

God's Vehicle, the Believers Made Immortal

God spoke at various times to the fathers by the prophets *"in different ways"* - **Hebrews 1:1**. One of those "ways" is straightforward literal language. But the Author of the scriptures often uses figures of speech which give beauty, variety and force to the message being given. One kind of figure is the metaphor, where often a concrete object is made a symbol of an abstraction. Literally, Jesus could say, *"I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore"* - **Revelation 1:18**. Also, John could say, *"...we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him..."* - **1 John 3:2**. And Paul could say of faithful believers, *"If we endure, we shall also reign with Him"* - **2 Timothy 2:12**.

John heard *"the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: Worthy is the Lamb..."* - **Revelation 5:11-12**. The Psalmist received a vision of this in **Psalm 68:17 NAS** - *"The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands..."*, the chariots [Strong 7393 Hebrew, *rekeb* = a vehicle] clearly being figurative. Later in the vision he sees Christ and his redeemed moving in a day of celebration towards the place of Messiah's throne, as he begins his thousand year reign - *"They have seen Your procession, O God, The procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary. The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after; among them were the maidens playing timbrels"* - **verses 24-25**.

These myriads of the redeemed will possess the power of swift flight, seen in the angel by Daniel, *"while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering"* - **Daniel 9:21**. This is only one of the *"powers of the age to come"* - **Hebrews 6:5**, which was experienced by Philip, when *"the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that" the man of Ethiopia "saw him no more...but Philip was found at Azotus"* continuing in his urgent work of preaching - **Acts 8:39-40**. It appears that Philip and the head of the exchequer were "in the middle of nowhere", on a desert road which ran from Jerusalem to Gaza. In the ordinary way, Philip would have had to travel the long way around to reach Azotus. Instead of the long walk, the Spirit of the Lord carried him directly to Azotus, more than 20 km away.

The introduction of the horse as a draft animal in about 2000 BC was the final step in the development of the chariot into a military arm that revolutionized warfare in the ancient world by providing armies with unprecedented mobility. This is the basis of the figure of the chariot used in the psalm. Previously we saw how Jesus used other military terminology to describe the angels which God had placed at his disposal as *"legions of angels"* - **Matthew 26:53**. Jesus had already shown that those who will be found worthy to rule with him in the restored kingdom of David will *"neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels"* - **Luke 20:35**. Therefore these *"sons of the resurrection"* will become a new order of angelic beings, organized by Jesus for their work of governing the mortal nations during the thousand years. They will rule as *"kings and priests"* - **Revelation 5:10**. The Old Testament speaks of the priestly service in the tabernacle as a *"warfare"* (Hebrew, *tsaba'* Strong 6635) **Numbers 4:43**. It will be the work of the redeemed to use the divine power then at their disposal in that spiritual warfare. *"For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death"* - **1 Corinthians 15:25-26**. *"The Lord Jesus Christ will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself"* - **Philippians 3:20-21**.