

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, August 23, 2022
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“Horse Feathers”

READING: Psalm 20:4-9 – May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. We will shout for joy when you are victorious and will lift up our banners in the name of our God. May the LORD grant all your requests. Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he answers him from his holy heaven with the saving power of his right hand. Some (men) trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and stand firm. O LORD, save the king! Answer us when we call!

Two weeks ago my niece Erin and her family were in town for a visit. They hadn't been to the Louisville area as tourists before, so I became their guide. We went to the Bat Factory, Slugger Field, Huber's, Schimpff's Candy, and, of course, to Churchill Downs and the Kentucky Derby Museum.

At the Derby Museum one is immersed into the horse culture and history of Kentucky. It really is a very good museum with lots of interactive displays, a marvelous wrap-around movie experience, and all kinds of interesting information on the horses, the jockeys, and the trainers who have sustained and grown the thoroughbred industry. There are some real “horse people” on display there.

When you stand back and give it some thought, you come to the realization that in our day and age, horses are mostly known for the racing business. There are still some working horses on ranches, in police forces, at riding stables, and on Amish farms, but horses do not hold the place of value and importance that they did a hundred and more years ago. Then they were the chief source of transportation and work power in all the world. It is amazing to read about the horse and mule industry at the time of the Civil War. The Union bought hundreds of thousands of them to mount their cavalry, pull cannons and wagons, and to make up for the terrible losses the horses suffered in battle along with their human handlers. During the First World War, over a million horses labored and died in that grisly conflict. Even in World War II, the German army depended on horses for much of their transport at the start and at the end of the war.

Horses and chariots were the tanks and trucks of the Old Testament age. Egypt drew much of its strength and status from its charioteers and their powerful steeds. The king who could amass the most of them had a great advantage in any battle he faced. So King David knows that any enemy he faced who had numbers of these mighty weapons was a force to be reckoned with. But he knows something else more important to him: any enemy who relied on the number of horses and chariots he had rather than on the true God of the universe was doomed to fail and to fall. He says in v.7, “Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.” Any enemy David faced had a terrible disadvantage because David and Israel had the ultimate power on their side.

There is a lesson here apart from horses and chariots that modern people need to heed. There is the temptation to rely on our technology to solve our problems and give us security. Whether it's solar power, nuclear fusion, government programs, or things yet undiscovered, if we put our faith and our future in “things”, in man-made supports and the creature comforts we so enjoy, and let go of God and his kingdom, we will fall and fall hard.

I had probably read this Psalm dozens of times without noticing the most important passage in it. I'll bet you did, too. It's in v.6. David says God saves the anointed from heaven with “...the saving power of his right hand.” Did you catch it this time? Who is seated at God's right hand? Ah! Now you see it. More

accurately, now you see “Him”! There is Jesus once again. Seated at the right hand of the Father, our Lord intercedes for us according to St. Paul. Jesus left that place of honor and might to become fully a man that he might become the perfect sacrifice by which God’s justice might be served and his grace might be extended to us. It is in the name of the LORD our God that we too put our trust. It is in our Savior that we can anticipate ultimate victory. As David says in v.5, “...we will shout for joy **WHEN** you are victorious.” Notice, he doesn’t say “if you are victorious.” He says “when”. There’s no doubt because of the One in whom we place our faith: Jesus Christ, Son of God, our Savior. No amount of horses and chariots, tanks or aircraft can give us such a guarantee. Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENT(S):

- 1) Remember that you have an opportunity to visit the “Ark Experience” in northern Kentucky on September 17. The bus ride is free, the tickets are \$41 for seniors, \$47 for adults, and kids will go free. Check it out at glcna.org under the “Events” button.
- 2) PASTORS CLASS: will commence on Sunday, September 4, from 1-3:00 P.M. It will meet 8 times with the last class in November. This class is a great review of the Six Chief Parts of the Christian faith. It is also the class by which a person can become a member of Grace if they have never been confirmed in a Lutheran church. Join us!