

I WILL LIFT YOU UP ON EAGLE'S WINGS

By Jim & Cindy Harman

When the disciples asked Jesus about His return for them, He gave us an interesting parable that is recorded by both Matthew and Luke:

"For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." (Matthew 24:28 KJ)

"Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." (Luke 17:37 KJ)

It is worth noting that both of the writers also associated these events with lightning (please see Matthew 24:27 & Luke 17:37 KJ). Jesus correlated His return with both eagles and lightning. Let's see why He did.

Using the rule of first mention, let's see where "eagles" first appear. Turning back to Exodus 19:4, we find:

"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself."

What? Did God lift His people on eagle's wings when He brought them out of Egypt? No, not literally, but figuratively speaking He did lift His people out of Egypt on "eagles".

LIGHTNING

The above story in Exodus is then related to how God came down Mount Sinai on Pentecost to give His people the law. Interestingly, there is lightning associated with this event:

"And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings...and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud..." (Exodus 19:16 KJ).

The first time "eagles" are mentioned, we also find an association with lightning and the deliverance of God's people.

EAGLES GATHERED

Now let's go back to the parable Jesus gave us. Many interpretations have been given as to what Jesus was trying to tell us. In the account given by Matthew, the context is at the very end of the Tribulation period when Jesus comes at the "parousia" (3952) in Matthew 24:27. But let's look at the context in Luke's account. It is completely different.

Luke associates the lightning and eagles with the stories of Noah and Lot. In both of these parallel passages, Jesus was telling us how bad the earth would become before His return. The stories of Noah and Lot show us how God plans to deliver his righteous before judgment falls on the earth. Luke's account relates lightning and eagles with the rapture!

Before God brings His judgment, He gathers His "eagles" together.

As God lifted up His people out of Egypt on "eagle's wings", so will God lift up His righteous prior to the judgment on the earth.

WAIT UPON THE LORD

Now, let's look at one more related use of the word "eagle" found in Isaiah 40:31 KJ):

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Many passages in the Word of God have more than one application. This passage in Isaiah is one such scripture.

Isaiah was actually giving us a picture of the rapture of the Bride of Christ! First, he says those that "wait upon" the Lord. The Hebrew for this phrase (6900) is: expect, patiently wait for, look for. This is a perfect picture of what the true Bride of Christ is doing today as she awaits the return of her Bridegroom! While the body of Christ (the Church) is not really looking for and waiting for the Lord, a remnant of believers are fully expecting His soon return and patiently waiting to hear His call.

Next, we see that these people will "mount up" which comes from the Hebrew word (5927) which means: to be lifted up! Those who are patiently waiting and looking for the Lord will be lifted up in the soon to occur rapture. What a beautiful picture Isaiah brings out.

Those "eagles" that are fully expecting and waiting and looking for the Lord will be lifted up in the air to be with the Lord! The use of the term "eagles" has a glorious meaning woven in both the Old and New Testaments. Jesus knew this, so He described the gathering of His own at the end of this age by the use of the word eagles.

TWO GATHERINGS

Actually, Jesus showed us there will be two gatherings. Matthew records the gathering of the eagles at the very end of the Tribulation when Christ comes at the "parousia" or when He will be present on the earth (Matthew 34:27).

He uses the word eagles, because by this time the remaining Christians will be waiting for and looking for His return. Prior to the first rapture (the Firstfruits) at the start of God's judgments, these Christians were the "lukewarm" believers too caught up with the things of this world to be bothered with "waiting upon" the Lord. Since they were not properly prepared, they entered into the

Tribulation. But, when the Tribulation is about over, these same Christians remaining on the earth will be looking for and waiting for the Lord. Because of this Matthew, records they will be the gathered eagles.

The first gathering, however, is recorded by Luke. These are the eagles who are gathered prior to the start of God's judgment. As God took care of Noah and Lot before judgment came, so God will gather together His eagles who are waiting upon (expecting, patiently waiting for and looking for) the Lord. Those believers who are counted worthy by the Lord (please see Luke 21:36) will be able to escape the time of judgment just as Noah and Lot were able to escape. These eagles will be gathered together before judgment because they were waiting upon the Lord and praying they would be able to escape all that is about to take place on the earth.

THE GLORY OF JEHOVAH'S WORD

"For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21:35 &36 KJ)

The current Laodicean church age has become lukewarm to the Lord's way. Being so preoccupied with the

cares of this present world, they cannot properly discern the truth of the Word. Somewhere along the line during this age of grace, the "GLORY OF JEHOVAH'S WORD" has been greatly disregarded. THE HEAVENLY FATHER STILL EXISTS - UNFORTUNATELY THE MAJORITY IN THE MODERN CHURCH DON'T KNOW HIM PROPERLY. His "GLORY" can only be realized and understood through FAITH. Jehovah's "GLORY" is wonderfully revealed in the Word to those who are humbly seeking Him. Now we know CHRIST is the WORD (the Son of Jehovah) who became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus has told His disciples in Luke 21:36 to pray to be counted worthy of escape and to be able to stand before Him - there is a very, very good reason for this!

We are able to gain a better understanding of "this prayer" Jesus has encouraged His followers to pray by going back to the The Old Testament account of Queen Esther .

GOLDEN SECPTRE

"Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the King's house, over against the King's house: and the King sat upon His royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. And it was so, when the King saw Esther the Queen standing in the court, that she obtained favor in his

sight: and the King held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the scepter. " (Esther 5:1 &2 KJ)

This true account illustrates the respect and royal procedure that an earthly queen paid to an earthly king. The queen did not assume that her position of honor allowed her the unique privilege to barge right in on the king and expect his gracious approval. Keep in mind, Queen Esther became queen as a result of the disrespectful behavior of Queen Vashti. In the same respect, King Jesus has likewise held out to his Church the golden scepter - which is: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21:36 KJ)

There is genuine power in this prayer...it is the GLORY OF JEHOVAH'S WORD! King Jesus has held it out for those New Testament believers who humbly draw near to Him "in faith" - to touch it! By paying proper respect to His Word they will also gain true favor in His sight; the Holy Spirit begins to create the necessary conditions for the believer to be ready when Jesus comes. Interestingly enough, this prayer (which is full of healing virtue) was recorded by Luke, the Physician.

ON EAGLE'S WINGS

As the Lord delivered His people from the land of Egypt "on eagle's wings", so will He deliver His Bride at the proper time. Those who are "waiting upon" Him and praying to be counted worthy to escape will be lifted up prior to the Great Tribulation... "pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape ALL these things that shall come to pass." The Lord's parables in Matthew and Luke were given to encourage the believers who are expecting His soon return, to keep waiting and looking. Soon, very soon, He will deliver His faithful Bride i.e. the wise followers on "eagle's wings"! They will be lifted up to be brought to Himself very soon.



The Bride of Christ
By Dorothy Spaulding
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THE EAGLE
By: Betty Spooner
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As storms approach, lesser fowl head for cover, but the mighty eagle spreads his wings and with a great cry mounts upon the powerful updrafts, soaring to heights of glory. The eagle soars effortlessly, letting the wind carry him where other fowl beat with frantic wings to stay aloft. In spite of the winds, thunder, and lightning, the eagle seems to know instinctively where there is safety in the midst of a storm. Similarly, the Christian sees behind the storm - the winds of the Holy Spirit - and rises on wings of faith to rest in God's carrying power far above harm and destruction. He moves not by striving, but by restfully abiding. He trusts in the soaring current of God's love...the Lord Himself bearing him up. Just as the eagle knows how to catch the rising flow of life through his knowledge of the currents, the one in Christ knows his faithful God and experiences this life by trusting and waiting.

When the eagle's mighty wing feathers become heavy with oil and dirt and his beak and talons become calcified and brittle, he retires to a hiding place in a cave or rock out of reach of predators and experiences a period of renewal. With his great beak he pulls out his mighty wing feathers one by one, then he extracts each claw. Finally, he begins to smash his beak against the rocks, until it too is gone. Left defenseless, this peerless, unique bird waits patiently until beak, talons, and feathers have regrown, emerging in his renewed condition stronger than before -- Every new creature in Christ experiences renewal as he lays aside those things inconsistent with the life of faith. As

he stands bare before the Lord, stripped of all that would keep him from leaning on Him alone, his strength is restored.

The eagle is known for its ferocity, yet no member of the bird family is more gentle and attentive to its young. At just the right time, the mother eagle begins to teach her eaglets how to fly. She gathers an eaglet onto her back and, spreading her wings, flies high. Suddenly she swoops out from under the eaglet and as it falls, it gradually learns what its wings are for until the mother catches it once again on her wings. Sometimes, the eaglet learns on the first try, but if not, the process is repeated many times. If the young is slow to learn or cowardly, she returns him to the nest, and begins to tear her nest apart, until there is nothing left for the eaglet to cling to. Then she nudges him off the cliff -- Those in Christ learn to depend on the faithful Father, knowing that underneath are His arms ready to bear His children up, to support and carry them through all of life's storms.

Just as this matchless bird has been given eyes that can see from great distance and can look directly into the sun and not be blinded, Christians are given spiritual eyes to see from afar; gifts of counsel, insight and vision are theirs. When others see only problems and turn their eyes to circumstances, those in Christ see beyond to the joy set before them and endure whatever cross must be borne. They see by the Spirit into the very depths of God, seeing in His nature the answers to all things.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

(Isaiah 40:31)