

12.40a Moses' Song (Deuteronomy 31:19–22, 30; 32:1–43)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows.

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional needed materials.
- Nancy Ganz’s treatment of this story is excellent in *Numbers: A Commentary for Children*, published by Shepherd Press, 2006.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Tips and terms are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *prosperous*: to be well cared for; having plenty of money to live well
- *to spurn*: to reject with contempt
- *vengeance*: the act of doing something to hurt someone because that person did something that hurt you or someone else; revenge

Scripture: (NASB)

Deuteronomy 31:19 “Now therefore, write this song for yourselves, and teach it to the sons of Israel; put it on their lips, so that this song may be a witness for Me against the sons of Israel. 20 For when I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn Me and break My covenant. 21 Then it shall come about, when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify before them as a witness (for it shall not be forgotten from the lips of their descendants); for I know their intent which they are developing today, before I have brought them into the land which I swore.” 22 So Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it to the sons of Israel. . . . 30 Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete: [For the sake of space, the following poetry sections are in prose form, except that the capital letters remain to show where a new line of poetry began.]

32:1 “Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth. . . . 3 For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God! 4 The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.

5 “They have acted corruptly toward Him, *They are* not His children, because of their defect; *But are* a perverse and crooked generation. 6 Do you thus repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you. 7 Remember the days of old, Consider the years of all generations. Ask your father, and he will inform you, Your elders, and they will tell you. 8 When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the sons of Israel. 9 For the LORD’s portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance.

10 “He found him in a desert land, And . . . He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye. 11 Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. 12 The LORD alone guided him, And there was no foreign god with him. 13 He made him ride on the high places of the earth, And he ate the produce of the field; And He made him suck honey from the rock, And oil from the flinty rock, 14 Curds of cows, and milk of the flock, With fat of lambs, And rams, the breed of Bashan, and goats, With the finest of the wheat-- And of the blood of grapes you drank wine.

15 “But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked—You are grown fat, thick, and sleek—Then he forsook God who made him, And scorned the Rock of his salvation. 16 They made Him jealous with strange *gods*; With abominations they provoked Him to anger. 17 They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom

they have not known, New *gods* who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread. 18 You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth.

19 “The LORD saw *this*, and spurned *them* . . . 20 Then He said, ‘I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end *shall be*; For they are a perverse generation, Sons in whom is no faithfulness. 21 They have made Me jealous with *what* is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So . . . I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation, 22 For a fire is kindled in My anger, And burns to the lowest part of Sheol, And consumes the earth with its yield, And sets on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 ‘I will heap misfortunes on them; I will use My arrows on them. 24 *They will be* wasted by famine, and consumed by plague And bitter destruction; And the teeth of beasts I will send upon them, With the venom of crawling things of the dust. 25 Outside the sword will bereave, And inside terror—Both young man and virgin, The nursling with the man of gray hair. 26 I would have said, “I will cut them to pieces, I will remove the memory of them from men,” 27 Had I not feared the provocation by the enemy, That their adversaries would misjudge, That they would say, “Our hand is triumphant, And the LORD has not done all this.”

28 “For they are a nation lacking in counsel, And there is no understanding in them. 29 Would that . . . they understood this, That they would discern their future! 30 How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the LORD had given them up? 31 Indeed their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves judge this. 32 . . . Their grapes are grapes of poison, Their clusters, bitter. 33 Their wine is the venom of serpents, And the deadly poison of cobras. . . .

35 ‘Vengeance is Mine, and retribution, In due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, And the impending things are hastening upon them.’ 36 For the LORD . . . will have compassion on His servants, When He sees that *their* strength is gone, And there is none *remaining*, bond or free. 37 And He will say, ‘Where are their gods, The rock in which they sought refuge? 38 . . . Let them rise up and help you, Let them be your hiding place!

39 ‘See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. 40 Indeed, I lift up My hand to heaven, And say, as I live forever, 41 . . . I will repay those who hate Me. 42 I will make My arrows drunk with blood, And My sword will devour flesh,’ 43 . . . For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And will render vengeance on His adversaries, And will atone for His land *and* His people.

Introduction/Review:

Both Moses and God Himself predicted that Israel would turn away from the Lord to worship the false gods of their to-be-conquered land. For that wickedness, they would incur God’s fierce anger and would end up being cast out of the land God had given them. This theme continues in today’s story.

Story:

Why a song?

God told Moses to write a song. It turned out to be a long song. ✓It might have taken a lot of effort to memorize, but memorizing it was important for two reasons: to remind the people of the greatness of their worthy God and to be a witness against their guilty souls when they forsook the true Lord God for false gods. This last purpose was in God’s mind when He said, “Teach the song to the sons of Israel; put it on their lips so that it may be a witness for Me against the sons of Israel.”

Why would it be a witness for God? Because, as God said, “When I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them and spurn Me and break My covenant.” This song, learned now, would remind God’s people of His previous warning before they became prosperous and forsook Him.

Why false worship?

What did God say would happen when Israel became prosperous? [They would turn to other gods.] This

happens every once in a while—a person seems to trust and serve the Lord when [s]he is needy but forsakes the Lord when becoming prosperous. May this never be the case for you or for me. We should rather desire to be poor and serve the Lord than to be rich and forget Him, for only He is worthy of our worship.

Prosperity would not perpetually follow Israel. When they forsook the Lord, many evils and troubles would come upon them. Then this song would testify against them. However, even at the time Moses wrote the song, the seeds for false worship had already been sown and were sprouting. God said, “I know their intent which they are developing today before I have brought them into the land which I swore.” We know the intention had already been growing, for they had already served idols at least two times since coming out of Egypt: first, they worshiped the golden calf, and later they turned to the Midianite gods.

Let’s look at this song— only at the highlights—for there is too much here for one lesson’s investigation.

God’s care

First, listen to these words about God: “Ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.”

How well these words describe our God—great, perfect, just, faithful, righteous, upright! Five times in the song God is called a Rock. This Rock is not a pebble but rather a mountain of rock, a symbol of security!

God had tenderly cared for His people. Listen to what God did in His kindness: [Teacher, refer to the enlarged-print copies, found below, of the three lists that follow. You might ask students to read these lists.]

He was their Father.

He bought them.

He made them and established them.

He claimed them as His special inheritance.

He found them in a desert land.

He cared for them.

He guarded them as the pupil of His eye. (Don’t you do your best to protect your eye? God protected Israel as carefully as you protect your eye.)

He protected them like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young. (God, in a sense, spread His wings and caught His young.)¹

He guided them.

He fed them with produce of the field; honey from the rock; oil from the flinty rock; curds from cows; milk of the flock; fat of lambs, rams, goats; the finest of the wheat; and grape juice.

Spurning God

But the song takes a turn for the worse as it rehearses how Israel spurned their God:

They forsook God who made him.

They scorned the Rock of their salvation.

They made God jealous with strange gods—abominations. (The word *jealous* is not always a negative word. God wanted the best for His people. He knew that false worship was bad for them—that it was abominable. Therefore, He was jealous that they would follow Him fully so that they would be blessed.)

They provoked Him to anger.

They sacrificed to demons who were not God—to new gods.

They neglected the Rock who begot them.

They forgot the God who gave them birth.

Punishment

What does a child deserve who treats a parent as these people did their God? Punishment. That’s what God promised these ungrateful, disobedient children.

“I will hide My face from them. [Teacher, turn your face away.]

“I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. (✓Maybe a nation would harass them with raiding parties taking away their animals and crops. ✓Maybe a nation would demand they pay tribute money.)

“I will heap misfortunes on them. (What are misfortunes? They are things that go wrong, sometimes at the same time, like sickness, a broken wagon wheel, losing baby calves to death, having animals wander off, seeing hail destroy crops, *etc.*)

“I will use My arrows on them. (How would God use His arrows against them? By the arrows of enemy nations that would war against them.)

“They will be wasted by famine, and consumed by plague and bitter destruction. (What is famine? Being unable to grow food for a long time, usually because of drought. What is plague? A widespread disease like the coronavirus.)

“I will send upon them the teeth of beasts. (What does this mean? Wild animals would destroy some.)

“I will send upon them the venom of crawling things. (What is venom? Poison. What are crawling things that have venom? Poisonous snakes. So how would some people be destroyed? By venomous snakes.)

“Outside the sword will bereave.

“Inside terror will bereave.” (The people would be fearful.)

God added His considered intention to this condemnation by saying, “I would have removed the memory of Israel from men.” He could have destroyed the nation. Indeed, He had threatened to destroy the nation at least three times already—when they worshiped the golden calf; when the spies brought a bad report; and when Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled and were swallowed up by the earth. Twice God said He would raise up a new nation through Moses’ descendants, but God did not destroy the nation. The reason He gave in Moses’ song is that “Israel’s enemies would misjudge and say, ‘We did this; our hand is triumphant against Israel. The LORD didn’t destroy them.’”

God’s vengeance

Much more is found in this song, but we will mention only one more thing. First, is a statement by God that is quoted in the New Testament and applies to us. It is this: “Vengeance is Mine, says the Lord; I will repay.”² We know God can do all His holy will: He can bless or punish. What He does is right. Sometimes He repays evil with great consequences. He can do it because He is the ultimate Judge.

Should we pay back someone who has done evil to us? Should we take vengeance? No, for Romans 12:19 tells us, “Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay,’ says the Lord.” Therefore, we need to be patient and let God take care of revenge. He will do it correctly and most meaningfully.

A good God

One more quote from this song gives insight into what our great God is like. He declared, “See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand.” It would be good for us to memorize at least this part of the long song of Moses.

¹ “In his article, ‘On the wings of the eagle - an old misunderstanding,’ Hendrik G. L. Peels argues for another way to understand verse 11. In his opinion, this verse divides into two very different halves. Verse 11a refers to the image of the eagle and its loving care for its young. Then the focus shifts and in verse 11b God himself is the subject of all three verbs (Peels 1994:301, Fn 6). The carrying on the wings, then, is not something the eagle does (or at least not to that extent), it is something God does for Israel. Therefore the discussion of whether eagles really carry their young on their back is not really vital for the understanding of Deuteronomy 32:11” (http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0259-94222016000300021).

² Deuteronomy 32:35 and 41 is quoted this way in the New Testament (Romans 12:19; Hebrews 10:30).

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

Five times in Moses' song, God is called *the Rock*. This word also identifies Jesus in the New Testament: 1 Peter 2:4–8: And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God . . . For this is contained in Scripture: “Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone.” . . . for those who disbelieve, “The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone.” and, “A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense”; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

- Beware of prosperity: Do not let it turn you away from the true God of gods.
- To not take revenge; leave it to God.

Activities:

- Play dough: a rock; an eagle
- Snack: Cottage cheese or, better, cheese curds (“curds of cows”); grape juice (“the blood of grapes”)
- Do a puppet skit on the eagle. One is found below and on the “Extras” page at teachingthebibletochildren.org. Here is a site with instructions for making an eagle paper-bag puppet: <http://learncreatelove.com/paper-bag-craft-eagle-puppet/>.
- Sing a short part of Moses' song entitled “I Am He.” This song is found below.
- Show a video of the evangelistic children's book, *The Eaglet*, written by Jim Eliff and found at <https://www.ccwtoday.org/free-audio-video-books/>.
- Review questions: (Game: Print, back with paper towel, and cut out the musical symbols found below. Each correct answer allows a student to place a musical symbol on the flannel board.)
 1. Tell one reason why God said Moses should write a song. [To remind the people of the greatness of God; to be a witness against their guilty souls when they forsook God.]
 2. God said the Israelites would surely eventually worship what? [False gods.]
 3. When were the people developing their intent to serve other gods? [That very day.]
 4. To what hard substance was God compared in Moses' song? [Rock.]
 5. To which bird's care did God compare His care of His people? [The eagle's.]
 6. Name one food God had provided for His people. [Produce; honey; oil; curds; milk; fat of lambs, rams, and goats; wheat; grape juice.]
 7. What was the logical consequence for Israel's disobedience? [Punishment.]
 8. To whom does vengeance belong? [God.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- Exodus 20:1–17. An enlarged copy of the words, the “Exodus 20:1–17” song sheet, and motions are in Lesson 12.15 or on the “Lessons” and “Songs” pages at teachingthebibletochildren.org. “Stop! It's the Law,” a song that teaches only the basic Ten Commandments, is found on the same “Songs” page.

Handwork:

- To continue the theme of a song (music), make a toilet paper roll kazoo. Children can decorate the toilet paper roll using crayons or stickers. Cut a piece of wax paper to fit over one end of the toilet paper roll. Use a rubber band to hold it in place. Use a pencil to poke a few holes in the wax paper. Blow and hum into the non-wax paper end of the tube (<https://www.allkidsnetwork.com/crafts/music/kazoo-craft.asp>).
- Or make a paper-bag eagle puppet like the one at the site suggested for the puppet skit above.

prosperous

to spurn

vengeance

God's Tender Care

He was their Father.

He bought them.

He made them and established them.

He claimed them as His special inheritance.

He found them in a desert land.

He cared for them.

He guarded them as the pupil of His eye.

He carried as an eagle carries its young.

He guided them.

He fed them with a variety of foods.

Israel's Spurning of God

They forsook God who made them.

They scorned the Rock of their salvation.

They made Him jealous with strange gods.

They provoked Him to anger.

They sacrificed to demons.

They neglected the Rock who begot them.

They forgot the God who gave them birth.

God's Punishment

"I will hide My face from them.

"I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

"I will heap misfortunes on them.

"I will use My arrows on them.

"They will be wasted by famine and consumed by plague and bitter destruction.

"I will send upon them the teeth of beasts.

"I will send upon them the venom of crawling things.

"Outside the sword will bereave.

"Inside terror will bereave."

The Song of Moses



Deuteronomy 32:4

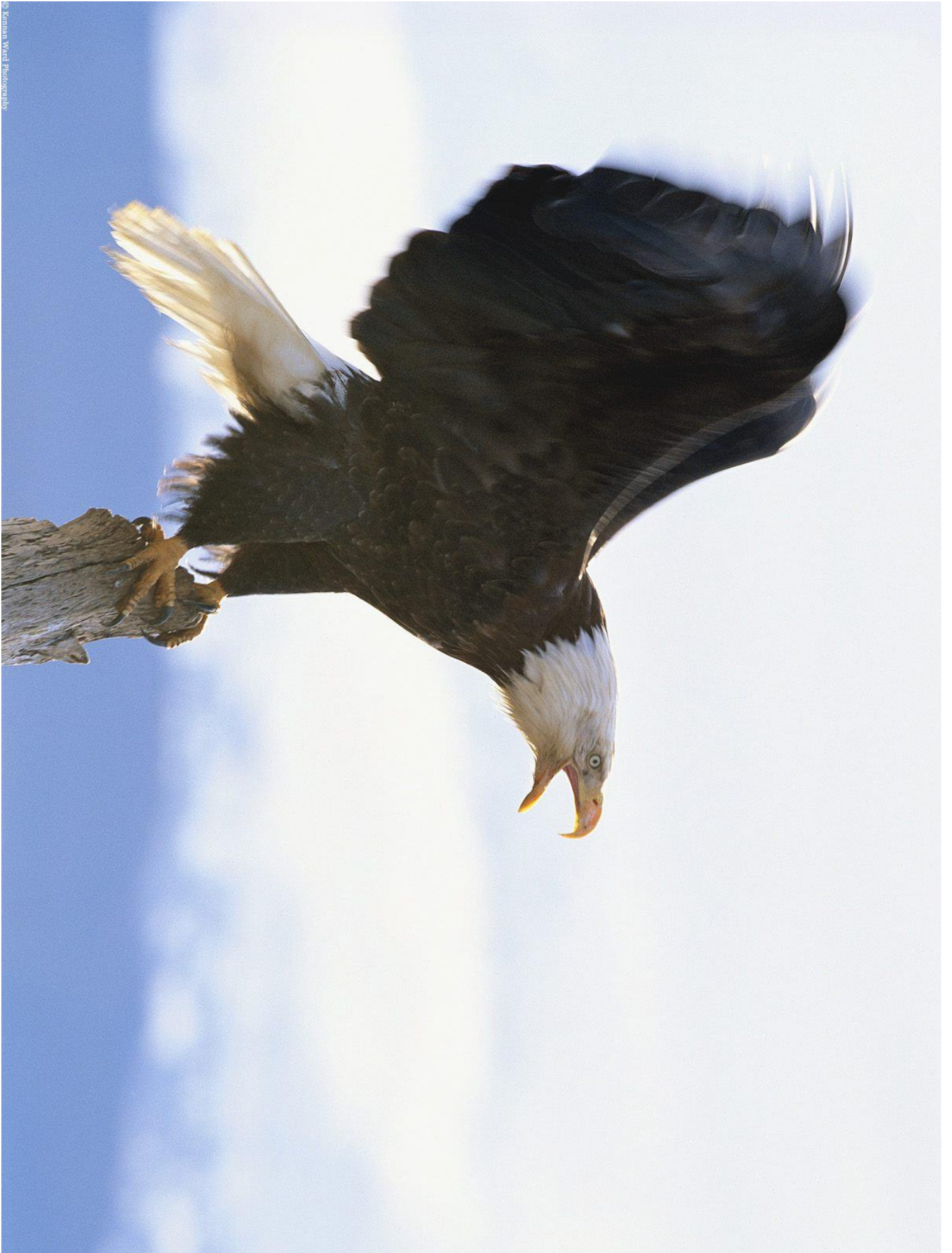
THE ROCK

His worke is perfect,
for all his ways are just.

A FAITHFUL GOD

who does no wrong
upright and just is he.

<http://bit.ly/17v25>



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Edith Eagle Puppet Skit
by Marilyn Alexander

Edith: [Have an eagle puppet soar up and then down as these first words are spoken.] Zoom! There. I caught it! Now to fix it for dinner.

Interviewer: What are you doing, Edith Eagle?

Edith: Oh, I just caught this rodent for my supper. He was running pretty fast, but I was faster.

Interviewer: Faster than a rodent? How fast can you fly, Edith?

Edith: Golden eagles can fly up to 200 miles per hour. I can fly almost that fast. God the Creator made me strong and fast.

Interviewer: What are you doing to that rodent?

Edith: I need to put it to death with my talons, and then—

Interviewer: Excuse me. Sorry to interrupt. Did you say talons? What are talons?

Edith: They are these claws at the end of my strong muscular legs. Like all raptors, eagles kill their prey with their powerful talons.

Interviewer: Oh. I thought you used your strong, hooked beak for that.

Edith: Well, no. Again, like all raptors, we eagles use our large hooked beaks for tearing off pieces of meat to eat. I'm a carnivore—a meat-only eater—you know.

Interviewer: So what meat do you like to eat?

Edith: There's fish, rabbits, ground squirrels, mice, sometimes slow-flying birds, reptiles, foxes, and even deer. I heard that a bald eagle once carried a 15-pound mule deer fawn while flying! Usually we carry only about 4 pounds max.

Interviewer: Amazing! But shall we get off the topic of food?

Edith: I'll be happy to get off that topic because—well, because—don't tell anybody, okay? [Whispers] I am bigger than my husband.

Interviewer: You are?

Edith: Yes. We female eagles are always larger than the males.

Interviewer: Interesting.

Edith: If you want to know something interesting, let's talk about my fantastic eyesight.

Interviewer: Oh, yes! Tell us, Edith.

Edith: First, my eyes are roughly the same size as a human's, but God made my eyesight 4 to 8 times stronger than yours. I can spot a rabbit about 2 miles away.

Interviewer: Two miles! That's is fantastic eyesight!

Edith: Yes, but guess what. My eyes hardly move in the eye socket. You know how an owl can quickly rotate its head three quarters of a circle?

Interviewer: Yes?

Edith: So can I.

Interviewer: That's interesting. Moving your head like that must be helpful for finding your prey. But tell me

about your nest.

Edith: Glad to. We eagles like to build our nests—by the way, they are called eyries [EER-ees]—way up high in tall trees or on high cliffs. Both my husband and I worked on our eyrie. He is a very helpful fellow. I have to tell you he even helps incubate the eggs in our eyrie during the 35 days before they hatch into eaglets. My husband and I mate for life, you know.

Interviewer: Great. Say, Edith. Our kids learned today about God's care for Israel. God compared Himself to an eagle that hovers over its nest and protects its young. In the same way, God Himself spreads his symbolic wings over his people, sheltering them under his protection.

Edith: It's pretty cool to have God use us eagles as a symbol of His care. We eagles have to care for our eaglets a pretty long time—about three months after they hatch while they grow and then fledge.

Interviewer: Excuse me, again, Edith. What does *fledge* mean?

Edith: When a bird has enough feathers and strength to fly for the first time, it fledges—it flies. My "baby," which has grown to be almost as big as I am when he first flies, is called a fledgling.

Interviewer: That means he is independent then and leaves the nest, right?

Edith: Oh, no. My eaglet may fledge, but he still depends on us parents to feed him for another one to three months while he improves his flying skills and learns to hunt.

Interviewer: That's another comparison we could use for us humans: we always must depend on our God. Unlike eagles, we never outgrow our need for Him. I am so glad we got to visit today, Edith. You have taught me how great our Lord is in His creation of you and in His care of us all.

Isaiah 40:28: The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.

Sources:

<http://justfunfacts.com/interesting-facts-about-eagles>

(http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0259-94222016000300021)

12.40a "I Am He"

Then God said, "See now that I, I am He, And there is no god be -

5 sides Me; It is I who put to death and give life; I have

10 wound-ed, and it is I who heal. And there is no one who can de - li - ver from My hand."

The musical score is written on three staves in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature (C). The melody is simple and declarative, with lyrics printed below the notes. The first staff contains the first line of the text, the second staff contains the second line, and the third staff contains the third line. Measure numbers 5 and 10 are indicated at the beginning of their respective staves.

