

# **SIMILITUDES USED IN HOLY SCRIPTURE**

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Similitudes Used in Holy Scripture by W. J. Trower

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**W. J. TROWER**

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IN HOLY SCRIPTURE**





# SIMILITUDES

USED IN

**Holy Scripture.**

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SECOND SERIES.

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BY THE RIGHT REV.

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## SIMILITUDES,

§c.

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### I.—THE EAGLE TRAINING HER YOUNG.

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.”  
Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.

THE care of the eagle for her young is here made an emblem of the Divine love and tenderness for the Church; as in another similitude, the hen gathering her chickens under her wings is an image of Christ's compassionate desire to shield the souls of His people from all the evil that can befall them<sup>1</sup>. The eagle is observed to have a strong affection for her young; and to show it, not only as other creatures, by protecting them, and making provision for them, but also by educating them and teaching them to fly. She stirs them out of the nest with her beak. She flutters over them, not only with parental delight and complacency in her offspring, but also in order to instruct and encourage them by her own example to use their wings. She stirs them up, that they may not lie in sloth and indolence, or lose their natural gifts and powers for want of exercise; and then she

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiii. 37.

flutters over them that they may learn by degrees the right manner of exerting those powers. And as she helps them to rise out of the nest, and try their feeble strength, so she continually watches their endeavours, and turns back to them, if she sees them wearied or in difficulty; and she bears them on her own wings. How true to nature is each instance of her parental love, and each action of her instinctive wisdom, as here set forth to us! How beautiful is the image thus brought before us, of an eagle stirring up her nest, fluttering over her young, spreading out her wings, and taking and bearing on her wings her helpless offspring! She thus teaches and accustoms them to fly; and, by bearing them on her wings, protects them at her own risk from danger; since the body of the parent must then be pierced before the young eagles can be destroyed, or wounded. Surely every parent may well be reminded, by this description, of the duty of training and instructing his children; that he must not suffer them to grow up in idleness, and in ignorance of their blessings, and duties; or to lose their powers of mind, or body, for want of exercise.

But this most beautiful image is used to show us, in the first instance, the care with which God trained His weak and wayward people in the wilderness. When they would have continued in Egypt, He stirred them up with the love of liberty and the hope of "a land flowing with milk and honey;" and many times kept them from returning to that house of bondage. At every fresh difficulty He was at hand to counsel, to succour, and to comfort them; training them by degrees for what they had to do; and not leading them to struggles that would require strong faith and principle, and powers of enduring hardness, until they had been prepared for those greater trials, by mastering such as were more easy. With patient love, "He suffered their manners in the wilderness," and

<sup>2</sup> Acts xiii. 18.

led them about and instructed them, with the tenderness and forbearance of a compassionate Father.

And does not the similitude apply as truly to His dealings with ourselves? He graciously stirs us up at first by the influence of His Holy Spirit, by the warnings of conscience, by the fear of hell, and by the hope of heaven; or else we should never move from our old bondage to sin and Satan. He gives us the desire for the "glorious liberty" of His children who are freed from the tyranny of sin; and many times He keeps us from returning to our old condition, when, if left to ourselves, we should go back to it. In all the trials or disappointments which come upon us, He still seeks to train us for the heavenly home, as well as to exercise us for the work which lies before us on earth. And our part is, to remember at all times His gracious purpose towards us; that His Holy Spirit is, as it were, hovering over us; and that He is willing, as it were, to bear and carry us on His wings. Nay, we should call to mind that our blessed Saviour has Himself interposed between the Divine justice and our guilty souls; and received in His own body the stroke under which we must otherwise have perished for ever. Surely one thought of what is here said of the eagle stirring up her nest and fluttering over her young, and taking and bearing them on her wings, should be enough to sustain us under every dispensation of Divine Providence, with cheerfulness, and with a calm trust in Him who has so infinite a compassion for His helpless creatures. Remember, also, that He tells us of all this unspeakable tenderness, in order that we may be drawn to Him as with cords of love<sup>3</sup>; and that we may walk with Him in the ways of obedience, as grateful and teachable children.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. viii. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Hos. xi. 4.