

Eagle Molt - A Prophetic Perspective

By Todd Bentley

Eagle Molt

This is a devotion on the process of Suffering and transformation using the story and prophetic parallel of how a eagle molts. Be blessed by these thoughts and let God speaking to you about molting.

The analogy of the eagle appears more than thirty times in the Bible, sometimes to describe God as a parent eagle in a nest caring for His children, and often to metaphorically give us a picture that we can relate to, about growth in our Christian life.

Often, those who have been in high places are taken into hidden, lonely places for a time of renewal, as you'll recall Elijah was after his experience on Mount Carmel. Sometimes our wilderness experiences follow times of powerful revelations from the Lord. The Holy Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness after the Lord audibly told the people that Jesus was His son, that Jesus was much loved, and that everyone should hear Him. Once there, He was severely tested. As such, our faith in His powerful revelations may also be tested.

At other times, we're driven there just as Jesus withdrew to the wilderness from the crowds (Luke 5:15, 16). The psalmist wrote: "God satisfies our mouth with good things so that our youth is renewed like the eagles" (Ps. 103:5).

A Prophetic Parallel

It's interesting to see the parallel between the eagle's shedding process, and growth in our Christian walk. Although the majestic eagle soars to great heights, it also spends anxious days alone in the valley. So too, we as believers spend time on the mountain top, soaring with God, but at least once in our lifetime we suddenly find ourselves hidden away, lonely, and undergoing transformation in the cleft of the rock in the wilderness.

Does the eagle mount up at your command, and make its nest on high? On the rock it dwells and resides, on the crag of the rock and the stronghold. From there it spies out the prey; its eyes observe from afar. (Job 39:27- 29)

Of all known birds, the eagle flies not only very high (Prov. 23:5; Jer. 49:16; Obad. 1:4, but with great swiftness (Deut. 28:49; 2 Sam. 1:23, Jer. 4:13; Lam. 4:19; Job. 9:25, 26). An eagle is appreciated for its strength (Ps. 103:5), its setting its nest in high places (Jer. 49:16), and its powerful vision (Job 39:27-30).

God's Design

The powerful eagle's survival is linked to its plumage, as its feathers function to insulate, protect, transport, and identify it. Feathers may become worn out, frayed, or weakened by a build up of oil and dirt. With a wingspan of up to 8 feet, plumage should be light for soaring, and strong and tight to insulate eagles from the cold and wet. The bald eagle has several layers of feathers, each serving a different function. Under the outer layer of feathers is an inner layer of downy ones. God's design of the feather's interlocking nature is amazing!

Thus, often in their lifespan of thirty or so years, beginning about age four to five, they molt. They will not lose all of their plumage in a given molt, usually about one-half to two-thirds of all feathers, (starting from the head down, and in patches) but the process of shedding and regrowth in any given cycle may take months.

Eagles may descend for a molt, usually to a safe refuge in a hidden low place on the forest floor, or in the cleft of a rock, or crevice. Some cycles of the molt renders an eagle very weak. Most cannot fly or hunt because they may lose vital primary and secondary feathers and because it takes a great deal of energy and body resources to grow feathers. This is the time when eagles are in greatest danger, for since they use their energy stores their fat for feather growth, they are less able to fight disease or stress. In their weakened state, they are also in danger from predators and the elements. Interestingly, some experts report that eagles lose their ability to tear, which diminishes their sharp vision. It is also said that calcium accumulates on their beaks, further hindering their survival.

Vision Restored

At some stage of the molting process, the older, more mature eagles (who have experienced molting before) drop meat to replenish the molting eagle's energy, because its oily fat stores are used to stimulate the growth of new feathers. Eventually the eagle gains enough strength to fly to a mountain or a high place and to beat or scrape its beak against a rock to break off the calcium. With renewed strength, the eagle soars against the wind to stimulate the flow of tears, and with vision restored; it flies higher and faster than ever. Some don't make it through to the end of the molt; others don't endure through the regrowth. However, those that do bear the process of transformation, rise again, stronger than ever before, their youth renewed, and they soar into higher realms than before.

There's an interesting reference to this process in Micah 1:16: "Make yourself bald and cut off your hair, because of your precious children; enlarge your baldness like an eagle, for they shall go from you into captivity." In those days, cutting off the hair was a sign of great distress, for instance, upon the death of a loved one. The suffering ended when the hair grew back. "Enlarging your baldness" referred to the rising of the eagle after casting its feathers and breeding new ones

Let us too embrace His process in our lives as we will molt and become new and strong Eagles!

In Him,

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