



What Did Jesus Mean in Luke 17 verse 37 About the Eagles Gathered Around the Body?

With Bishop Ronald K. Powell

“And they answered and said to Him, ‘Where, Lord? So He said to them, ‘Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together” ([Luke 17:37](#)). When answering the question of what Jesus meant, we must first ask ourselves if there any other verses in the Bible that might help answer this question.

What did Jesus mean in [Luke 17:37](#) about the eagles gathered around the body?

In this case, yes there are.

A parallel account of this was recorded in [Matthew 24:28](#), and in both places, it appears that Jesus was paraphrasing the inspired words of Job: “Does the eagle mount up at your command, and make its nest on high? On the rocks 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. Its young ones suck up blood; and where the slain are, there it is” ([Job 39:27-30](#)). It’s interesting to note that the Hebrew word for “slain” in this verse is *chalal*, which can be translated “pierced to death.”

The symbolism in this allegory of Job helps unlock the mysterious but valuable message Jesus Christ gave many years later. Other scriptures show by analogy, metaphor, or allegory what “eagles” can symbolize. **Isaiah spoke of eagles as an allegory of Gods faithful people:**

“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” ([Isaiah 40:31](#)).

Where does Job say the eagle dwells? On the rocks, when using the symbolism of Gods people, points to Jesus Christ, who is our spiritual Rock ([1 Corinthians 10:4](#)).

What is the “prey,” which is “afar off” that the “eagles” seek? The answer is found in [Matthew 6:33](#)—the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Now that we have unlocked the symbolic meaning of [Job 39:27-30](#), we need to read Christ’s statement in [Luke 17:37](#) and [Matthew 24:28](#) and ask what the context surrounding these verses is.

In both accounts, the context is about the coming Kingdom of God on Earth. Notice how right before [Luke 17:37](#) in Luke [17:24-36](#), Jesus prophesies the events immediately preceding His return to this earth and the resurrection of Gods faithful people:

“For as the lightning that flashes out of one part under heaven shines to the other part under heaven, so also the Son of Man will be in His day...Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left” ([Luke 17:24](#), [Luke 17:35-36](#)).

The same is true in the verses right before [Matthew 24:28](#). So the context of the statement is of the end of the age, just preceding Christ’s return and the resurrection of Gods people.

We can now understand that Jesus Christ is the “body” around whom the “eagles” (the Church, His faithful people) will congregate at the resurrection when Jesus returns to this world to rule over all the nations as King of Kings ([Revelation 11:15](#), [Zechariah 14:9](#), [Revelation 5:10](#)).

It was our Savior Jesus Christ who allowed Himself to be pierced and bleed to death to become a “carcass” before He was resurrected. He was dead for three days and three nights and did not go to His Father in heaven during His time in the grave.

Did the faithful “eagles (Gods faithful disciples) gather around Jesus Christ when He was resurrected then?

Yes they certainly did. Paul recorded how Jesus was seen by over 500 brethren during the 40 days He revealed Himself after His resurrection to life again ([1 Corinthians 15:6](#)).

Will Gods faithful people be resurrected in the end of the age and gather around the “body” of the returning Jesus Christ? Yes, indeed they will:

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” ([1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#)).

Closing

We too can be considered by God to be worthy “eagles” in that resurrection, to be with the “body” of Jesus Christ when He returns in power to set up His Kingdom on Earth, and to rule over all the nations with His faithful people.