

“Soaring Like Eagles”

by Marli Spieker

Have you ever wondered where people go to when their hearts are crushed and their spirits broken? When the pain is intense, and nobody is able to understand them or to offer help, not even those they love most? Believe me, this is a tough place to be! I have been there. Actually I'm still in this place of suffering. You see, when our 28 year old son, the joy of our lives, died a terrible death a year ago, I felt as if a knife pierced my soul. Pain and despair settled inside my brain and my heart. However, when I was at the very edge of hopelessness, I experienced the presence and comfort of my God. The Bible says that: “God is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” (Ps 34:18)

You and I know that grieving and healing take time, a lot of time! It is only because I have known God for so many years, that I have been able to trust and wait on him. I've learned about Him in His holy book, the Bible and not only that, but I have experienced His character in my own life; such as His faithfulness, His love, and His compassion. There is a Bible verse that has comforted me many times: “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint (Is 40:31).” That's what God is doing for me, my friend. He has carried me through this time of deep sorrow and He has delivered me from despair. Yes, I mourn and grieve, but I have hope! I am waiting for God to heal my wounded heart. As I wait on Him, He is renewing my strength and making me fly like the eagle - way above my pain and my circumstances.

Well, I did not want to talk about me. I wanted to talk about eagles today. You might wonder, “What is so special about eagles? What does it mean to wait upon the Lord?” and “What does this have to do with the renewal of strength?”

Did you know that the eagle is called the King of the birds? It is! It flies higher than any other bird and is the most majestic of all birds created by our God. She builds her nest up high on the cliff of a mountain or in the tallest trees. The eagle is a huge bird - about 90cm (or 35 inches) tall! Its wing span reaches about 2m (or six and a half feet).

And, would you believe it? Its nest is big enough for a human being to sleep in!

The eagle can teach us a lot about God and also about ourselves. Today I will focus on the way eagles learn to fly. Next time we will learn how eagles can master the winds and renew their strength. Well, baby eagles behave very much like any baby in the world. They just open their beaks and Mama eagle keeps busy filling their mouths several times a day. Eat and sleep - that's what they do all day and all night for weeks.

The eaglets grow and the time comes for them to get out of the nest! Mama eagle starts hovering over her nest. She circles the nest a few times and dives into the nest shaking it violently. Then, suddenly she takes one bird into her mouth and while holding it fast, flies up high into the skies. Wow...the little eaglet starts to tremble. “This is crazy!” he thinks.

And that's not all! All of a sudden Mama eagle drops the baby eaglet from a high altitude. The little bird begins to struggle and chirp in despair as it falls through the air. Just before the eaglet smashes against a rock, there is Mama eagle, swooping down and picking it up, carrying it on her wings! She repeats the process five to eight times. Each time the struggle gets worse. But soon Baby eaglet starts flapping its little wings with more vigor and confidence. Finally it happens. Baby eagle starts to fly away just like Mama!

Think with me for a moment: You and I are God's creation, just like the eagles. But, unlike the eagles, the Bible tells us that our first parents rebelled and sinned against God. You see, every human being is born a sinner and far from God. This is why there is so much evil in this world. The Bible says: “For all have sinned and fall short

of the glory of God (Rom 3:23a).” But the Bible also says that: “God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).” When a person believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior, this person is born into the family of God because the Bible says that: “To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God (Jn1:12).” To be born again is a life-changing and marvelous experience. God’s forgiveness, peace and joy become a personal reality.

Those who believe in Jesus Christ are at first like baby eagles. They are comfortable in just receiving their spiritual food from reading the Bible, or listening to a radio message, or going to church. After that, they go back to “sleep,” like the baby eagle, for a few days until it’s time to go to church or to listen to the radio program again. But then one day the nest is shaken. Something unexpected, uncomfortable, maybe even painful, happens. They struggle and wonder what is happening and usually they don’t know what to do. In those moments of upheaval some will blame the devil, who is the enemy of God. Others might blame people or circumstances. What we need to understand is that our loving heavenly Father, our God, is the One who allows our “nest”, (that is, our lives) to be shaken. He wants us to grow up to maturity so that we too learn how to fly on our own, just like the eagles. He wants us to learn how to face life’s challenges with faith in Him, trusting that He will never leave us or forsake us!

There is something else - all eagles are *born* to fly!! There is no point in being an eagle if you don’t know how to fly up in the sky! In the same way, there is no point in being in this world without reflecting the very character of God, without trusting in Him and His word in everything we do! That’s why we need to remember that when bad things happen to us, this is the time when God is teaching us to fly. However, through it all, we should never forget that He is right there with us! Like Mama eagle He encourages us to flap our wings and if we are unable to make it on our own, He comes to rescue us by taking us upon His everlasting and strong wings! What a comfort and assurance for us!

Remember? The Bible says: “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles.” (Is 40:31)

So many times I have to cry out to God and say: “Please come and help me, God! I am falling I am not making it! And every time I have experienced that He is always just a prayer away. He hears, always hears my prayer. So I want to encourage you to ask the Lord to help you when life gets tough my friend. Don’t be afraid. Don’t try to fix life’s mess on your own. Cry out to God and trust in Him. Believe me He’ll hear your prayers, as He has heard each one of mine!

God is like the mother eagle. We can learn from the way a mother eagle treats her baby eaglets, how God treats us, his children. And the wonderful thing is that even when we are slow learners and forget to flap our wings, He does not let us crash. Just when it seems that we are going under, He picks us up.

I am saying this because I know that hard times will come to you. They come to every one of us. No one escapes trials and troubles. But the good thing is that if we trust God when these times come our way, we start to pray a little bit more; to read God’s word, the Bible, a little more; to trust Him more and suddenly we realize He’s answering our prayers. We’re not helpless any more because we have learned to spread our wings and fly life’s skies with confidence on the promises that God makes to us in His word, the Bible.

Well my dear friend, now you know a little bit more about me. Just like everyone else, I have my pressures and face trials. It is not easy. Life hurts. Love hurts. But we can learn to fly away, to fly high above our circumstances and to trust completely on our God. He is real. He is right at your side right now. Will you do as I did? Will you pray and ask God to teach you? Will you ask Him to fly with you over this dark time in your life? Remember our verse today: “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles.” (Is 40:31)