

~FALCON (72)

[Hebrew, *nets*]

- Modern lexicographers believe the Hebrew term *nets* applies to **falcons**, though some consider it to embrace also hawks, which are very similar to the **falcons** though classified by ornithologists as in a separate family grouping. [The Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate render *nets*, as hawk.]
- As a predator, eating snakes, lizards, small mammals, and other birds, the falcon according to its kind, the hawk in its several species, **AT**, was among those birds decreed unclean in the Mosaic Law.
- And the ostrich and the owl and the gull and the **falcon** according to its kind. (**Leviticus 11:16**)
- And the ostrich and the owl and the gull and the **falcon** according to its kind. (**Deuteronomy 14:15**)
- Some **falcons** vie with the swift as the fastest fliers of the bird family, observers crediting one falcon with a diving speed of 290 kilometers/hour (180 mph). Among the **falcons** found in Palestine is the peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus*, a fairly common passage migrant.
- There are also the somewhat larger lanner **falcons**, *Falco biamircus*, once abundant in the cliffs and rocky gorges from Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea area. Saker **falcons**, *Falco cherrug*, are occasionally seen in the western Negev.
- The smaller common kestrel, *Falco tinnunculus*, about 36 centimeters (14 inches) long, is also a member of the same genus as the **falcon**. It is abundant the year round throughout Palestine's agricultural settlements and gardens. It even nests on larger buildings in the cities.
- Is it owing to your understanding that the **falcon** soars up, that it spreads its wings to the south wind? (**Job 39:26**)
- Describes the **falcons** soaring up and spreading its wings to the south wind, and this is understood by some to refer to a southward migration, spreads his wings to travel south, **JB**, which would be true of

the lesser kestrel of the falcon family and, to some extent, of the peregrine **falcon**.

- Others, however, believe that the text describes the bird as turning into the oncoming wind and, by the power of its wings, flying into it, ascending higher and higher. **Falcons** are said to rise to a great height, always endeavoring to outsoar any bird of which they may be in pursuit in order to be able to plummet down with fierce velocity upon the prey below, and in doing so they often avail themselves of the wind, and by flying against it are borne aloft like a kite. [Funk and Wagnall's New Standard Encyclopedia, 1931, Vol. XI, pp. 329,330]

- Similarly the kestrel is sometimes called the windhover because it **hovers**, stays in one place, in the air while it hunts. This bird faces into the wind and beats its wings while watching the ground for prey. [The World Book Encyclopedia, 1987, Vol. 11, p. 237]

- The **falcon** held a very prominent place in the religion of Egypt. It became the symbol of Horus, the **falcon**-headed god of Egypt, who, together with Isis and Osiris, formed the principal trinity or holy family among Egypt's gods and goddesses.

- The **falcon** symbol was always used in writing the title of the Pharaoh's, and in some cases, these rulers were considered to be incarnations of Horus. Of the hundreds of mummified birds found in Egypt, the **falcon**, particularly the kestrel, is among the most numerous. Herodotus said that anyone killing a **falcon** in Egypt, even though accidentally, was put to death.