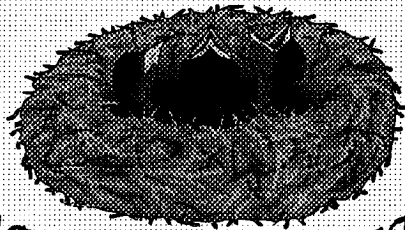
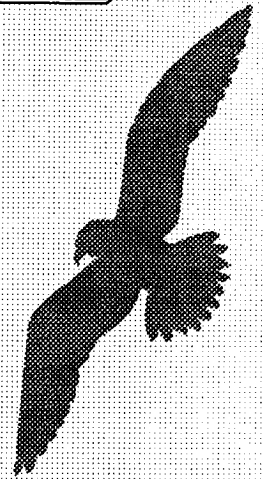


'They shall
mount up...

ON EAGLES' WINGS

... with wings
as eagles."
Isaiah 40:31



AERY NUGGETS

Father, we Thy children bless Thee
For Thy love on us bestowed,
Source of blessing, we confess Thee
Now our Father and our God.
Wondrous was Thy love in giving
Jesus for our sins to die!
Wondrous was His grace in leaving,
For our sakes, the heavens on high.

Now the sprinkled blood has freed us,
Hast'ning onward to our rest,
Through the desert Thou dost lead us.
With Thy constant favor blest.
By Thy Truth and Spirit guiding
Earnest He of what's to come,
And with daily strength providing,
Thou dost lead Thy children home.
—Treaelles

most important of all -- *spiritual*. While we might have no choice in the establishment of some of these relationships, others may be entered into or refused by choice, and where we are spiritually will determine how each one will be approached.

We who have owned our sinful and lost condition, which has resulted in seeking and receiving Jesus Christ as Saviour, have established a relationship with God as our heavenly Father. This should have a bearing on all other relationships and subject us to His Word, the Bible, as our guide on how to relate to those around us in a way that will bring glory to God, and at the same time be for our benefit, blessing and protection. Now we are —

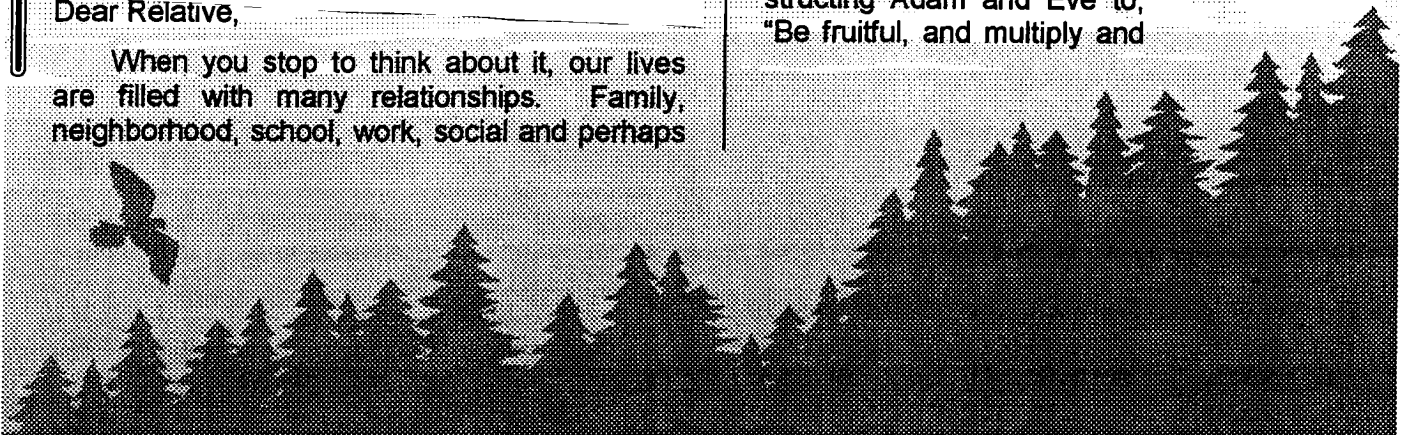
*Called from above, and heavenly men by birth
(Who once were but the citizens of earth),
As pilgrims here, we seek a heavenly home,
Our portion in the ages yet to come.*

It is our first and unchangeable natural relationship that I have before me—that of parents and children. God ordained it to be, instructing Adam and Eve to, "Be fruitful, and multiply and



Dear Relative,

When you stop to think about it, our lives are filled with many relationships. Family, neighborhood, school, work, social and perhaps



replenish the earth" (Gen. 1:28), thus establishing the first earthly relationship of parents and children. Psalms 127:3 tells us, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Do we parents value them as such?

On the children's side, Proverbs 17:6 gives us the truth that, "The glory of children are their fathers." This is shown forth in young children, who think that, "My daddy can do anything". Though he has been with the Lord for 16 years, I still have proud thoughts of my father.

Respect and honor are enjoined upon us by the words, "Honor thy father and thy mother", which are found many times throughout the Bible. This can be shown by carrying out the exhortation, "Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Eph. 6:1). Looking around us we see such evidence of disobedience to authority, starting at an early age. Recently I heard a remark, that in schools, above the first grade, part of the teacher's work was, "riot control".

Instruction manuals do not come with babies as they do with cars and lawn mowers, so many times we parents make mistakes in the upbringing of our children. Our frustrations can lead us to be overly severe or unreasonable with discipline and thus foster a rebellious spirit in our offspring. The apostle Paul wrote, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

Solomon, in his dissertation of life under the sun (Eccl. 7:29) states that, "God hath made man upright: but they have sought out many inventions". Whatever these inventions are, their effect is to lead the heart further from God, destroying even the "natural affection" (Rom. 1:31) which man had been imbued with. Thus we hear of the cruelties that parents perpetrate on their children.

"Like as a father pitieth his children" (Ps. 103:13), is the way God would have a parent's concern to be shown, and He sets the example, for we read further, "So the Lord pitieth them that fear him".

How sad it is, when there is a violent estrangement between family members, young or old, and especially parents and their grown sons or daughters. Family ties are precious and to have them sundered is heartbreaking, I can imagine. How good to know of the provision that awaits us if the need so arises. David had the assurance that, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up" (Ps. 27:10).

As can be seen from scriptures already referred to, God uses our earthly family relationships to picture our spiritual life in His family. Even before we knew Him, God loved us and wanted us for His own

children, as the wonderful words, "For God so loved the world" (Jn. 3:16) attests. A dramatic change in us had to take place to make this possible, requiring rebirth that we might possess the family characteristics of our Father.

Young believers might be under the impression that they are far removed from God, by the opening words of the well known prayer, "Our Father, which art in heaven", but the Lord dispels that thought by His promise, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (Jn. 14:23). So He is very near at hand.

A loving earthly father has a concern over the activities and friendships of his children, which is even more manifest with our heavenly Father, Who makes the plea for His children's separation from the world with the promise, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty." (2 Cor 6:17-18). How ready He is to forgive, when we dishonor Him, but sad to say, some earthly parents cherish hurts incurred from their children for many years.

As mentioned earlier, some children are forsaken by one or more of their parents, and the number seems to be increasing with the escalation of broken homes. Other children, especially those of dependent age, have to bear the loss of one or both parents through death. What a bleak period, especially in the life of a young person. But again we see that God is mindful of earthly situations and by David referred to as, "A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows" (Ps 68:5). Is the One who upholdeth all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3) too busy to be concerned by some of the complexities of life on earth? How many sparrows fell to the ground today that He was too busy to see?

If you are a young parent, what reasonable plans are you making for your child's future? Will they benefit him and also be acceptable? I like this message from Jeremiah 29:11, which God had sent to His earthly people while in exile, and could also be typical of His intentions toward His heavenly family, for He does have special plans for us. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (NIV).

Yours in that hope of the future,

Leslie L. Winters

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write to:

Leslie L. Winters

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