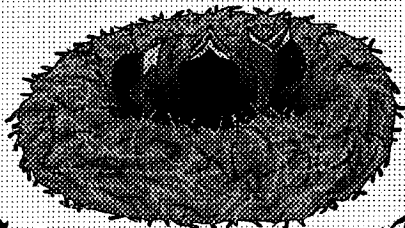
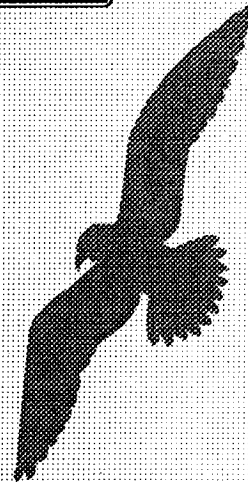


*'They shall
mount up...*

ON EAGLES' WINGS

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



AERY NUGGETS

Thomas

John 20:19-31

Dear Friends'

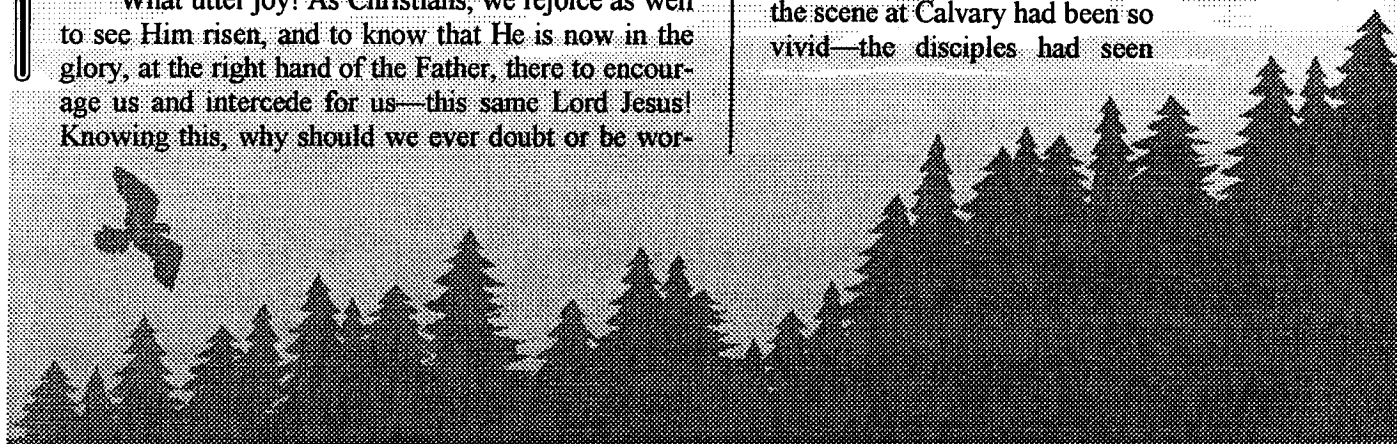
This is a portion of scripture that never fails to thrill me when I read it. The disciples had only recently witnessed the bitter scene at Calvary—they had watched their Lord be cruelly put to death and be laid in a cold, dark tomb. Though they had believed it was He that should redeem Israel, the events they had witnessed were not at all what they had expected for Messiah, even though Jesus had told them previously what would come to pass. In the upper chamber on that first day of the week, with the doors locked to shut out the world, the hearts of the disciples were no doubt sober and downcast, considering the events of the past days. Then, suddenly, the Lord Jesus stood in their midst—alive, just as He had said! We read in verse 20, "...he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the LORD."

What utter joy! As Christians, we rejoice as well to see Him risen, and to know that He is now in the glory, at the right hand of the Father, there to encourage us and intercede for us—this same Lord Jesus! Knowing this, why should we ever doubt or be wor-

ried? Often enough, however, it appears that the so called "realities" of the world we see with our eyes can become more real to us than the plain truth of God's Word. I think this was the problem for Thomas.

Thomas was one of the apostles (Matt. 10:3), and he had walked with Jesus throughout the Lord's earthly ministry. He had heard the words of Jesus, and he had seen His miracles. I do not believe that Thomas was a timid man, but I think you'd agree that he was a practical man. In John 11, when the Lord Jesus was called into Judea at the time that Lazarus was dying, Thomas realized the danger of going into Judea seeing that the Jews laid in wait for the Lord. Yet, he said in verse 16, "Let us also go with Him that we may die with Him." Thomas recognized the extreme danger and the logical outcome of going to Lazarus, but he was not able to anticipate the all powerful hand of God in what appeared to be a hopeless situation. The same might be said of all the disciples regarding the trial and crucifixion of the

Lord. Jesus had told His disciples beforehand that He must go to Jerusalem, and that there He would be mistreated, and killed; but that He would rise again on the third day (Matt. 16:21). But the scene at Calvary had been so vivid—the disciples had seen



the Lord die, and there was no doubt in any of their minds that He was actually dead. I believe their eyes rested heavily on all they had seen, rather than on what the Lord Jesus had told them.

Now, it was the third day since these things had happened, and the disciples had gathered in the upper room, locking the doors for fear of the Jews. There, without going through the door, the Lord appeared to them suddenly and reassured them that He was in fact alive from the dead, just as they should have expected. But Thomas was not with the company on this occasion. When the disciples later told him that they had seen the Lord, Thomas just could not bring himself to believe. Those images from Calvary were so strong in his memory. We read his words in verse 25, "The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." Sometimes what we see with our eyes seems very real—more real than it should, given the reality of God's Word. Oh, for the eyes of faith!

A week later in that same upper room, Thomas had the opportunity to see the Lord with his own eyes. We read in verse 27, "Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." In a moment of time, I believe that Thomas' doubts vanished as he beheld and perhaps handled his Lord. He could now appreciate with his own senses the reality of what His Lord had told him before Calvary—He had been dead, but now He was alive again, just as He had said. He was alive from the dead, and the truth of this could not be denied. And, if this was true then the words of the Lord had all been true—everything that He had said! He was the Christ, the Lord, and all things were different now! Oh the joy that must have rushed through the heart of Thomas! But we hear the words of the Lord in verse 29, "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

What an exciting and deeply moving thing it is when we see the truth of God's Word revealed to us in a very tangible way; but it is better far to have that faith that accepts what God has said in His Word, simply because He has said it! How blessed is the child of God who takes God at His word, despite the so-called realities that seem to be all around. I believe that King David gives us a good example of taking God at His word in Psalm 3. At a time when David was surrounded by enemies on every hand, and those enemies being led by his own son, David might have had cause to be concerned looking at the situation with his own eyes. Yet his eyes did not remain on what was so clearly evident all around him; but rather looked above to the One who, though unseen, was fully in control of the situation. In Psalm 3:3, we read, "But

thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head." Sometimes when it seems that enemies are all around us on every side, and that our way is threatened at every turn, we must do like David and change our perspective by looking up! To focus on what we see with the eyes of the flesh is frightening; but that is all swept away when we focus on Him who is our shield, a perfect protection from any enemy; He is our glory too, and the lifter of our heads. Finally, remember verse 8, "Salvation belongeth unto the LORD..." That is much to consider for the child of God!

My dear friends, as you read my words, are the "realities" of this life pressing in on you and causing you to worry? If you are one of His children, you can change your perspective and look up with the eyes of faith. Remember the words in Hebrews 13:5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Despite the outward appearances, we have His word that we will never have to face the grim, so called realities alone.

Now, do you believe that the Lord Jesus is alive and that He is the Christ? If you do not, then you will not find much comfort in these words. But just consider the appeal of the Spirit of God written for you in John 20:30,31, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." You have the authority of God's Word that Jesus is alive. Will you believe? The person who believes that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God has life through His name. Thomas would only believe what he could see with his own eyes. But blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Do you believe? This same Lord Jesus is alive today and seated in glory, but He longs to hear your prayers and provide for your needs. He loves you so much that He once came into this world to die for you and open up the gates of Heaven if you will but believe on Him—"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16.)

Much love through Christ,

Steven J. Faulkner

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

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