this church the Epistle Romans in 57 A.D. When Emperor Constantine I (Flavius Valerius Constantinus) ruled as Roman emperor from 306-337 A.D., he brought Christianization to the Roman Empire and renamed it Roman Catholic Christianity in 312 A.D. After his conversion, he had an impact on the Roman church the Apostles established by 50 A.D. A vision he had during the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in Rome in 312 A.D. was one of the factors that led him to become a convert. So before Constantino, Catholicism was not there.

It is important to remember that throughout the Bible, faithfulness depends on having the right memories. When God wanted mankind to know his origin and how man fell in the Garden of Eden, He instructed Moses to write the book of beginning (Genesis). God calls his people to remember and recount his gracious acts of saving throughout the Old Testament. But Israel stumbles, forgets, and errs on a regular basis. The good news is centered on historical events, as the New Testament makes abundantly clear. Recounting that history and urging all peoples to turn from their sins and accept Jesus as their Savior is our mission. History even played a role in the formation of post-apostolic doctrine. For example, the early church fathers and councils had to decide with historical certainty what it meant to say about Jesus that he was both God and man. Because everything that was written in the past was written for our guidance, allowing us to have hope through perseverance and the support of the Bible. Additionally, church history can provide enlightenment, motivation, or zeal to foster a high level of spirituality. According to Paul, understanding the past would instill hope in the Christian life (Rom. 15:4).

Nobody can examine Ambrose of Milan's courageous stance—his denial of Communion to Emperor Theodosius until he repented of his massacre of the Thessalonian crowd—without being inspired to defend Christ from evil in influential religious or political circles. The passion and industry that allowed Wesley to travel thousands of miles and deliver over a thousand sermons during his lifetime Therefore, church history is full of practical, didactic, and moral lessons that apply to all human societies, ancient and modern. While church history would be more important and pertinent to individuals who believe that God is in control of human affairs and that he uses people, occasions, and everyday human behavior to achieve his divine purpose.

Any typical Christian seeking to understand the basic details of their background must embrace church history. For every Christian worker, understanding the church's past has intrinsic practical benefits. A prerequisite to understanding Christian orthodoxy is familiarity with the historical development of

Christian doctrines, including the Trinity, Christology, sin, and God's plan of salvation for humanity as presented in the various Post-Apostolic Councils of the church.

Church history thus encourages cultural heritage. The background of the western civilization, without a comprehension of the place and time of Christianity, civilization is incomplete and incomprehensible especially considering that, according to Earle E. Cairns, a man's history and his religious life are inextricably linked. People who are ignorant of Christian history are frequently more open to heretical groups of all kinds, seditions, and the appeals of false prophets and teachers. Possessing a sufficient understanding of church history provides a strong basis for defending one's beliefs and theology (apologetics and polemics). A person's ministry involvement can be broadly contextualized by looking at church history.

Comprehending the process of denominational fragmentation is essential as it highlights the primary concerns of the church at the time of the denomination's founding. It also helps to explain why so many churches within a denomination have radically different biblical and theological perspectives. For example, the United States is home to three major Presbyterian denominations, each with its own unique worldview and theology. Knowing where the three denominations diverged is helpful because it shows the kinds of topics that called for debate in order to come up with a position Paper like PAG-USA does.

Every denomination uses distinctive characteristics to set itself apart from other churches. This can be useful for Christians moving to a new city in terms of finding a new church to attend. They can look for churches that have similar their morals. This can facilitate the development of a feeling of community in a new environment. In a similar vein, churches with Pentecostal heritage worldwide are so fragmented doctrinally to the extent that some teach ancestral spirits theology; yet others abhor it; some teach prosperity gospel others don't teach it; others call fire during prayers, others don't; others preach seed faith theology, others don't; others encourage followers to earn their living through hard work; others promise them miracle money while they are seated cross-legged. Hence, if churches would review a historic doctrinal perspective, all these inconsistencies which are making the church moribund would be eliminated.

George Santayana wrote, **"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,"** in his book *Life of Reason*. The enemy will not stop spreading heresies because he takes pleasure in twisting the facts. Certain flawed ideas are recycled and presented to different audiences. There is nothing new under the sun, according to one scholar. There is nothing new under the sun; what has been is what

will continue to be; what has been done is what will continue to be done. Is there anything about which one could say, *"Look, this is different"*? *It was earlier in history, even before our time.* Ecc: 1:910.

Christians as individuals should also be aware of church history, as this will help them determine whether the lessons they are receiving are in line with the Bible. Let's say, for instance, that a pastor preaches oneness theology—the idea that each member of the Trinity represents 3 distinct aspect of God amounting to 9 of them—to someone who is ignorant of church history, they might not see it as a mistake if they don't have the historical context. A lot of churches have forgotten their past. People in their churches have been impacted by the loss, and this has frequently led to them dismantling their faith. Many people look elsewhere for a connection to the past because they don't feel it in their churches. This is one of the reasons why young Christians are increasingly drawn to liturgical churches full of entertainment music without a biblical warrant (Psalms 137:1-4). Christians are busy looking for breath through (deliverance) services which are not helping them at all. Instead, it's the Pastors conducting ancestral spirits and covenant breaking minting money from gullible Christians, in total contravention of Ezekiel 18.

The younger generations are often inspired to greater heights by learning about the legacies left by our spiritual forefathers. Furthermore, the study of church history will give Christians and the church, which is enduring persecution—including the threat of mar-tyrdom—hope. The knowledge of the audacity of Christian martyrs, the inspiration and motivational accounts of the great reformers, and the experiences of revivalists throughout history demonstrate that they had profited from the legacy of religious heroes. Throughout the ages of Christianity, the church has served as a stabilizing force against persecution, secularism, heresies, and moral decay. As has already been mentioned, church history plays a crucial role in helping us redefine or reshape our doctrines, beliefs, and way of life within the context of the deeds of God's saints, both past and present.

Studying church history is an excellent way for people in this generation to feel a connection to the past. The writings of the church fathers contain a great deal of depth. **"It is a good rule after reading a new book, to never allow yourself another new one until you have read an old one in between,"** as C.S. Lewis once stated. The ancient church's ideas contain a wealth of historical information spanning thousands of years.

Recalling church history does more for us than simply pointing out how many of the erroneous doctrines that have come back into vogue are derived from the early church. It also demonstrates to us what the beliefs of the past were uncompromising. E.G. the New Apostolic-Prophetic Reformation theology taught in Pentecostal churches championing dominion theology to take over civil structures of

governments, is not new and is not a reformation. It was there during the Biblical Apostles and was rejected by the Apostles (2Corinthians11:13), and recently the PAG-USA has abhorred it. After the end of the Apostolic Age (33-100), the following men claimed the apostolic and prophetic gifts; e.g., Irenaeus in the second century, Montanus (135-177 A.D.) in Turkey; Mani, the ruling Apostle (216-274 A.D.) in Babylon; In 1824, came Edward Irving (1792-1834) of Scotland; Former Congregational clergyman John Alexander Dowie (1847-1907) in Scotland; the New Latter Rain-NOLR" at Sharon Orphanage in North Battleford, Saskatchewan Canada; are some men who taught the New Apostolic reformation theology but were rejected as heretics. The 1949 General Council of the Assemblies of God USA rejected the Ministry of Apostles and prophets which has resurfaced in modern Pentecostal churches by naming it the New Apostolic Reformation. History can be swiftly lost if people don't study it. Ancient items might be even more likely to be forgotten if even recent things are being forgotten.

People who create their own radical interpretations that diverge from conventional wisdom may come to absurd conclusions due to a lack of appropriate historical context. This occurred with Origen in the early church. For centuries, the Roman Catholic Church adopted Origen's interpretation of the Old Testament as its own. He did not consider the Old Testament to be literally true, but rather as a collection of stories. His allegorical perspective is useful in some contexts; for instance, it can assist readers in recognizing Old Testament allusions and warnings to Jesus. But contemporary believers have now rediscovered the significance of pondering the intended meaning of the text for its original audience.

Through examining church history, believers can discern God's hand at work throughout history. It demonstrates our shared understanding of the core tenets of the faith. Splitting arguments usually stem from disagreements over secondary matters. A few exceptions did exist earlier in church history, such as the nature of Jesus, which caused some denominations to break away from the main body of the church, including the Oriental Orthodox Church. You'll be surprised to learn that, even with those exceptions, the church has agreed more than disagreed on the central questions of who God is, how Jesus relates to God, and who Jesus was. It's one in which divisions have only recently been able to form since Christianity emerged as the predominant religion in the West. Because of the persecution of the church, believers are more unified. Because it demonstrates that Christians have been together for far longer than we have been divided, studying church history helps to foster unity. The narrative of church history tells the tale of how God has strengthened, chastised, purified, and watched over his undeserving people. Being aware of the historical context of doctrinal formulation ought to improve our theologians.

Church history can occasionally serve as a reminder of the flaws and failures of many of our ancestors, including our heroes. Any generation of Christians faces the challenge of not erasing or

justifying these mistakes (such as the relationship between Southern Baptists and race, Jonathan Edwards and slavery, John Calvin's involvement in Servetus's demise, and so forth). Not only is it a scholarly obligation to confront such warts with historical honesty, but it also exalts God.

Furthermore, it serves as a reminder that human dependency has never been the source of the church's tenacity. All of us are far too weak and flawed. God founded, advanced, and protected the church of Jesus Christ. In this vein, George Marsden notes that **those histories that portray their protagonists with faults as well as virtues will be the most convincing**. A biblical theory of depravity not only instills in us the necessary humility to admit that we cannot know with absolute certainty what actually occurred in the past, but it also gives us an appropriate skepticism. This doctrine ought to forewarn us against the temptation of hagiography and encourage us to tell the truth about the people who came before us in a critical manner.

There will always be revisionism and evolution in historical scholarship. Truth is real, objective, and knowable and is based on the traits and essence of a self-revealing, veracious God. However, we are aware that our knowledge is incomplete and constantly hazy. Since we are fallible and finite, we will always require more progress in the direction of the truth. Hard work, original research, and humility are necessary for this endeavor.

Chapter 2

GOD COMMANDS TO FOLLOW THE HISTORICAL PATHS.

Many people today share similar religious beliefs to those that Paul met in Athens. Acts 17:21 states that they "spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new." The pursuit of these new things diverts us from staying on the path that leads to heaven, even though it may seem intriguing or thrilling to do so. Ephesians 4:14 warns us against being "carried about by every wind of doctrine." We need to stay on course rather than chasing after every new development.

"Stand by in the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; and you will find rest for your souls" (Jeremiah 6:16) is the instruction that the Lord gave the people of Jerusalem regarding the path they should take. This instruction came through the prophet Jeremiah. The "old paths" led to the "good way," not the "new paths" of contemporary religion and culture. These are the "old paths" that we need to pursue in the present.

Job used the same principle in Chapter 8: For enquire... of the former age, verse 8. Test the matter with the treasure of experience that has been passed down from generation to generation since the remotest times. This experience is embodied in proverbs, which are the concentrated wisdom of antiquity. Not with the fleeting experience of living men. Look into what was once believed about successful men who were suddenly downtrodden and afflicted, such as yourself. And get ready for their fathers to search you. Return, that is, to the bygone era, but don't stop there. Keep researching to reach their distant ancestors. Bildad suggests that these ancient records have been preserved in some manner.

What "ancient paths" are they, though? The "ancient paths" were the ways that God had revealed through Moses, according to the Jews in Jeremiah's day. We are no longer subject to the Law of Moses since it has been crucified (Colossians 2:14). But if we wish to please God, we still have to follow some "ancient paths."

According to Mark 16:15, Jesus gave His apostles instructions to spread the gospel throughout the entire world. Acts 2:42 states that the apostles' teachings were upheld by the early church. Everyone who departed from the teachings of the apostles was doomed (Galatians 1:6–9; 2 Thessalonians 3:6). (2 Thessalonians 2:15) tell us to abide by the customs and teachings that the apostles left behind. These, then, are the "old paths"—the lessons the New Testament makes clear to us—that we have to heed.

Remember that we should not follow any "old" path when searching for the one we should follow. We have to take the proper course. When the Lord spoke through Jeremiah, he had a particular route in mind. That was the route where the right path lay. It does not follow that something that was done a generation,

two, or even centuries ago is the ancient way that we should be going. There are a lot of outdated and incorrect routes (Judges 5:6) due to absence of proper leadership which brought captivity and suffering to Israel by Jabin, a Canaanite king for 20 years in Israel. Wherever the good path leads, we must take it.

Furthermore, the "ancient paths" will appear "new" to someone who has never encountered the way of truth before. As Dr. Damina says: When error has been institutionalized, truth appears as error. It's possible that something we hear that seems new to us is actually a part of the "old paths" we should be taking. Thus, we shouldn't pursue what, in our limited experience, appears to be "old." God's word is the source of the good way, so we must return there to decide what course of action is right for us.

When pursuing novel endeavors, we need to exercise caution. According to Ephesians 4:14, we are not to be carried about by every wind of doctrine. We must allow God's word to guide us rather than letting our feelings, desires, peers, etc. control us. Here's where the wise path lies. God is warning us to heed His path if we want salvation, or rest for our souls. All other routes result in devastation. So that we might live obediently to the Lord, let us be content

The time has come for brave men and women to once again recite the proverbial "ask for the old paths... and walk therein." One of the hardest assignments in Israel's history fell to the prophet Jeremiah. It was his divine mission to warn the people of ancient Judah to turn back to the Lord, from whence they had wandered. The only hope for the nation, which was under the threat of imminent punishment (the Babylonian captivity), was repentance. Thus, take note of the prophet's request.

"Stand by the roads, look, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls," declares the LORD. However, they declared, "We won't walk in it." Jer. 6:16. Even for our day, this passage merits careful examination because it is filled with so many truths (Rom. 15:4). Jeremiah's statement that Jerusalem was under threat from a malevolent force due to her extreme immorality is the immediate context. O, that the Lord would give her guidance (Jer. 6:1-8). If the land is attacked by this disciplinary force, Judah will be gathered in like a crop of grapes, a sign of God's fury. False prophets objected, saying that "peace" would prevail—that is, destruction would not occur—but Jehovah would still "visit" them and destroy them (Jer. 6:9–15).

The prophet's call to go back to the "old paths" emerged from this context. This compelling story may yield several significant truths. The "old paths" are defined as the authentic means of serving God; they are further described as "the good way." It was required of the Hebrews to "walk" along these paths. But they had veered off the honorable path (Judges 4: 1-3, 5:5-6, 7). They had to turn from their sin and hurry back to the Lord. They could have "rest" once more if they came back. It is crucial to take these facts into account.