

The Doctrine of Wings

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The Abbreviated Doctrine of Wings

Preface: I must admit that, when I first considered the idea of doing the doctrine of Wings, this struck me as being sort of an odd topic. However, I kept coming across them in the psalms (although they are found throughout the Bible. *Wings* are found about 90 times in the Bible and they are used in a variety of ways in Scripture. Understanding their use explains many different passages (although there is at least one inexplicable passage below).

Quotations from the Bible will be from the Modern KJV, unless otherwise noted. Quotation marks will be added when appropriate. It will be obvious that by far, most of the references to wings are found in the Old Testament.

1. Although *wings* are certainly used in the tradition references to birds (Gen. 1:21 Psalm 148:10—the Creation Psalm), most of the times that we find the word *wings*, there is a metaphorical connotation.
2. The first metaphorical use of *wings* is found in Ex. 19:4–5, where God says to Moses, “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. And now if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure to Me above all the nations; for all the earth is Mine.” Obviously, the Jews walked out of Egypt, but God made that possible. The indication here is, apart from God, either the Jews could not have come out of Egypt or it would have been much, much more difficult.
3. God makes a very similar statement in Isa. 40:30–31 *Even the young shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but those who wait on Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.* Those whose hope is in Jehovah, will have renewed strength and agility.
4. Angels are said to have wings. However, the first time this is mentioned is when God tells Moses how to make the Ark of God, which the two cherubs standing over the Mercy Seat, looking down. Ex. 25:20 37:9 1Kings 6:24, 27 8:6–7
 - 1) As a sub-point, I think the idea of angels having wings is not so much an indication that they can fly, but that they can transport themselves from earth to the 3rd heaven without difficulty. This is supported in part by Psalm 139:9, which is not about angels, but about using wings to move to the outskirts of the seas.
 - 2) It is not until Isaiah has a vision of angels with wings, do we have a confirmation that angels have wings. Isa. 6:2
 - 3) Ezekiel also speaks of the wings of angels in Ezek. 10:5–22.
 - 4) Then the living creatures in Revelation appear to be angels with wings. Rev. 4:8 9:9

5. Moses, in a sermon to the people of God before they crossed over into the Land of Promise, spoke of God's dealings with them. "For Jehovah's portion is His people. Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the deserted, howling wilderness. He led him about, He cared for him, He kept him as the pupil of His eye. As an eagle stirs up her nest, flutters over her young, spreads abroad her wings, takes them and bears them on her wing, Jehovah alone led him, and there was no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, so that he might eat the increase of the fields. And He made him suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock, butter from cows, and milk from sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the sons of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat. And you drank the blood of the grape." (Deut. 32:9–14). Nearly all of this is metaphorical. God is looking after the Jews, who are called Jacob, one of the patriarchs of the Jewish race (the grandson of Abraham). The eagle, once her young are old enough, stirs up the nest, so that young birds are pushed out of the nest and fly. This is what God wanted for the Jews. In bringing them out of the desert into the Land of Promise, which they must take by military force, God is pushing them out of the nest.
6. Boaz spoke of Ruth being under Jehovah's wings, indicating that she had decided to put her lot with the Jewish people, when she decided to stay with her mother-in-law after her husband had died. Ruth 2:11–13
7. David, in a psalm, speaks of God coming down from heaven, being borne by cherubs and on the wings of the wind. This would have been Jesus in His 1st advent, as He was confined to a human form until his death and resurrection. 2Sam. 22:7–11 Psalm 18:10
 - 1) We find similar imagery in Mal. 4:2a **But to you who fear My name, the Sun of Righteousness shall arise, and healing will be on His wings.**
8. When Job is being schooled in divine viewpoint, he is asked, "Does the hawk soar by your understanding? Will he spread his wings toward the south? Does the eagle mount up at your command and make his nest on high? He lives and stays on the rock, on the crag of the rock and the strong place. From there he seeks food, and his eyes see afar off." (Job 39:26–29). These animals have a behavior pattern which is defined by their nature, and this is outside of Job's ability to dictate terms to these animals as to how they should behave. The idea is, the angelic conflict and the actions of angels is outside of Job's ability to dictate terms of what ought to be; and history with angels plays itself out in ways that Job may not fully appreciate.
 - 1) In the same chapter, there is a reference to the wing of an ostrich: **The wing of the ostrich beats joyously; though not like the stork's pinions for flight** (Job 39:13).
9. We have God riding the wings of the wind in association with creation: **Bless Jehovah, O my soul. O Jehovah my God, You are very great; You have put on honor and majesty, covering Yourself with light as with a robe; and stretching out the heavens like a curtain; He lays the beams of His upper rooms in the waters. He sets the clouds as His chariots; He walks on the wings of the wind; He makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flaming fire. He laid the earth on its foundations; it shall not be shaken forever. You covered the deep as with a robe; the waters stand above the mountains** (Psalm 104:1–6).
10. On several occasions, David speaks of being protected by the wings of God (as a young bird is protected by its mother).
 - 1) **Set out Your wonderful loving-kindness, O Savior of those seeking refuge in You, by Your right hand, from those who rise up against me. Keep me as the pupil, the daughter of the eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wings, from the face of the wicked who strip me. Those against my soul, My foes, encircle me** (Psalm 17:7–9).
 - 2) **How precious is Your loving-kindness, O God! And the sons of men take refuge under the shadow of Your wing** (Psalm 36:7).
 - 3) **Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me; for my soul trusts in You; yea, in the shadow of Your wings I will make my hiding-place, until these great troubles pass by** (Psalm 57:1).
 - 4) **I will dwell in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the hiding place of Your wings. Selah** (Psalm 61:4).
 - 5) **David rejoices because of God's protection: Because You have been my help, therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice** (Psalm 63:7).
 - 6) **He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall trust. His truth shall be your shield, and buckler** (Psalm 91:4). Again, there is protection here, but wings are parallel here to *truth*.
11. Jesus uses *wings* when speaking of protection of the people of Israel. **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to her, how often would I have gathered your children**

- together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you would not! (Matt. 23:37; see also Luke 13:34)
12. Interestingly enough, David once speaks of having wings so that he could fly away from all of his troubles. (Psalm 55:6). Wings are also spoken of as a means of escape for the inhabitants of Moab in Jer. 48:9. Apparently, their land would eventually suffer great plunder and be laid waste.
 13. Psalm 68:9–14 is an unusual reference to wings: *You, O God, sent a plentiful rain, by which You upheld Your inheritance when it was weary. Your flock has dwelt in it; You, O God, have prepared in Your goodness for the poor. The Lord gave the Word; the bearers of it were a great army. Kings of armies fled away; and she who stayed at home divided the plunder. When you lie among the sheepfolds, the wings of a dove are covered with silver, and its pinions with the shimmer of gold. When the Almighty scatters kings in it, it snows on Salmon.* However, if you are looking to me to explain this, I struggled with this verse many years ago and did not come up with a reasonable explanation. See **Psalm 68** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).
 14. *Wings* are used in Proverbs to refer to someone who wants to acquire riches, but riches can suddenly be gone, as if it grew wings and flew into the heavens like an eagle. Prov. 23:4–5
 15. The reader of Ecclesiastes is warned not to curse a king or a rich man in privacy, or even think about cursing them, as this will be brought to them, as if plucked up by a bird with wings and flown there. Eccles. 10:20
 16. Isaiah warns that the king of Assyria will come from the Euphrates River into Judah, and stretch his wings over the land, as if to take it all in as his own (Isa. 8:7–8). We have a similar conqueror coming into Moab and spreading his wings over their land in Jer. 48:40. We find another similar use in Jer. 49:22.
 17. Isa. 18:1–2 reads: *Woe to the land of whirring [possibly, a shadowing] of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, which sends ambassadors by the sea, even in ships of papyrus on the waters, saying, Go, swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth, to a terrifying people from it and onwards; a mighty nation and trampling down, whose land the rivers have divided!* The problem here is, commentators are quite divided as to the land which is being spoken of. The phrase with wings is thought by some to associate this with Assyria (Isa. 8:7–8). We find another reference to the Assyrian dictator in Isa. 10:14 *And my hand [= the hand of the Assyrian dictator] has found as a nest the riches of the people [he found the northern kingdom unprotected by truth]; and as one gathers eggs that are left, I have gathered all the earth; and there was none who moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped [there was no protection or even a call for help].*
 18. Ezekiel's vision of living creatures had several wings in Ezek. 1:6–11, 23–25 3:13. In at least two of those verses, Ezekiel speaks of the sound made by the wings of these creatures.
 19. Ezekiel refers to Nebuchadnezzar as an eagle with wings, very powerful and very mobile; as well as Hophra, king of Egypt (Ezek. 17:3–12). Daniel also speaks of Nebuchadnezzar as a lion having the wings of an eagle (Dan. 7:4). In Dan. 7:6, he speaks of Alexander the Great as a leopard with wings.
 20. Hosea speaks of Israel (the northern kingdom) of her wings being bound up by the wind in Hosea 4:19.
 21. It is possible that the women with wings in Zech. 5:9 are two tribes of Israel (Judah and Daniel) or two sets of Jews who are removed from the land.
 22. The woman, who refers to persecuted believers in the Tribulation, is given the ability to escape her attackers in Rev. 12:14 *And two wings of a great eagle were given to the woman, so that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the serpent's face.*
 23. Part of the beauty and serenity of Israel in the Millennium will include having birds of all kinds (*of every wing*) within it. Ezek. 17:23
 24. Birds of every wing and the beasts of the field will be called to feast upon the flesh and blood of those slain in Ezek. 39:17.
 25. One of the things which I saw over and over again in the Bible, were references to eagle's wings. ISBE says of this: *Often the wings of an eagle are mentioned because they are from 7 to 9 feet in sweep, of untiring flight, and have strength to carry heavy burdens: so they became the symbol of strength and endurance. Ancient monuments and obelisks are covered with the heads of bulls, lions, different animals, and men even, to which the wings of an eagle were added to symbolize strength.*¹
 26. In fact, ISBE gives this sort of classification:
 - 1) Eagle wings represent strength and power.

¹ *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Wings.

- 2) The wings of a stork are used to portray strong flight, as in the vision of Zechariah: “Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there came forth two women, and the wind was in their wings; now they had wings like the wings of a stork; and they lifted up the ephah between earth and heaven” (Zech. 5:9).
 - 3) The wings of a dove symbolized love.
 - 4) Wings in the abstract typified shelter, strength or speed
27. A second thing mentioned many times in the Bible is the *sound of wings*.²

Topics

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[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

Although most of this was taken strictly from the Bible, I did take some limited material from:

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