

# Jeremiah 6:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein.

## Analysis

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God commands His people to 'stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way.' This call to return to ancient covenant faithfulness contrasts with innovation and compromise. The promise 'ye shall find rest unto your souls' (echoed by Jesus in Matthew 11:29) offers peace through obedience. However, the people's response—'We will not walk therein'—demonstrates willful rebellion. Reformed theology values the 'old paths' of historic orthodoxy, recognizing that truth is not discovered but received from God's revelation. The refusal to walk in God's ways despite clear direction shows human autonomy asserting itself against divine authority.

## Historical Context

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During Josiah's reform (2 Kings 22-23), the rediscovered Book of the Law called Judah back to covenant faithfulness. However, after Josiah's death, the people quickly reverted to idolatry, rejecting the 'old paths.'

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. What are the 'old paths' that contemporary Christianity needs to recover?
2. How do we distinguish between legitimate development of doctrine and departure from biblical truth?
3. Why does the human heart resist returning to tried and tested ways of faithfulness to God?

## Interlinear Text

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וְשָׁאַל וְיָאַמֵּר וְרָא וְדַרְאָה כִּי  
H3541 But they said the LORD Stand H5921 way and see and ask  
H559 H3068 H5975 H1870 H7200 H7592

בְּהָדֳקָה וְנִתְבְּנָה וְעַזְלָם אֵין הַטּוֹב  
paths for the old H335 H2088 way where is the good H1980 H0  
H5410 H5769 H1870 H2896

בְּלָהָלְהָ לְאֵין וְיָאַמֵּר וְמִמְצָא וְלִנְפְּשָׁחַ מִרְגָּג וְעַזְלָם  
therein and ye shall find rest for your souls But they said H3808 H1980  
H4672 H4771 H5315 H559

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 30:21** (Parallel theme): And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

**Jeremiah 18:15** (Parallel theme): Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up;

**Deuteronomy 32:7** (Parallel theme): Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

**Jeremiah 7:23** (Parallel theme): But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

**Colossians 2:6** (References Lord): As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

**Isaiah 2:5** (References Lord): O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

**Jeremiah 18:12** (Parallel theme): And they said, There is no hope: but we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.

**John 12:35** (Parallel theme): Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

**Jeremiah 22:21** (Parallel theme): I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear. This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not my voice.

**Jeremiah 44:16** (References Lord): As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee.