

THE HOLY SPIRIT

“Eagle”

I. Establishing the Symbol

1. Led by the Spirit of God – Isaiah 63:11-14

Isa 63:11-14

11 Then his people recalled the days of old, the days of Moses and his people-- where is he who brought them through the sea, with the shepherd of his flock? **Where is he who set his Holy Spirit among them,**

12 **who sent his glorious arm of power** to be at Moses' right hand, who divided the waters before them, to gain for himself everlasting renown,

13 **who led them through the depths?** Like a horse in open country, they did not stumble;

14 like cattle that go down to the plain, **they were given rest by the Spirit of the LORD. This is how you guided your people** to make for yourself a glorious name. NIV

All three themes mentioned are typical of the Holy Spirit: power, leading, and rest.

A. Power (vs. 12) – Acts 1:8 NIV

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

B. Leading (vs. 13) – Romans 8:14

“because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” NIV

C. Rest (vs. 14) – Isaiah 28:11-12

“¹¹Very well then, with foreign lips and strange tongues God will speak to this people, ¹²to whom he said, “This is the resting place, let the weary rest”; and, “This is the place of repose”-- but they would not listen.” NIV

It is evident that it was the Spirit of God that led them out of Egypt. The Spirit of God was on Moses and he was a leader. But the children of Israel were not directionally led by Moses. Another sign marked the way for them.

2. Led by the Pillar of Cloud – Exodus 13:17-22

Ex 13:17-18, 21

17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, “If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.”

18 **So God led** the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt armed for battle.

21 **By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night.** NIV

From Isaiah we understand that God led them by His Spirit. What the people followed was the pillar of cloud and fire. The pillar was the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit among the people. This sets the type for the cloud being the Holy Spirit, but this teaching is on eagles!

A. LORD like an Eagle – Deut. 32:9-12

Deut 32:9-12

9 For the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance.

10 In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste. He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye,

11 like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions.

12 The LORD alone led him; no foreign god was with him. NIV

Adam Clarke's Commentary Notes on Deut 32:11-

Deut 32:11

[As an eagle stirreth up her nest] Flutters over her brood to excite them to fly; or, as some think, disturbs her nest to oblige the young ones to leave it; so God by his plagues in Egypt obliged the Israelites, otherwise very reluctant, to leave a place which he appeared by his judgments to have devoted to destruction.

The Lord did stir up Israel to leave Egypt as an eagle stirs up her young. And He led them out, as we said before, by the pillar of cloud. But that is not the only way God describes their departure.

3. Carried on Eagles' Wings – Exodus 19:4

“You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.” NIV

[NIV Study Note: The description best fits the female golden eagle.]

The Spirit that was leading them, the manifest presence of God that was continually before them, is also called “carried on eagles' wings.” Thin as this thread may seem, I believe it is a tenable position to liken the Spirit of the living God to an eagle. As the Son of God is the Lion and the Lamb, so the Spirit of God is the Eagle and the Dove!

II. What Does the Eagle Tell Us About the Holy Spirit?

1. From Scripture – Deut 32:11-12 (An eagle with her young.)

Deut 32:11-13

11 like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions.

12 The LORD alone led him; no foreign god was with him.

13 He made him ride on the heights of the land and fed him with the fruit of the fields. He nourished him with honey from the rock, and with oil from the flinty crag, NIV

Before we look at the eagle and her young, I want us to take a closer look at verse 13 to see the type of life the Holy Spirit lead them to. We are given fruit to eat (fruit of the Spirit), as well as honey (the sweet Word of God received by revelation – Rev 10:9-11) and oil (the anointing)! Is this not the life that the Holy Spirit leads us to?

A. Stirs Up the Nest – to waken.

The word translated “stirs up” means to waken or be roused from sleep.

Isa 50:4-7

4 The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He **wakens** me morning by morning, **wakens** my ear to listen like one being taught.

5 The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears, and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back.

6 I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.

7 Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame. NIV

It is the Spirit of God that wakens us out of our slumber that we might be instructed by Him and accomplish His purposes.

Eph 5:14

for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "**Wake up [S# NT:1453]**, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." NIV

[NOTE: There are a great many uses of this word with regard to Jesus being raised from the dead and the dead being brought back to life.]

Rom 13:11 NIV

And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to **wake up [S# NT:1453]** from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

It is worth noting that in the context of the verse, the point of wakening is to get the eaglets out of the nest. In like manner, though God wants us to not forsake the fellowship of the brethren, He doesn't want us asleep and cloistering behind the four walls either!

B. Flutters Over – to warm.

Comment from Adam Clarke's Commentary-

[Fluttereth over her young] Y^aracheep (OT:7363), broodeth over them, communicating to them a portion of her own vital warmth: so did God, by the influences of his Spirit, enlighten, encourage, and strengthen their minds. It is the same word which is used in Gen 1:2.

Gen 1:2

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was **hovering** over the waters. NIV

Our brother Tim Keyes made an interesting observation. If there was no light until God said, “Let there be light!” what was the state of the water? If it wasn't frozen, it certainly must have been cold. The Spirit of God hovered over the waters. The Spirit of God warms us. Another implication of this word is relaxation. The Holy Spirit gives us rest and peace.

C. Spreads Out Her Wings and Catches – to cover and capture.

i. Spread wings – Ps 36:7

“How priceless is your unfailing love! Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.” NIV

When we talked about the dove, we talked about abiding under His wings. Being under His wings means being under His protection. But there are literal wings that Scripture speaks of also. They involve the cherubim and Christ and His church.

a. Cherubim

Ex 37:9 KJV

And **the cherubims spread out their wings on high**, and covered with their wings over the mercy seat, with their faces one to another; even to the mercy seatward were the faces of the cherubims.

1 Kings 8:7

For the **cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark**, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above. KJV

In a literal sense, cherubim are creatures (Rev 4:8; Ezek 1:5 with Ezek 10:2) and distinct from God. They form the chariot of God, hold up the glassy sea, and proclaim praise continually.

Symbolically, they represent the Godhead. This is seen in the mercy seat, which is one solid piece of gold (One) and three components: 2 cherubim (Father and Holy Spirit) and mercy seat (Lord Jesus). In the temple, the ark was placed under two large olive wood cherubim that were covered in gold. The entire ark then becomes representative of Jesus Christ, the Way, Truth, and Life as seen in the commandments, the manna, and the rod that budded. The overshadowing cherubim represent the Father and the Holy Spirit (gold is representative of that which is divine) who both had a part in His anointing (shown by the olive wood). The Father was the Anointer. The Spirit was the Anointing. The Son is the Anointed.¹

It is my belief that their wings are like eagle's wings. I base this on two major points: 1) the face of an eagle shows up among them, 2) at least one flies like an eagle (Rev 4:7).

I believe that when David writes of dwelling under the shadow of His wings, he is speaking:

- Spiritually – of being under God's protection and
- Physically – of being near enough to the ark (in the Tabernacle of David, which see) that its actual shadow covers him and
- Prophetically – that if he could see the Temple built, he would stay in the holy of holies.

b. Christ and His Church (The Corner of His Garment)

b.1. betrothal

Ezek 16:8-9

8 "Later I passed by, and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I **spread the corner of my garment over you** and covered your nakedness. I gave you my solemn

¹ Kevin J. Connor, *The Temple of Solomon*, Bible Temple Publishing, Portland, Oregon, 1988, p. 170-175

oath and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Sovereign LORD, and you became mine.

9 "I bathed you with water [baptism] and washed the blood from you [salvation] and put ointments on you [Holy Spirit anointing]. NIV (see 1 John 5:6-8)

This spreading of the garment (wing) over the woman represents betrothal. We see this in the story of Ruth and Boaz.

Ruth 3:8-9

8 In the middle of the night something startled the man, and he turned and discovered a woman lying at his feet.

9 "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer." NIV

We have been betrothed to Christ and covered by Him.

2 Cor 11:2

For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. NKJV

Gal 3:27 (see also Rom 13:12-14)

for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. NIV

b.2. healing

Mal 4:2

But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings¹. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall². NIV

Brown-Driver-Briggs' definition-

OT:3671 – **kanaph**¹ -- a wing, an extremity, an edge, winged, a border, a corner, a shirt

a) a wing

b) an extremity; a skirt, a corner (of a garment)

This Hebrew word, which is the primary word translated "wing", is also used to describe the edge of a garment.

Num 15:38-40 NIV

38 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the **corners**¹ of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel.

39 You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the LORD, that you may obey them and not prostitute yourselves by going after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes.

40 Then you will remember to obey all my commands and will be consecrated to your God.

² for "leaping like calves released from the stall" see Luke 13:10-16

Jesus fulfilled the law. There is no doubt that he wore the tassels which were a reminder of God's marriage covenant (the Ten Commandments) with Israel. It was most likely this portion of his garment that the woman with the issue of blood grasped.

Matt 9:20-22

20 And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment.

21 For she said to herself, "If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well."

22 But Jesus turned around, and when He saw her He said, "Be of good cheer, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour³. NKJV

Either word of this got out or people were aware of the promise of Malachi 4:2 because it happens again later on in Matthew.

Matt 14:34-36

34 When they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick,

36 and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well. NKJV

ii. Catches

Ezek 3:14

The Spirit then lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness and in the anger of my spirit, with the strong hand of the LORD upon me. NIV

We need to understand that the Holy Spirit can take hold of us. There are many who debate over some of the common manifestations of a move of the Spirit of God (shaking, slain in the Spirit, drunk in the Spirit, etc.). Many who are made uncomfortable by these manifestations appeal to the theology of freedom of will. God, they often say, would never violate your freedom of will. From this starting point, a leap in logic is made to say that a saint shouldn't lose motor control while under the influence of the Holy Spirit because "God wouldn't do that."

[Another argument brought forward is "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets (1 Cor 14:32)." One simple refute of this argument against slain in the spirit (which is inapt in itself to describe something that happens to the body) is that it is talking about their spirits, not their bodies.]

This teaching is not the place for a full discussion of the free will of man and the sovereignty of God. But we need to know that the Holy Spirit can take hold of us. Not only can He, He does! When my children make the free will choice to come to me and ask to be picked up and I comply, they lose some control of their body. When I pick them up, their bodies come under my control. Am I violating their freedom of will? Not technically. Who is bigger, us or the Holy Spirit? If we seek His face, it is very likely that He will take us to places we had not expected.

³ By being "covered by the edge of his garment" she was cleansed of her blood. Is this a reflection of Ezekiel 16:9?

Let me present another example. You are inside your house and feel confined. You want to go outside, but there is a windstorm warning in place. You weigh the boredom and safety of your confinement against the danger and excitement of being out in the wind. The wind wins out and you venture outdoors. Standing in the face of a 20 mph gale, you find your hair messed up, your clothes disheveled, and walking difficult. But then you start walking with the wind. You can almost manage to keep your pace to a fast walk, but speed and direction are largely determined by the wind. You are being propelled by a force stronger than yourself. Is your freedom of will being violated? Not exactly, you decided to step outside into the wind.

The illustration of the eagle involves her instruction of the young in flight. The eaglets eventually make a choice to jump out of the nest and test their wings. As they learn to fly (and soar), the mother eagle encourages, directs, and supports them with the tip of her wing. When we decide to jump into the wind of the Holy Spirit, we can be comforted in knowing that He is there to catch us on His wings and direct our flight.

D. Bears Them Up on Her Wings – to carry.

Sometimes offering support is not enough. It is reported that at times, when the eaglets are fatigued and can fly no more, that the mother actually carries the young on her back⁴. Often, our burdens are more than we can bear. The Holy Spirit helps us carry the load.

Num 11:17

I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them. They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone. NIV

Gal 6:2 “Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” NIV

2. From Nature

Having established some of what the Bible tells us about eagles and the Holy Spirit, let's look into the creation and see what lessons God has imbedded for us in the life of eagles.

A. Anatomy

i. Vision

- An eagle's eyes can be as large as a man's⁵. When we consider the ratio between our eyes and brain and the eagle's eyes and brain, for us to have eyes like an eagle would be like having eyes the size of baseballs.
- Unlike doves that are born blind, eagles are hatched with their eyes open⁶.

Acts 26:18

to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' NIV

⁴ See Adam Clarke's Commentary on Deut 32:11

⁵ Frank B. Gill, *Ornithology*, W. H. Freeman & Co., New York, 1990, p. 160

⁶ The Robinson Research World of Knowledge, www.robinsonresearch.com/ANIMALS/BIRDS/eagles.htm p. 4

- Their eyes have a resolving power (focusing ability) that is eight times that of the human eye⁷.
- Their eyes are positioned on their head in such a way that they can see forward and sideways. [Unlike doves,] they have good binocular vision which gives them good depth perception⁸.
- An eagle can see a rabbit from two miles away⁹.

As the dove deals with the singular, immediate and proximate vision, so the eagle deals with expansive “big picture” vision. In a certain sense, we can think of the dove’s vision as dealing with the here and now and the eagle’s vision as dealing with there and future.

ii. Voice

- The golden eagle is generally silent. Its sound has been described as a “kee-kee-kee”, or it may give a high-pitched scream or squeal¹⁰.

The eagle’s voice couldn’t be more different than the dove’s. The dove’s voice is low and warm (or a murmuring mournful sound). As such, it does not carry as far as an eagle’s screech. The dove’s voice is a close, intimate sound. The eagle squeals and screeches in a high-pitched scream that carries its message far and wide. The eagle’s voice, like its vision, goes farther and wider than the dove’s.

In Scripture, we learn that the voice of the eagle:

- Gives warning of judgment – Rev 8:13
- Proclaims the eternal gospel – Rev 14:6-7¹¹

iii. Flight

- Eagles take off with powerful flaps of their wings. But they are most spectacular when soaring. Eagles spread their wings (a golden eagle’s wingspan is from 6.5’ to 7.5’) and catch thermals that carry them high into the air, sometimes as high as 14,000’!¹² The other updrafts they are fond of riding are those caused when wind meets a mountain or cliff side. Eagles can soar on these thermals and updrafts for hours on end at from 28 to 44 mph.¹³ [The application of this seems pretty obvious. Not only does the Holy Spirit give us wings like eagles, He is the wind that carries us along as well!]
- When diving for prey, eagles can reach speeds of 150 to 200 mph.¹⁴ As the Bible says, they are swift fliers.

⁷ Joe Van Wormer, *Eagles*, Lodestar Books, E. P. Dutton, New York, 1985, p. 5

⁸ *ibid.*, p.12

⁹ Merebeth Switzer, *Nature’s Children: Eagles*, Canada, 1985, p. 25

¹⁰ Wormer, p. 13

¹¹ This we get from the word “flying” which is Strong’s number NT:4072. It is used every where else to describe the flight of eagles (Rev 4:7; 8:13; 12:14) except where it refers to carrion birds in Rev 19:17. But even Rev 19:17 can be understood as being eagles in light of Job 39:27-30 and Matt 24:28.

¹² Helen Roney Satter, *The Book of Eagles*, Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, New York, 1989, p. 12

¹³ Wormer, p. 5

¹⁴ *ibid.*

Deut 28:49

The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, **as swift as the eagle flies**, a nation whose language you will not understand, NKJV

- All birds molt, but eagles do not lose all their large wing-feathers in a single annual molt, so they are able to maintain flying ability.¹⁵ **[This is part of our strength being renewed like the eagle's – Ps 103:5]**

Ps 103:5

who satisfies your desires with good things so that **your youth is renewed like the eagle's**. NIV

- When it is time for golden eagles to begin flying, the parents start cutting back on their food rations **[can you say fasting?]**. This brings their weight down and gives them the hunger to hunt.¹⁶ To entice them to fly, the mother eagle will sit away from the nest with food in her talons. She will then call to her young encouragingly in high-pitched squeaks. Because the young eagle is hungry, he is forced to fly to his mother for food.¹⁷ **[Have you ever received your healing or deliverance while ministering to others? – see Job 42:10]**

Job 42:10

And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, **when he prayed for his friends**: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. KJV

- An eagle's wings are a miracle in lightweight design. A female bald eagle can have a wingspan nearly 8' and yet the wings weigh less than two pounds. Pound for pound, an eagle's wing is stronger than the wing of an airplane.¹⁸

B. Eating Habits (golden and snake eagles)

i. Hunting

- The golden eagle makes fast diving, sudden strikes on its prey. (It can hit with a force greater than a rifle bullet.) It can also attack flying birds such as grouse, ducks, and geese and is able to pluck them out of the air.¹⁹
- Eagles are raptors, which means "birds of prey." The term comes from the Latin word meaning "plunderer."²⁰
- Once an eagle has spotted its prey, it does not take its eye off of it until it strikes.²¹
- Eagles take prey on land, in the air, and at sea. **[This speaks to us of the Holy Spirit aiding us in taking the kingdom of God into the three battle zones: the sea, air and earth.]**

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 9

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p.34

¹⁷ Switzer, p. 6

¹⁸ John Bonnett Wexo, *Eagles*, Creative Education, Mankato, Minnesota, 1989, p. 10

¹⁹ Wormer, p. 27

²⁰ Sattler., p. 7

²¹ *ibid.*, p. 12

The Three Battle Zones-

Gen 1:26 NKJV

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; **let them have dominion over** the fish of **the sea**, over the birds of **the air**, and over the cattle, over **all the earth** and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Deut 5:8

'You shall not make for yourself any carved image--any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; NKJV

1 Cor 10:19-20

19 Do I mean then that a sacrifice offered to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything?

20 No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. NIV

In Deuteronomy we read that no idols should be made that represents anything in heaven, earth or the sea. In Corinthians we are told that idols are demons. Ergo, demons inhabit these three realms. As eagles take prey in the air, land, and sea so must we do battle in these three realms.

Rev 10:5-7

5 Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven.

6 And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, "There will be no more delay!

7 But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets." NIV

Rev 12:12

Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short." NIV

Rev 12:12

Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants [word not found in several Greek texts] of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. KJV

Though the word "inhabiters" is not in many Greek texts, it does seem implied when compared to the "ye that dwell in them [heavens]." This begs the question of who dwells in the sea.

- Snake eagles pounce on their prey near the head, breaking the snake's neck and paralyzing it. It has short, thick toes that grasp snakes well and its legs and feet are covered in thick scales to protect them from snake bites.²²
- The eagle crushes the snake's head with its beak and then swallows the snake whole, headfirst. The venom is digested and does not harm the eagle.²³

Gen 3:15

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; **he will crush your head**, and **you will strike his heel**." NIV

Mark 16:17-18

17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;
18 **they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all**; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." NIV

Luke 10:19

I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; **nothing will harm you**. NIV

As long as we are talking about snake eagles:

- **The following are insights presented in The Tabernacle of Moses teaching series with regard to the banner of the tribe of Dan.**

Gen 49:17

Dan will be a serpent by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider tumbles backward. NIV

The above is Jacob's blessing over Dan. Each tribe had an ensign and each division of Israel had a banner. These banners were designed based upon a combination of the color of the gem their names were engraved on in the high priest's ephod, the words that Israel spoke over them in blessing.

Num 2:1-2

1 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron:

2 "The Israelites are to camp around the Tent of Meeting some distance from it, each man under his standard with the banners of his family." NIV

Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the banners-

Num 2:1-2

According to rabbinical tradition, the standard of Judah bore the figure of a lion, that of Reuben the likeness of a man or of a man's head, that of Ephraim the

²² Sattler, p. 16

²³ *ibid.*, p. 56

figure of an ox, and **that of Dan the figure of an eagle**; so that the four living creatures united in the cherubic forms described by Ezekiel were represented upon these four standards.

Towards the north, above the tent of Ahiezer the son of Dan, there floated a motley standard of white and red, like the jaspis (or, as some say, a carbuncle), in which the name of Dan was engraved upon the breastplate. The crest upon this was an eagle, the great doe [*sic*] to serpents, which had been chosen by the leader in the place of a serpent, because his forefather Jacob had compared Dan to a serpent, saying, 'Dan is a serpent in the way, an adder (cerastes, a horned snake) in the path;' but Ahiezer substituted the eagle, the destroyer of serpents as he shrank from carrying an adder upon his flag.")

Dan had the position of rear guard in the march of the armies of Israel.

Num 10:25

Finally, **as the rear guard for all the units, the divisions of the camp of Dan** set out, under their standard. Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai was in command. NIV

The Lord is our rear guard.

Isa 52:12b "the God of Israel will be your rear guard." NIV

- European snake eagles also eat frogs, rats, birds, and insects!²⁴
- Eagles are diurnal. They hunt during the day and sleep at night.²⁵
- Just as an aside: There are 5 genera and 12 species of snake eagles.²⁶ There are 9 genera of booted eagles (the golden eagle is a booted eagle).²⁷

ii. Eaglets

- Young eagles have enormous appetites. They eat almost as much food as the adults, who can eat one to two pounds of food a day.²⁸
- Eagles are gentle parents. They patiently tear off tiny pieces of meat to feed one by one to their chicks.²⁹

Job 39:27-30

27 Does the eagle soar at your command and build his nest on high?

28 He dwells on a cliff and stays there at night; a rocky crag is his stronghold.

29 From there he seeks out his food; his eyes detect it from afar.

30 His young ones feast on blood, and where the slain are, there is he." NIV

²⁴ Sattler, p. 44

²⁵ Wexo, p. 6

²⁶ Sattler, p. 56

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 40

²⁸ Wormer, p. 30 and Sattler, p. 22

²⁹ Sattler, p. 38

The eagle's upbringing in diet couldn't be more different from the dove's. Where the dove is given "pigeon's milk" and later grows up to eat seeds, the eaglet is brought up on a diet of meat and blood.

- Eaglets eat voraciously and grow rapidly on the diet of meat. If a human baby grew at the rate of an eaglet, which can weigh forty times what it did at hatching within forty-five days, a seven-week-old could weigh 300 pounds!³⁰

This would be unhealthy for physical babies, but not for spiritual ones.

- **Mixed metaphors – The Holy Spirit is called a seal in Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30. The seal is one of the symbols used of the Holy Spirit that we are not going to look at in depth independently. But it warrants some examination at this point. One thing a seal does is leave its image on whatever it stamps. In this light, we can understand Jesus' comment that those born of the Spirit are like the wind (John 3:8) and His admonition that we are to be gentle as doves (Matt 10:16). Because the Holy Spirit is like wind and like a dove, He can work both qualities into our lives because He seals us. In like manner, when He relates to us as the eagle, we take on similar eagle characteristics. [Please note that we are not talking about animism or manifesting the spirit of animals!] In this light, let us examine the next point.**
- **We are to desire the sincere milk of the Word (1 Pet 2:2). This is a good and an ongoing need. But those approaching full age need strength to be able to take their place as spiritual warriors. They need to be bathed in the blood of Jesus and fed on the strong meat of the Word (Heb 5:14 KJV).**

iii. Adults

- The beak of an eagle can tear, cut, crush (or carry) depending on what is being eaten [no, it is not made by Ronco!].³¹
- An adult eagle eats every part of a prey – bones, fur, feathers, or scales and all. Its stomach can sort out good food from pieces that are of no value. The parts that cannot be digested are coughed up in the form of hard pellets.³²

Now, let's compare this to the eating habits of the young. The eaglets are only given meat. Once they mature on this diet, their stomachs are then able discern between the good and the bad.

- **There is a proverb we give to people as they begin to examine all the information there is to eat out there in Greater Christendom. It is this, "eat the fish and spit out the bones." This is exactly what an adult eagle does.**
- **Strong meat belongs to the mature.**
Heb 5:14
But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. KJV

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 41

³¹ Wormer, p. 12

³² Switzer, p. 29

- The Spirit of truth (John 15:26) teaches us the truth (1 John 2:20,27) and causes us to discern truth from error (1 John 4:6).
- Avoiding error requires the Spirit and the Word.
Matt 22:29
Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. NIV

C. Mating Habits

i. Courting

- Eagles court through the use of spectacular flying exhibitions at high speeds.³³

One could almost call this an aerial dance! With regard to Christ and His bride, there is:

- Meeting Him in the air. (1 Thes 4:13)
- The Spirit of God is a spirit of dance. (John 4:14 “springing up”)
- We will dance at the wedding. (Rev 19:7 rejoice = jump for joy)

- Eagles mate for life.³⁴
- Golden eagles prefer rocky cliffs as their nesting sites.³⁵

This reminds us that we are to trust in the Rock, our High Tower!

Ps 144:1-2

- 1 Praise be to the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle.
- 2 He is my loving God and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me. NIV

Ps 61:1-4

- 1 Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer.
- 2 From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
- 3 For you have been my refuge, a strong tower against the foe.
- 4 I long to dwell in your tent forever and take refuge in the shelter of your wings.
Selah NIV

ii. Breeding and Rearing

- Eagles usually lay two eggs each of which are about twice the size of a chicken egg.³⁶
- The female does most of the incubating (43 to 45 days for golden eagles) while the male supplies the food.³⁷

³³ Wormer, p. 22

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 21

³⁶ Wormer, p. 24

³⁷ *ibid.*

In this we again see the principle of the Holy Spirit and the church working together in evangelism and discipleship.

- During incubation, the male patrols the nesting area, protects the nest, and feeds its mate.³⁸
- For the first week, parents brood the chicks constantly. They keep them warm in the cold and shade them from the sun.

When we consider that an eaglet only weighs about 3 to 4 ounces at hatching³⁹ and may only weigh 24 ounces by the end of the second week⁴⁰ and that a female golden eagle can have a wingspan of 7.5', we get a dramatic picture of what it means to dwell "under the shadow of His wings." (Ps. 17:8)

Those are some insights that we gain from the behavior and make up of the eagle. Next, we want to understand what it means to mount up on eagle's wings.

III. On Wings of Eagles

1. Executing Judgment

Hos 8:1-3

- 1 "Put the trumpet to your lips! An eagle is over the house of the LORD because the people have broken my covenant and rebelled against my law.
- 2 Israel cries out to me, 'O our God, we acknowledge you!'
- 3 But Israel has rejected what is good; an enemy will pursue him. NIV

The motif of an eagle swooping down speaks of swift and impending judgment. (See also Jer 48:40-42; 49:22) Look at the message of the eagle in Revelation.

Rev 8:13

As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!" NIV

The eagle proclaims woe because he is warning of impending judgment. When we combine the symbol of the eagle with that of the dove we have a picture of the conviction of sin (the sacrificed dove), righteousness (the dove as a clean bird), and judgment (the eagle as a bird of war). But even in the simple context of the eagle itself (as a bird of prey), we can see these three principles.

Isa 46:9-13

9 Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.

³⁸ Sattler, p. 21

³⁹ Wormer, p. 25

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 31

10 I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.
 11 From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do.
 12 Listen to me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are far from righteousness.
 13 I am bringing my righteousness near, it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, my splendor to Israel. NIV

In verse 11 the Lord warns that He has summoned a bird of prey. This is the warning of impending judgment. He cries out to His people because they are far from righteousness (vs. 12). And in verse 13 salvation is promised (conviction of sin).

2. Renewing Strength

Ps 103:2-5

2 Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits--
 3 who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,
 4 who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion,
 5 who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. NIV

The Lord renews our strength like the eagle. The life span of an eagle in the wild is figured at 20 years. Some have lived 40 years in captivity. This is a long-lived bird!

Isa 40:31

but those who hope in the LORD will **renew**^a their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. NIV

Brown-Driver-Briggs' definition-

OT:2498 – **chalaph**^a -- to pass on or away, to pass through, to pass by, to go through, to grow up, **to change**, to go on from

- a) (Qal)
 - 1) to pass on quickly
 - 2) to pass away (vanish)
 - 3) to come on anew, to sprout again (of grass)
 - 4) to pass through
 - 5) to overstep, to transgress
- b) (Piel) to cause to pass, to change
- c) (Hiph)
 - 1) to change, to substitute, to alter, to change for better, to renew
 - 2) to show newness (used of a tree)

Ps 102:26

They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak **You will change them**^a, **And they will be changed**^a. NKJV

Once we understand the connection between renewing one's strength and changing clothing we can get an understanding of how the Holy Spirit renews our strength. The eagle's strength is

renewed when he molts his old feathers for new ones. Ours is renewed day by day and firmly established in the day.

2 Cor 4:16

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. NIV

Rom 8:11

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. NIV

This promise of receiving lives for our mortal bodies is for the here-and-now not just for the ever after. But what He works in us today is just a portion of what shall be.

2 Cor 5:1-3

1 Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.

2 Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling,

3 because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. NIV

1 Cor 15:51-53 NIV

51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-

52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

3. Transporting to Safety

Rev 12:13-14

13 When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.

14 The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach. NIV

The Holy Spirit can physically transport us like he did with Elijah and Philip or spiritually transport us like he did with Ezekiel, Paul, and John. Either way, one thing is sure. When we mount up on wings like eagles by the power of the Holy Spirit, the serpent cannot reach us!

Conclusion-

By a close examination of eagles both in Scripture and in nature, we have seen a unique and intricate picture of one of the ways in which the Holy Spirit relates to us. As Jesus is the Lion and the Lamb, the Holy Spirit is the Eagle and the Dove. As the eagle, He causes us to see far and speak far. As the eagle, He feeds us on a diet of strong meat and teaches us to rise up on His wind, fly over the mountain, and be safe from the serpent's bite. As the eagle, He leads us to war against all the power of the enemy. And in all our days, He renews our strength like that of the eagle that we may run and not grow weary, that we may walk and not grow faint! Amen!