

Along the Way, Nov. 8 We Stand at the Crossroads

“Stand at the crossroads and look: ask for the ancient path, ask where the good way is, and walk in it.” Jeremiah 6:16

In the book of Jeremiah, the Book of the Law had been rediscovered and with the help of the prophetess Hulda, some of the Israelites were returning to the covenant and to God. Josiah was king, and he was putting to practice many religious reforms until he was killed in battle with the Egyptians. Jeremiah was afraid that, without Josiah’s leadership, the people would again lose their way. So Jeremiah continued to remind them of their covenant with God. His teachings became a cornerstone for the slow rebuilding of faith for some of the people. In chapter six of the book of Jeremiah, he tells the Israelites that they stand at the threshold of a new era.

There is a crossroads before them, and they must choose the correct path. Staying put was not an option because their enemies were in pursuit. To live, they had to move.

Not every journey, whether physical or spiritual, is intended. The Israelites had no intention of going anywhere. They were comfortable with their lives. When Jeremiah confronted them again with how far they had strayed from their covenant, and how they were hurting each other, they still refused to be moved. When he warned them of the consequences of their actions, they still failed to see the threshold they were standing on.

Rabbi and leadership consultant Edwin Friedman has written in *A Failure of Nerve* that “conceptually stuck systems cannot become unstuck simply by trying harder. For a fundamental reorientation to occur, that spirit of adventure which optimizes serendipity, and which enables new perspectives beyond the control of our thinking processes must happen first.” What is needed? A spirit of adventure. We, too, stand on the threshold of a new adventure. Let’s be courageous to take the first step!