

## The Wings of an Eagle, the Hands of a Man, and the Feet of a Calf

### Wings of an Eagle

The wings of an eagle signify not only the resurrection power of Christ but His resurrection power applied to us **to become our grace**. Eagles are graceful, powerful, and strong. When they soar, eagles appear to be peaceful, free, and boundless. The Bible uses the eagle as a symbol to signify **our God as the Spirit** with His resurrection power applied to us to become **our grace**.

Exodus 19:4 says, *"You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself."* Here God, likening Himself to an eagle, came to the children of Israel in Egypt, bore them on His wings, and brought them to Himself. Surely this was His grace. The children of Israel were suffering under the tyranny of the Egyptians and cried out to God. He heard their cry and came to save them. He arranged all the plagues, the last of which killed all the firstborn in Egypt, except for those in the households that were passed over. This caused the children of Israel to finally be released to make an exodus from Egypt. When they came to the Red Sea and were seemingly trapped by the Egyptian army, God opened up the Red Sea and brought them across. When they were thirsty, God brought them to Elim and later caused water to flow from out of the rock. When they were hungry, God rained down manna from heaven. God is like **a great eagle**, and **He cared** for the children of Israel by bearing them on eagles' wings **through the wilderness**, eventually **bringing them to Himself**... Grace is not only for our supply as our enjoyment but also to empower us to overcome all kinds of situations.

Research shows that eagles have the ability to detect winds called **thermals**, which are rising currents of warm air. They perch in a high place, such as a rock or a tree, waiting for a warm column of air to rise from the earth. When the current rises, the eagles stretch out their wings and soar. Many other birds depend on flapping their wings for flight, but eagles do not flap their wings much. Actually, they will die if they expend too much energy flapping their wings while in flight. Instead, they soar with the assistance of the thermals. The body of an adult eagle is between two to four feet long, but their wings can span to more than seven feet in length. Upon detecting a warm updraft, they leave their perch and glide on the air. Eagles can soar higher than many birds without the use of their own strength. They **let the air carry them**.

I am impressed with the physical symbol of the eagle, and this has helped me to understand Isaiah 40:31. We need to wait on Jehovah, renewing our strength, by stopping what we are doing. When we sense the Spirit move, we need to stretch out our wings and let Him carry us. This should characterize our Christian life. It should not be characterized by how strongly we flap our "wings." Rather, we should stretch out our wings and let the air carry us. For this reason, it is important to wait. We need to be patient and **not be anxious** to do something. Instead, we should wait **until the right moment**, stretch out our wings, and soar with the move of the Spirit. The four living creatures have strong wings like that of eagles, but they do not flap their wings. They fly by soaring and gliding. We need to wait on Jehovah, which means that we need to terminate ourselves, stopping ourselves, in all our living, our doing, and our activity, and receive God in Christ as our life, our person, and our replacement.

### Hands of a Man

Paul's writings indicate that although he experienced the eagle's wings, he was still **very human in his living**, taking **the human way** and doing things in a human way. The living creatures bear the appearance of a man, and **under their wings are the hands of a man**, indicating that the living creatures live as a man. They do

things in a human way. In 1 Thessalonians 2:7-8 Paul wrote to the recently saved believers in Thessalonica, *"We were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children. **Yearning in this way over you**, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, **because you became beloved to us.**"* Paul was not merely a powerful, spiritual evangelist who considered that his work in Thessalonica was completed after he preached the gospel and raised up a church. In verse 8 he says that he yearned over the saints. According to footnote 1 on verse 8, the word **yearning...over** means *"being affectionately fond of, affectionately desirous of."* The saints in Thessalonica were not merely an object of gospel preaching to Paul—they became beloved to him. Paul loved them and was affectionately fond and desirous of them to the point that he was well pleased to impart to them not only the gospel but also his own soul. This is a rare kind of Christian worker. Gospel preachers in Christianity today limit themselves to their spiritual work. However, Paul was an apostle who imparted to the saints not only the gospel of God but also **his own soul** because they were beloved to him.

Paul was very human. In 1 Timothy 5:23 he wrote to Timothy, *"No longer drink water only, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses."* Similarly, in 2 Timothy 4:20 Paul says, *"Erastus remained in Corinth, and Trophimus I left at Miletus sick."* Paul was a great apostle who miraculously healed many sick ones. He was so powerful that people were healed simply by touching his handkerchief (Acts 19:11-12). Yet when Timothy, his close co-worker, became sick, he advised him to drink a little wine, and he also left another co-worker sick in a certain place. **We may wonder why he allowed these things rather than exercising his gift to heal them.**

There were miraculous things in the **early days** of the church, but as the church grew, after it had been established for a while, and especially in the time of its decline, the **need was much greater for the inner life than works of power and of healing.** What is needed in the days of decline and degradation is not miraculous power but the exercise and the discipline of the inner life to stabilize the church in a very human way. Thus, although Paul was very spiritual and his revelation was high, he was very **human** in his work, living, and conduct. He conducted himself in a very human way.

### Feet of a Calf

The apostle Paul speaks of walking with the straight feet of a calf. In 2 Corinthians 2:17 he says, *"We are not like the many, adulterating the word of God for profit; but as out of sincerity, but as out of God, before God we speak in Christ."* When we speak the word of God, we do not and should not adulterate or change anything to appease men. To do this is crookedness. Paul says, *"As God is faithful, our word toward you is **not yes and no**."* He preached Christ **purely** and **straightforwardly**. This is to walk straightforwardly with the straight feet of a calf. In 1 Thessalonians 2:3 Paul says, *"Our exhortation is not out of deception nor out of uncleanness nor in guile."* In our serving the Lord and moving with Him, we need to learn to walk with straight feet, having no crookedness.

According to Paul, we should love with a mind full of knowledge and discernment. This knowledge and discernment are Christ Himself; when we experience Christ, He becomes our knowledge and discernment, our perceptive power. The more we experience Christ, the more we will discern matters not by our cleverness but by the Christ who lives within us. When the Lord Jesus was on the earth, He was very discerning. When the religionists spoke to Him in a deceitful way with evil thoughts, He discerned what was going on in their minds. By our learning and experience, we need to develop our discernment and sensitive perception. *(Excerpt from the Ministry of the Word: Crystallization-Study of Ezekiel (1), 123-151)*