



Throughout history the Eagle has been a primary symbol of grandeur, military might and authority. The Imperial Eagle of Southern Europe, the Bald Eagle of North America and the Martial Eagle of Africa, have inspired countless national emblems and have been adopted as corporate symbols for strength, speed and vision.

I REMEMBER WAKING UP ON THE banks of the Zambezi River to the haunting cry of a fish eagle. Just then I saw the fish eagle extend its legs far forward as it prepared to snare a fish, then the talons broke the surface of the water impaling its catch. As the eagle flapped its powerful wings, it snapped its talons to the rear and soared gracefully

into the air carrying the fish in its talons as it flew to a nearby perch for breakfast. The precision and efficiency with which this eagle caught the fish was impressive. I immediately thought of the Words of our Lord Jesus when He challenged Peter: *“Follow Me, and I will make you a fisher of men.”* Mark 1:17

Although some farmers have a negative view about birds of prey, they are an asset to any farm. The average barn owl family kills about 2,000 rodents a year. The kites, goshawks and kestrels are extremely efficient at killing snakes.

The hearing of a barn owl is highly specialized. Its face resembles two ears joined together. In fact, its ears are at different levels to enable the barn owl to triangulate sound with precision. National Geographic claims that a barn owl can hear a mouse's heartbeat at 20 metres!

We use "eagle-eyed" as a metaphor for excellent vision. In fact, eagles have the best eyesight on the planet. The average eagle has an eyesight capability 8 to 12 times better than humans. Their colour spectrum greatly exceeds ours. Kestrels have an ultra-violet capability, enabling them to spot even rat urine at night. National Geographic claims that, were they able to read, Eagles could read a newspaper's print at 300 metres. Eagles typically fly far out of sight, thousands of feet up in the sky from where they can still clearly identify their prey. Some birds of prey have been recorded to have plummeted down from 17 000 feet to catch their prey.

The peregrine falcon is reputed to be the fastest living creature. Peregrine falcons can reach speeds of up to 500 km per hour when plummeting to the kill. Eagles have a transparent membrane that lubricates not only their eyes (something like windscreen wipers), but can serve as the equivalent of goggles to protect their sensitive eyes while diving at high speed through the air. Some eagles have an ability to zoom in with something like a telephoto lens magnifying capability. What to us may seem like a blur across our vision would be quite clear to an eagle that sees in many more time-frames per second than we do.

The talons of a martial or black eagle would be longer than a grown man's hand, longer than the claws of a lion. The talons of a crown eagle have been recorded in a pressure test as being capable of exerting 480 pounds per square inch. When that kind of pressure is applied on a point like the tip of your pencil it can go through anything it wants. Eagles talons have

a vice-like grip. They can crack skulls and break bones with ease. When an eagle comes plummeting down at 300 km an hour, it makes an instant kill with whatever prey it hits.

The God who created these eagles has put something of his character and capabilities in them. If the eagle can fly so high, see so clearly, plummet so speedily, imagine how clearly the Creator who made them sees?

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If an eagle from thousands of feet up in the sky can spot a snake or rat camouflaged on the ground, just imagine how clearly the Creator sees you and me.

If a barn owl can hear a mouse's heartbeat at 20 metres, imagine how clearly the Creator can hear even the thoughts of our hearts.

If a peregrine falcon can plummet to its prey at 500 kms an hour, imagine how swiftly the Creator can bring judgment or deliverance.

If an eagle's talons have such power to crush bones, imagine the power of the Hand of God.

At Mount Sinai, before giving the children of Israel The Ten Commandments, God said: "*You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagle's wings...*" (Exodus 19:4)

*"As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so the Lord alone led His people..."* (Deuteronomy 32:11 – 12)

When we see these majestic creatures we should be inspired by the words of Isaiah 40:31: "*But those who wait on 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.*" •

— Dr. Peter Hammond

