

# Eagles

There used to be a band called 'The Eagles'. You'll be relieved to hear this talk is not about them or their music... Instead it's about the Eagle - the raptor bird!

The Bible does give us some insights into God in heaven. We learn about 'four living creatures'. One place is Ezekiel 10 and the another is Revelation 4. Both have one of the living creatures with the 'face' of an eagle!

***Ezekiel 10:14** - "Each of the cherubim had four faces: one face was that of a cherub, the second the face of a human being, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle."*

***Revelation 4:7** - "The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle."*

## **Golden Eagle. Scotland. BBC Countryfile**

Here's a YouTube Clip of a Golden Eagle in Scotland (from Countryfile) – <https://youtu.be/EpZbr6EnGsU> (link checked April 2019)

## **Bald Headed Eagle Catches Salmon**

Direct link – <https://youtu.be/hecXupPpE9o> (link checked April 2019)

## **The life of an eagle and lessons we can learn!**

These are some points we can learn from the eagle, from the way they are, what they do and how God made them to be. Let's crack on...

### **1. The little eaglet is completely reliant on their parent**

As Christians, our faith and trust must be in God alone. No-one else can help us.

***Psalm 121.1** says, "I lift my eyes to the hills. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth."*

### **2. Eagles keep clean by bathing**

Eagles keep clean so they can fly without hindrance. In the same way, we need to keep 'clean' before God. We need to be right with God and with other people around us. Now God has forgiven our sins already,

but we sin creates barriers with God and with each other.

***Psalm 51.7** says, "Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."*

### **3. Eagles clean all their feathers**

Feathers so important for flying and hunting. They apparently pass every feather through their beak. This can apparently mean cleaning up to 7000 feathers. This keeps the feathers oiled, clean and fresh - ready for flight. All birds have to clean their feathers. The eagle also cleans its beak. We also need to check ourselves as God tells us our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit - God lives in us so we should take care of ourselves - spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally.

***1 Corinthians 6:19** - "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own."*

### **While we're here... Myth buster**

It is complete nonsense that they pull out their feathers and their beak and it re-grows!! This would kill the eagle who needs to fly and use its beak to catch food! The internet is full of this myth, but it is exactly that - not true!

### **4. Eagles Fly Together**

Eagles mate for life and apparently even 'recommit' each year before mating. They do a courtship flight / mating ritual. What they do is fly together and one flips upside down and present talons to the other one and then lock talons. Sometimes they do a swirl and then break before hitting ground and fly back up, sometimes do it again. (A similar behaviour is used by one male to fight off another bizarrely!!) (It is also said that male eagles sometimes bring a green twiglet to their female on a daily basis!)

In April 2012 we visited Colorado in the US and spent a lot of time in the Rocky Mountain National Park. Over recent years, God has spent a lot of time speaking to me about being an eagle and 'soaring high' with him, spiritually (and often physically, up mountains!) While we were visiting the Rockies, we saw 2 eagles flying together high up. This really spoke to us about God's will to be like eagles flying high with God.

*God said this in the Bible, "It is not good for man to be alone" (**Genesis 2.18**)*

***2 Samuel 1:23** - "Saul and Jonathan (insert your name and another person's name here!) - in life they were loved and admired, and in death they were not parted. They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions."*

It is really important that we find people who we can relate to / fly together / be on the same level in what we do and for God. We want to lift each other up, not be dragged down with the crowd. Today, pray for your soul-mate, your sole-mate, your soar-mate :)

## **Eagle Mating Ritual**

Direct Link – <https://youtu.be/L8D9Fe7tv8Y> (link checked April 2019)

## **5. Protecting the Young**

Eagles can live many years (30 or so) but survival is only 50% in first year. Often the stronger sibling can kill the other one or attack / humans etc / lack of food / diseased food (eg DDT poison had got into water supply and food chain and started killing eagles). Eagles only have 2-3 eggs a year - know how many they can cope with. One breed of eagle apparently knows not to breed when food is scarce! (Who says there's no God when you find this!) Both male and female also incubate the eggs - working together to bring up the young.

They also need a secure nest. The nest can be up to 20 feet deep, 10 ft wide and weigh up to a ton. Usually on a high rock. Sometimes stick by stick build their own and build on it each year when they return to the same nest. Inaccessible to predators. Always within a mile of fresh water. Dad apparently often brings along 'toys' for the young ones - shiny things, bones etc!

All of this speaks about care. We know that God cares about us passionately and even promises good things to his people. We also need to support each other and look out for each other as Christians. Here are two Bible verse worth reading...

***Galatians 6.9-10*** - "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

***Psalm 84.11*** - "For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favour and honour; no good thing does he withhold from those whose way of life is blameless."

## **6. Empowering the young**

The Bible tells us this in **1 Timothy 4.2** - "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

But if we are young (in age or in our Christian life), we have to know that there's lots to learn! God takes us on a journey with him to understand his will and he trains us to do this, often using other people. Elisha followed Elijah. Elijah had a school of prophets. Paul the apostle trained different people and wrote letters to new churches to help them in doing God's will and work. But a good church is one where young people are allowed to take part. In our church, young people are involved in all areas pretty much - worship, kids work, refreshments, doing services and more.

In the life of the eagle, the young ones called 'eaglets' are trained to fly by the parent pushing them out of their nest. The eaglet then plummets towards the ground and then at the 11th hour, the parent swoops in and catches on its wings. Takes it back up and then does this again to teach the young one to fly. Often God does this with us - he asks us to step out of the 'nest' in faith. But he will catch us and not allow us to be destroyed. Peter had to get out of the boat to walk on the water. Often Jesus asks us to do the same!

**Deuteronomy 32:11** - *"...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."*

## 7. Flying High

Some believe the eagle can fly above the storm. Others say that the eagle actually isn't designed for very high altitude flight. The website [www.baldeagleinfo.com](http://www.baldeagleinfo.com) informs us that eagles have great endurance in flight and can soar for long periods of time. To do this they use 'thermals' - rising currents of warm air and updrafts found around mountain slopes / the edges of valleys. They soar effortlessly and 'ride' numerous thermals to travel long-distance, often not attempting flight until later in the day when the warmer thermals have formed.

**Isaiah 40.31** - *but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

**Prov 30.19-20** - *"There are three things that are too amazing for me, four that I do not understand: the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock..."*

The writer of the Proverb says that the way of eagle we don't understand... Eagles are amazing. They can launch 15ft into air in one jump. Can be up to 12,000 ft in minutes. Pilots at 25,000 ft have apparently seen eagles. The pilots have had to move the plane around the eagle as it's so single minded it's not moving!

## 8. Fighting off and killing the enemy

We know that there is a battle raging, between good and evil. This battle is between God and Satan, the devil. The eagle also has enemies. Often when catching food, it finds an animal such as a goat near the edge of a cliff and literally drags it over the edge to its death! OK, so this isn't exactly an enemy, but it is a lesson that we have to be on the offensive as Christians. God has given us every place where our feet tread.

When the eagle catches thermals, it actually out-flies its enemies (raven / crow). This is a picture that God has enabled his people to out fly the enemy. We don't respond like with like, we don't get involved in hate or bitterness. Instead, God calls us to rise up higher. As one picture puts it, when rubbish gets thrown at you, just stand on the rubbish and climb higher.

Another enemy of the eagle is the snake. One way that the eagle fights the snake is to get hold of it and drop it on the rock. The eagle then decapitates the snake (removes its head). OR the eagle sometimes gets hold of the snake in its talons (a dangerous move as the snake continues its attack on the eagle). Eventually the eagle squeezes the life out of the snake. Then it decapitates the snake.

This enemy describes Satan, who comes as a snake in Genesis 3 to tempt Eve and Adam. We win by prayer and taking everything to God - he has already defeated evil and won the ultimate victory!

**James 4:7** - *"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."*

**Colossians 2.13-15, ESV** - *"...God made (us) alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him."*

**Psalms 94.22** (among many other Psalms, talks about God as our Rock) - *"But the LORD has become my fortress, and my God the rock in whom I take refuge."*

Ephesians 6 tells us we have amazing weapons - prayer and the Bible. We also have each other. We have to use them by keeping close to God, praying at all times, reading the Bible and learning it. We can then even pray verses from the Bible, *"God you said in Jeremiah 29 that you have good plans for me, plans for hope and to give me a good future, when we seek you with all our hearts. You say in Matthew that if we seek you, you will look after everything else in our lives..."* etc!

## 9. Eagle eyed...

The website [www.baldeagleinfo.com](http://www.baldeagleinfo.com) tells us that eagles blink using an inner eyelid called a 'nictitating membrane'. This slides across the eye from front to back every 3-4 seconds to wipe away dirt and dust from the cornea. Amazingly, this membrane is translucent (see-through) so the eagle can see at all times! The eagle's sight is amazing and 4 times better than a human with perfect vision. This means the eagle could see prey like a rabbit from a mile away and could see a huge area of ground beneath them. It can also apparently see sideways and front at the same time. This means it can see if anything is creeping up behind! Some people believe the eagle can look directly into the sun.

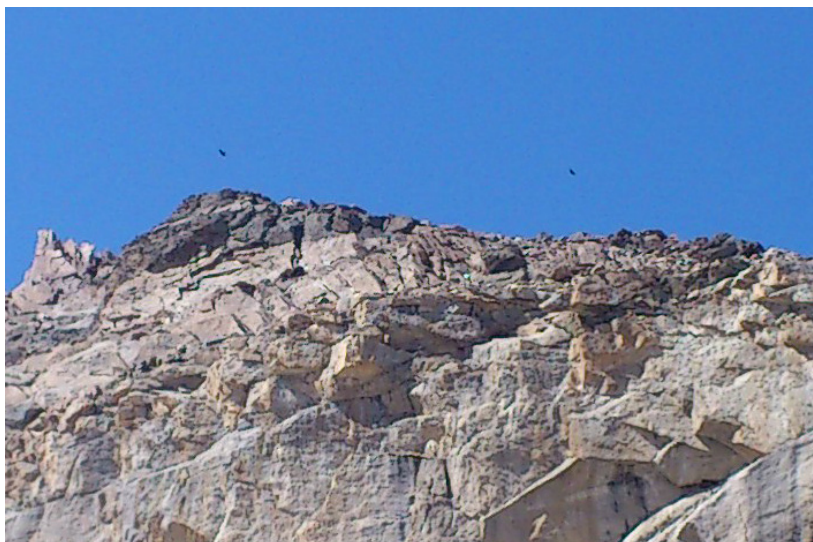
Let's keep our eyes focused on Jesus, the Son of God. Let's keep our eyes open to people around us, to what the Bible says and what God is asking and showing us to do. Keep your spiritual eyes in good condition by choosing not to watch or look at anything that isn't good for you - turn off the movie, quit your internet browser, don't accept that image on your phone. Stay pure.

***Psalm 119.9*** - "How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word."

Jesus tells us to let our light shine for all people to see, so that people will glorify God. But one day Jesus will return and we have an incredible future with God. One day, God himself will be our light!

***Revelation 21.22-25*** - "I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there."

The two eagles →  
(the two black dots in the pic!!)



Some credit for this talk goes to JH, although this has been adapted and expanded on since.