

Eagle's Wings:

Revelation 12:14, “Nevertheless, the two wings of the great eagle [divine protection of true Israel in the first half of the Tribulation] had been given to the woman [Jewish believers in Israel during the first half of the Tribulation], so that she might fly to her place of refuge [the high desert country of Revelation 12:6] where she will be sustained for 3 1/2 years [the last half of the Tribulation] from the presence of the serpent [Satan who will try to get believing Jews to leave this place of refuge].”

In this verse, we note the deliverance of regenerate believers or true Israel at the end of the first half of the Tribulation. This place of refuge is described in both Matthew and in Revelation 12:6. God has prepared a special place of refuge for those regenerate Jews of Palestine who accept Christ as savior during the first half of the Tribulation. The place is the provision of logistical grace and the challenge to perpetuate the Faith-rest Drill once they have arrived at these caves. Matthew 24:15-20, “Therefore, when you see the Detestable Idol [the Abomination of Desolation, an idol of the image of the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire being placed in the Holy of Holies in the temple in Jerusalem then flee; this also is when Satan will be thrown out of heaven] which was communicated by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, (let the reader who understands), [heed the following mandates], (16) then those who are in Judea [a word for Israel at that time] must flee to the mountains; [Under the leadership of the mature believers, they will flee to the caves in the mountains of Amon, Moab and Edom all the way down to the Gulf of Aqaba.] (17) Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house [because there will be very little time for escape]. (18) Furthermore, whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak. (19) But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! (20) But pray that your flight will not be in the winter [inclement weather], or on a Sabbath [heavy traffic].”

Theologians and pastors like to be sensational when it comes to eschatology. In the above verse, God's logistical grace and deliverance in

time of disaster is the issue. They are not actually literally flying “**so that she might fly with eagle’s wings to her place of refuge**”. Rather, they are being delivered by logistical grace. In logistical grace, some will undoubtedly take a vehicle as close as they can get to these locations and then walk the rest of the way.

In Exodus 19:4 the Lord was speaking to Moses and to Israel, and said, “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians [at the Red Sea], and how I carried you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to myself.” The Jews weren’t literally picked up on eagles’ wings and carried to the Lord. It simply is used here for the Lord’s logistical grace protection of the Jews in their departure from Egypt and in their Exodus wanderings.

In Deuteronomy 32:9-12 another eagle passage is pertinent to this. “For the Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the allotment of his inheritance. (10) He found him in a desert land [in slavery in Egypt], and in a barren and howling waste, he encircled [shielded] him and cared for him, he guarded him as the pupil of his eye. (11) Like an eagle [an analogy] that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young [pushing out its young one by one], and spreads its wings and catches them by bearing them on its pinions. (12) So, the Lord alone guided him, and there was no foreign god with him.” As an eagle trains its young to fly, so, the Lord was preparing and training the Jews spiritually that they might enter the land of Canaan.

The divine protection, the eagle, is administered through the content of the Scriptures, such as Matthew 24:15-21. Here is an eschatological warning to true Israel or believing Jews living in Palestine in the middle of the Tribulation. These people have been evangelized by the 144,000. They are now warned to flee to the high desert country, and in obeying that command they are going to be protected, as per Revelation 12:14, “Nevertheless the two wings of a great eagle [divine protection of true Israel].” Both groups of Jews in the Tribulation, those who believe in the first half and those who believe in the second half, are delivered by the 2nd Advent of Christ as per the Word of God, but they must follow the mandates in the Word, otherwise they will wind up as martyrs.

Often, but not always, martyrs are the stupid ones, the non-flexible ones. There will be a lot of martyrs in the Tribulation because they are stupid, arrogant, inflexible. Each group must use the Faith-rest Drill but with a different application. One group runs away and the other group stays and fights. True Israel in the first half of the Tribulation must flee using God's logistical grace described in the context of the two wings of the eagle; the second group of true Israel toward the close of the Tribulation, must make the opposite application: they must stand and fight. To stand and fight for the first group means certain death and, conversely, for the second group to flee is certain death. Each group must make a correct Faith-rest application, maintain common sense and flexibility.

Anything given by God is always a matter of grace. "Nevertheless, the two wings of a great eagle [divine protection of Israel] had been given [grace provision]." "Had been given" is the translation of the culminative aorist tense, contemplating the action of the verb in its entirety but regarding it from the viewpoint of existing results, the protection and the eventual deliverance of those believers of Israel in the first half of the Tribulation, those who follow instruction, those who utilize the general mandate for the Faith-rest Drill and the specific mandates for fleeing to the high desert country.

The reality is simply this: the positive believer advancing to maturity in any time of historical disaster is not in any way deterred by the adversities of history, from the blessings that belong to that individual who advances to spiritual maturity. There is no promotion, no system of prosperity, that you cannot have in the greatest time of historical adversity.

The designation, serpent is used instead of Satan or devil because during the last half of the Tribulation Satan will attempt to lure or get born-again Jews to leave their place of refuge. Just as the serpent tempted the woman in the garden so the serpent will tempt the woman, Israel in the place of refuge, Matthew 24:23-24, "Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There He is,' do not believe him. [Beware of the public

lie] (24) For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders [extra natural phenomena] to mislead even the excellent ones [Jeshurun: the highest level of maturity] if possible, and it is [but not very likely].” [Satan knows that the Jews are safe in that high desert place and therefore must lure them out of their place of safety, their place of refuge.]

By way of application:

God’s plan continues and has the same blessings, the same rewards, the same promotions, in historical adversity as in historical prosperity. God’s plan does not take cognizance of circumstances; God’s plan works in all circumstances of life. So, no matter how bad things become, God’s plan for your life doesn’t change, the momentum factor does not change as a mandate from God, and you are not deprived of any blessings because you move into a time of historical adversity.

We have the tendency to think that once we get into unstable times, once we get into any form of historical disaster, that somehow the opportunity is gone for the believer. In fact, the opportunity and spiritual impact is even greater. We do not need historical prosperity for Christian blessing for Christian blessing comes under any circumstance. Today, there is no question that we are in a transitional period as far as human history is concerned. Therefore, there are terrible uncertainties, many instabilities, many people losing out, many people gaining, that is always the way it is in history, and people become very concerned and insecure. One of the manifestations of the insecurity is the phenomenal drug abuse today. However, no matter how great the disaster, whether it comes from war, famine, disease, economic depression, social degeneration, it does not change God’s plan for your life, and it does not hinder your opportunity for impact nor the fantastic blessing that can come to you through the daily exercising of your options.

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Based on the scholarly work of R.B. Thieme Jr.

I recommend downloading 'THIEME'S BIBLE DOCTRINE DICTIONARY' from this website: rbthieme.org