

Steve Hill: Some Trust in Chariots

“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God” (Ps. 20:7, KJV).

In this day of modern high-speed transit and advanced warfare, it's hard to imagine the chariot as being a luxurious mode of transportation, let alone as a fierce weapon used in battle. Can you imagine trekking across the desert in a dusty chariot without the convenience of air conditioning, bucket seats and cruise control? Or could you envision a host of chariots facing off against any of today's armies?

While the chariot may be archaic in our world today, God's Word—penned thousands of years ago by the Holy Spirit through holy men of God—is timeless. It's alive and powerful and will transform your life if you believe it and act upon it.

This is why I tell people, “Don't just go through the Book. Let the Book go through you!” As you fellowship with the Lord through His Word, He will speak and minister to you.

That's what happened to me as I was reading Psalm 20. At the time, I was faced with some situations where I really needed His wisdom and guidance. While reading the Word, He suddenly showed me something I'd never seen, even though I'd read that passage hundreds of times before.

I was so moved by how it fit my life, I said, “Jesus, this is exactly where I'm living!”

He answered, “Not only is this where you're living, Steve, but this is where My people are living. They need this word, too!”

Perhaps you're on the front lines of battle right now. Or maybe you're facing a situation where you need divine wisdom.

My friend, this is a word for you.

Allow me to set the stage by painting a picture for you. Go back in time with me to the days of ancient Israel, when chariots were used in war.

Back then, the war chariot was as powerful a weapon as the Patriot missile is to us today. It was an incredible machine, consisting of two large wheels spinning on an axle. At the center of the spokes of the wheel would often be a blade-like object protruding out, which would incur damage when sideswiping another chariot. Many chariots held three people, consisting of the warrior, the shield bearer and the charioteer (driver).

Of course, they were drawn by the most powerful horses. Some Persian chariots were known to be drawn by four horses. Lined up side by side on the battlefield, these fighting machines caused fear and intimidation at their very sight. Once in motion, they sped along at breakneck speed and slaughtered the enemy in their path.

Here's what's interesting. Although their enemies used horses and chariots in battle, initially God prohibited the children of Israel from even having horses!

Think about that. Forget about having chariots—Israel wasn't even allowed to have horses!

“But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way” (Deut. 17:16).

Imagine the terror the people of Israel must have felt whenever they looked across the valley and saw their enemies lined up in these fierce pieces of machinery, ready to attack them! Yet note how the Lord instructed them to face their enemies on the battlefield:

“When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. ... For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you” (Deut. 20:1, 4).

My friend, what enemies are you facing on the battlefield of life? Maybe you’ve received a bad report from a doctor or you’re experiencing trouble on your job or with a relationship. Perhaps something is stealing your affections from Christ or temptation is knocking at your door.

You may feel like Israel felt when they squared off against the superior might of their enemies. Maybe the enemy of your soul, along with the demons of hell, have stationed themselves against you. In front of you stand rows and rows of snorting horses and gleaming chariots, outfitted with the most vicious warriors in hell. The battle seems to be lost before it even begins.

I’ve got good news for you: The God who created the horse and formed the iron that was melted down to make the steel to fabricate that chariot is on your side!

You would think that not having horses or chariots would have made Israel extremely vulnerable against her enemies. So why did the Lord forbid them to multiply horses? The Word tells us why:

“Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright” (Ps. 20:7-8).

God wanted Israel to trust in Him, not horses and chariots. When they faced their enemy on the battlefield, they were to remember how the Lord delivered them in times past. They were to remember how He delivered them from Egypt’s chariots at the Red Sea (Ex. 14:7).

As they remembered Him, they put their trust in Him. And He delivered them.

My friend, when you're in the heat of the battle and it looks like the enemy is closing in on you, go back and remember all that the Lord has brought you through. He has not changed. Just as He brought you through the trials of yesterday, He will bring you through the trials of today and tomorrow too.

Now let me show you how this passage about horses and chariots relates to us today:

1. Those who put their trust in chariots are, in essence, placing their confidence in the ingenuity of man.

"Some trust in chariots" (Ps. 20:7).

Man is absolutely amazing. Our ability to invent and build has taken us to unimaginable levels. Just consider some of our modern-day chariots, such as the light bulb, automobiles, the airplane, the rocket, the stock market, computers, smartphones, digital cameras and the marvels of modern medicine, to name a few. God has given us an incredible ability to create and invent. It's no wonder that we're always trying to solve and fix our way out of problems.

But here's a caution for every believer: Many times we lean upon our ability to concoct, to make and to fix. We say in our hearts, "I can do this." When we put our heads together and seek earthly wisdom rather than putting our hands together to seek heavenly wisdom, we end up squeezing God totally out of the picture. This is trusting in chariots.

What we ought to say is, "God of heaven, You have given me the ability to think. Please help me, because I don't want to do anything outside of Your guidance or Your direction, Father."

How many preachers and Christian workers have trusted in "chariots" over the years and moved ahead without ever

consulting their Creator? They ended up building monuments to themselves, which neither glorified God nor advanced His kingdom. Or how many businessmen have blown it on a business deal because they never sought the Lord?

What are you trusting in? Your creative ability? Your imagination? Your intellect, your business sense or your ability to make things happen?

Many times—if not in word then through our actions—we tell the Lord, “God, I’m going to do this, and You can come along.” Instead, we should get on our face before Him and say, “Jesus, please speak to me, and I’ll move forward only when You tell me to move forward.”

Learn, my friend, to trust in the Lord and His infinite wisdom rather than your ability to fix and solve problems.

2. Those who put their trust in horses are, in essence, placing their confidence in the resources that have been made available by our Creator.

“... and some in horses” (Ps. 20:7).

Consider this: Man made the chariot, but horses were created by God. He is the one who put life into the nostrils of that horse, not man. Man put a saddle on the horse’s back and a bit into its mouth, then started to use the resource that God had given. Then man began to put his confidence in that God-given resource to help him win victories on the battlefield.

How about precious metals? God created the resources of gold, silver, copper and precious gems. Man has learned how to blast open and burrow miles into mountains to extract those resources from the earth. And what have we done with these resources? We’ve taken metals, such as gold, and shaped gods and idols out of them. And bowed down to them.

That reminds me of the time when Moses came down from Mount

Sinai and found that the children of Israel had taken all their jewelry and threw it into the fire to make a golden calf. Then they began to worship the golden calf.

I find it interesting that gold, which is so greatly esteemed and even worshipped on earth, is mere pavement in heaven. My friend, trusting in any resource will have negative recourse. Learn to trust in God rather than what He has made or provided.

3. Those who put their trust in God and tap into their God-filled memory banks will activate His spoken Word in their lives and set themselves up to be the recipients of a God-ordained miracle.

“... but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright” (Ps. 20:7-8).

Trusting in chariots (man’s ingenuity) or putting your confidence in horses (God’s resources) can have devastating results. But when a follower of Jesus Christ muses on what God has done and on what He says He will do, then the enemy will do exactly what the Scripture dictates: He will be brought down and will fall!

When you trust in God’s spoken word, you unleash a faith that sets in motion the resources of heaven. And when the power of heaven is unleashed on your behalf, the powers of hell tremble and quake.

Matthew Henry is quoted as saying, “We, the Israelites, have neither chariots nor horses to trust in, nor do we want them. If we had them, we would build our hope of success upon them. But we will remember and rely upon the name of the Lord our God. We will depend upon the relation that we have with the Lord and the knowledge we have of Him by His name.”

Yes, God wants you to use the gifts and talents that He has

given you. He wants you to use the natural resources He's created. He wants you to use your mind. Just remember where it all comes from.

That business plan that brought you success—He's the one who gave it to you. That money you have in the bank—He's got a whole lot more of it. That raise you got—He's got more raises for you. That job He blessed you with—He's got more jobs. It all comes from Him.

Bottom line: Depending upon Him instead of "chariots" or "horses" is an issue of confidence.

Where's your confidence?

When David stood before Goliath, he wasn't trusting in his skill, his slingshot or Saul's armor. Instead, he reached into his memory bank and recounted how God delivered him from the lion and the bear. As David remembered the Lord, he received internal strength for his outward battle. And we all know the outcome: God delivered him!

What about you? You could be right at the edge of an incredible miracle, my friend. As you trust in the Lord rather than in His resources or your ingenuity, you will position yourself to receive that miracle!

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