

## **SERMON: WHEN GOD REMOVES CHARIOT WHEELS**

### **Exodus 14:21-25a**

**(21) And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. (22) And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand, and on their left. (23) And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. (24) And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, (25) And took off their chariots wheels, and they drave them heavily.**

### **Introduction**

Anyone who knows anything about the Bible knows that the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea on their exodus to freedom. This miracle, which is really a series of complementing miracles, has been acclaimed by composers like George Frideric Handel, actors like Charlton Heston, preachers like Martin Luther King, Jr., writers like Leon Uris, cartoonists like Charles Schulz, animators like Walt Disney, and even singer/song writers like Bob Marley.

The story is so simple yet so profound. After allowing God's people to go, it dawned on Pharaoh and his officers that by allowing their Jewish slaves to escape, they had threatened, if not destroyed, Egypt's whole economy. The logical thing to do, they thought, was to go after the Jews and bring them back. What seemed like an easy victory turned out to be an ignominious defeat. Pharaoh commandeered six hundred of his best chariots, mounted his own royal chariot, and pursued the people of Israel. Moses lifted up his rod, the waters parted and formed a wall on the left and the right, and the children of Israel walked across on dry land, escaping the Egyptian army.

When the Egyptian soldiers tried to follow, the dry sediment from the floor of the sea clogged the wheels of the chariots and the wheels came off and the chariots scrapped the ground as they tried to move. This of course impeded their progress; they could neither go forward nor backwards. When Moses lifted his rod the second time and the waters returned, all of the Egyptian soldiers, including Pharaoh, were drowned. This was an additional miracle that God wrought by Himself. The Egyptian chariots could maneuver in almost any type of terrain. They were especially designed to function in the fierce sand storms of the Sahara Desert as well as in the mud after the flooding of the Nile River. This was an unexpected failure of military technology. For them to get clogged on a dry ocean floor was a miracle of the highest order. For all the wheels to fall

off was unimaginable. Only God could make that happen. I have seen God work miracles like this all of my life. I have seen it recently in current events. Just when it looked like evil had succeeded, God took the wheels off of the enemy's chariots and true believers were delivered and "God got the victory."

### **Exposition**

#### **1. Pharaohs Don't Die Easily, but They Do Die.**

(Don't Kid Yourself. They don't give up without a fierce fight.)

#### **2. There Are Somethings God Decides To Do Directly.**

(When God Shows Up He Shows Out.)

#### **3. Sometimes God Moves Slowly, But He Moves with Power and Finality.**

(Our Faith Must Not Weaken As We Wait.)

#### **4. When God Removes Chariot Wheels, History Is Made.**

(He Teaches Us New Things.)

#### **5. When God Removes Chariot Wheels, We See Vivid Proof of Romans 8:28.**

(All Things Work Together for God's People.)

### **Closing Thoughts**

Since my last point refers to Romans 8:28, I will end this sermon with a story that has been told many times in our oral tradition. Like our traditional spirituals, we don't know who told it first. (I decided to start writing them down so they will be available for future generations.)

One Sunday morning, at a small rural church, which had a new pastor after months of internal turmoil, the pastor asked the chairman of the deacon board to lead in the opening prayer. The old deacon came forth, bowed his head and said, "Lord, I hate buttermilk. It's nasty." The new young pastor opened one eye and wondered where this was going. The deacon continued, "Lord, I hate greasy lard. You know it comes from filthy pigs." Now the young pastor was totally perplexed. He did not know if he should tell the deacon to end the prayer. The deacon continued, "Lord, I ain't crazy about flour; one day I was helping a neighbor unload her groceries and the flour sack broke and it ruined my brand-new suit. Lord, I don't like the taste of baking soda; my mother used to make me brush my teeth with it. Lord, I don't like table salt. When I was a child, I got some in my eye and it burned all night."

“Lord, it’s a strange thing. I can’t figure it out. After my wife takes all of these ingredients that I don’t like and mix ‘em all together and bake ‘em in a hot oven, the most delicious mouth-watering biscuits come out. Lord, they are good. I could eat one right now, if I wasn’t in church.”

“Lord, help us to realize when life gets hard, when things come up that we don’t like, when we don’t understand what you are doing, that we need to wait and see what You are making. After You get through mixing and baking, it will be something much better than my wife’s biscuits. Lord, teach us to wait and see what the end gonna be. Things are tough now, but I just believe the end is gonna be good and very good. I can’t wait to see what You are baking right now. Amen.”

Give God Glory! Give God All The Glory!

### **Theological Note**

Some scholars believe God simply loosened the pins which attached the wheels to the axles. Anyway, the wheels came off.

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