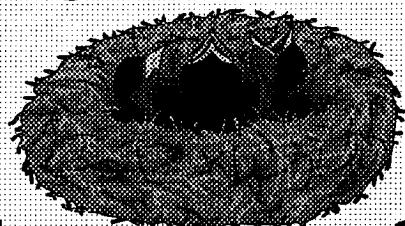
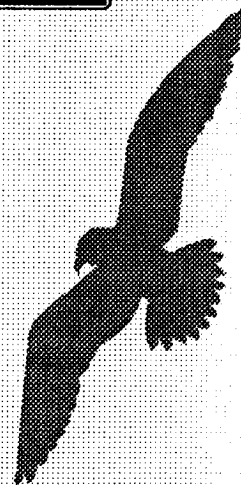


*'They shall
mount up...*

ON EAGLES' WINGS

*... with wings
as eagles."*

Isaiah 40:31



AERY NUGGETS

**"Thou makest the outgoing of the morning
and evening to rejoice."**

Psalm 65:8

**"In the holy hush of the early dawn
I hear a Voice__**

**"I am with you all the day,
Rejoice! Rejoice!"**

**"In the early morning hours,
'Twixt the night and day
While from earth the darkness passes
Silently away."**

**"Then 'tis sweet to talk with Jesus
In thy chamber still__
For the coming day and duties
Ask to know His will."**

**"Then He'll lead the way before you,
Mountains laying low,
Making desert places blossom,
Sweet'ning Marah's flow."**

**"Would you know this life of triumph,
Victory all the way?
Then put God in the beginning
Of each coming day."**

—Selected

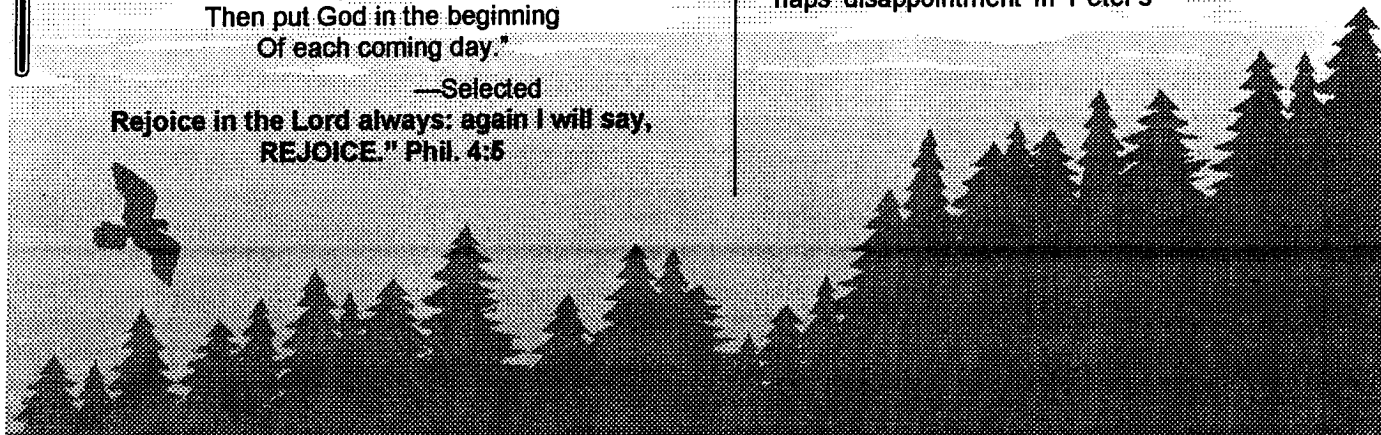
**Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say,
REJOICE." Phil. 4:5**

Jesus by the Sea

John 21:1-7

As we read these touching verses, we find seven of the disciples of Jesus in Galilee, by the Sea of Tiberius, after the resurrection of the Lord. The disciples had already seen the Lord on two previous occasions as He appeared to them in the upper room when they gathered on the first day of the week (John 20). They were now in Galilee because, they had been told to go there to wait for the Lord. As you will recall from Matt.28:1-10, angels had appeared to the women at the tomb (and later the Lord Himself) and had instructed them to tell the disciples that He would go before them into Galilee. There, they would see Him. Now, the disciples were there in Galilee waiting for the Lord.

What a time this must have been for the disciples, waiting to once again be together with this One that they loved so much! However, the Lord evidently did not appear to them immediately because in verse 3, we find Peter apparently looking for a way to occupy the time, and resorting to what he knew first, namely fishing. You can almost hear the impatience and perhaps disappointment in Peter's



voice as he tells the group, "I go afishing." The other disciples, apparently not having a better suggestion, indicate that they will go along, and the next thing you know, Peter and the others have gotten a boat and are out fishing, just like in the old days. *Recall that Jesus first met Peter by the sea in Galilee as Peter pursued his family occupation* (Luke 5). Despite the similarity of the scene, however, the disciples did not recognize the Lord when He appeared to them the next morning.

I have heard some say that the reason that the disciples did not recognize the Lord was that they were not occupying their time by truly waiting on Him. Perhaps their minds were not really focused on Him and His promised appearance, and perhaps they returned to their former occupation rather than the one that He had called them to in Luke 5. Well, I am not sure about that. There could be many reasons why they decided to go fishing and why they didn't recognize the Lord when He appeared to them. Perhaps it was early in the morning and still dark so that they couldn't recognize Him, or perhaps they were too far away. Perhaps the Lord shielded His identity from them for a time. The fact does seem to remain that they did not expect to see the Lord that morning, and for whatever the reason, they didn't realize it was Him when He called to them. But oh, how their hearts must have longed for Him! They had walked with the Lord on this Earth and had come to love Him as a person and friend as well as their Master. They had heard His words and had seen His wondrous works, and they had trusted that He was the Christ. And yes, they had watched Him be arrested and tried, and they had watched Him die on a cross, their hearts burning with terrible shock and sadness. Then, they had had their sorrow turned to unspeakable joy as they found the empty tomb, seen the vision of angels, and finally seen the Lord alive in their midst! What an incredible time this was! But the fact remained that the Lord was not with them in person at this time, and whatever was to be, things would never be the same again. If the disciples seemed a bit lost at this point, I think that might be well expected.

We read that in the early hours of the morning, a man stood on the shore and called to them in the boat asking them if they had caught any fish (vs. 4.5). The answer was a lifeless "no". Then, they were instructed to cast out of the other side of the boat, and in a similar fashion to the earlier fishing story of Luke chapter 5, they suddenly had more fish than they could have ever imagined! It didn't take them long to make the connection at that point. John cried out (vs.7), "It is the Lord!" Can you imagine their excitement! In a moment, Peter jumped into the sea, not wanting to take the time to bring the boat in to shore, and began to swim for it. Oh how he longed to be with His Lord!

Isn't this picture kind of similar to the current situation of Christians in this world? For those of us who have come to know this same Jesus as our Lord and Savior, He is the One who had given us so much. He has given Himself for us at Calvary's cross, and in so doing, has opened the way of salvation—*forgiveness for our sins and life eternal through faith in Him*. Haven't we come to love Him and to deeply desire His presence? Yet we are bid to remain in this troubled world with all its trials and dangers. What a weary journey it often is through a "dry and thirsty land where no water is" (Psalm 63:1). Yet, we are never alone, because He has promised us that "where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt.18:20). He has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5), and He has said, "Lo, I am with thee always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). We know that He leads us through this troubled scene, come what may, and that He will not suffer our foot to be moved from the path that leads to glory.

Do we *look* for Him even in the harshest of circumstances, and do we daily *expect* His certain coming to take us home? Or does the grief and trouble of the moment blind our eyes to His presence? Does the delay in His coming discourage us? We need to look for Him everywhere and in all circumstances, and when we do we will find that He is never far away, regardless of how we may feel at the moment. He is ever with us now, regardless of where we are or in what circumstances we may find ourselves. We as Christians have glory to look forward to when we are with Him in that Heavenly scene which is to come, but in just as real a sense, we have glory now in this scene. We have His presence with us, and we enjoy a foretaste of the glory to come when we gather with the saints, the Lord in our midst, and worship Him. And we are never alone!

Let us look for our Lord at all times and expect His presence as He has promised us. Let us enjoy together the fellowship we share in Him, and let us be in constant communication with Him by prayer and study of His Word. He is with us and we need never grieve for His presence. *Do we look for Him in the darkness of the early morning, and will we recognize Him when He calls out to us in those times that try the soul?*

"No, never alone; no, never alone! He promised never to leave me, Never to leave me alone."

Steven Faulkner

For address correction or free new name addition,
write to:

Leslie L. Winters or Christine Albury