

# Competing with Horses

January 2004

*This article was adapted from the original article which I wrote on 11 January 2004. It was at the beginning of the financial collapse of the Zimbabwean dollar, which followed the iniquitous farm invasions. The Reserve Banks' policy statement on 12 December 2003 had caused interest rates of overdrafts to rise overnight to an astronomical figure of 600%. Many companies went bankrupt overnight, and my company and farm also faced imminent bankruptcy. It was only by the grace of God that we were saved from bankruptcy through a supernatural intervention by God and wisdom which He gave me.*

*Mic 6:6 "With what shall I come to YHWH and bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves?"*

*6:7 "Does YHWH take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"*

*6:8 "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does YHWH require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God ..."*

Reading on, we read about utter wickedness surrounding the righteous:

*6:12 "For the rich men of the city are full of violence, her residents speak lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth ..."*

Here we are at the beginning of another year - 2004. Many are bewildered to say the least. The onslaught on the righteous is unrelenting. Wickedness seems to flourish and the righteous are weary. Job's friends had this to say of him:

*Job 4:3,4 "Behold you have admonished many, and you have strengthened weak hands. Your words have helped the tottering to stand, and you have strengthened feeble knees ..."*

If Job could encourage people with mere words, causing weak knees to be strengthened, then I would also like to do that for you - to give a word of encouragement during this evil time, and pray that it might strengthen you and give you the hope you need, with which to face the year ahead.

When we read of violence and utter wickedness, and experience the same around us every day, then we are reminded that Paul the apostle had warned us that,

*2Tim 3:1 "In the last days difficult times will come."*

He then proceeds to give the reason for such difficult days:

*3:2 "... For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant ... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God ..."*

We are in those last days. The Scripture tells us that no man knows when the day of Christ's return will be, but it does tell us that we should know the times and seasons

- and this is, I believe, the season for all these things to take place. Speaking about these times, Jesus said:

*Luke 21:28 "When these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draws nigh."*

In the midst of the turmoil of the last days of which Micah speaks, he informs us that we should do three simple things - to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly before our God. However, this is impossible to do in our own strength alone.

We have had a horrific last three months, having been caught in the crossfire between the Reserve Bank and our bank. To cut a long story short, the banks made some foolish investments, and the Reserve Bank pounced on them, threatening to close them down. Their only way out was to make some massive policy decisions overnight, which enabled them to take billions of dollars from their clients in order to make good with the Reserve Bank. Well, we got caught totally off guard, and every reserve we had was wiped out by their immoral action.

So, what do we do when the world acts so corruptly? We turn to the Word and seek direction. A Scripture which has been resonating through my heart and mind is the following unusual verse from Jeremiah:

*Jer 12:5 "If you have run with footmen and they have tired you out, then how can you compete with horses? If you fall down in a land of peace, how will you do in the thicket (swelling – KJV) of the Jordan?"*

What an interesting verse! How could one compete with horses? You might remember how Elijah prayed for rain after he had dealt with the priests of Baal on Mt Carmel. Once the clouds started to develop, he sent a message to tell king Ahab to get his chariot prepared for traveling home, and Elijah "*girded up his loins and outran Ahab to Jazreel*". In other words, Elijah ran faster than Ahab's horses! Wow!

You cannot outrun a horse in your own strength. Jeremiah's question is thought provoking. If we cannot run with footmen – i.e., cope in the natural - then how will we cope when the real pressure is on?

Friends, we are in the last days, and the pressure of corruption is likely to increase more and more rather than lessen. God spoke to us through a prophetic gift at the turn of the year as we were praying the new year in. He told us that things were going to become more difficult. But He also told us that this would be the year of the miraculous, and that we were to have faith in Him.

To compete with horses requires the supernatural. I believe that we are going to need to live day by day by the principles of the Word of God, as guided by the Holy Spirit. It will be our only source of truth and light in these dark days. We cannot afford to think the world's thoughts or run the same way the world runs. The Word is our standard, and by it we can and must "compete with horses" and win.

Two other Scriptures have really convicted and challenged me in this difficult time. These are truths which king Lemuel's mother taught him:

*Prov 31:4f "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to desire strong drink, lest they drink and forget what is decreed and pervert the rights of all the afflicted ..."*

For me the issue was not so much strong drink, as I do not use alcohol. The issue here was just simply, *if I want to be a king, then there are some things that I just cannot do*. We must live on a higher plane, and the ordinary acceptable vices of humanity must not be a part of our lives. God wants us to compete with the horses, and as such, *we cannot afford to dabble in worldly things*. It will weaken us.

Samson told Delilah, *"If you cut my hair, I will become weak like any other man."* The cutting of his hair, then, brought him down to the level of other men, and as such meant that the Spirit was not with him anymore. When that eventually happened, the Scripture says that he was *not aware* that the Lord YHWH had departed from him (*Judges 16:20*). When we do things the world's way, we might still think we are serving the Lord, but we are unaware that the Lord's protection has departed from us. That happened to me last year in my dealings with the bank!

The other Scripture, giving a similar message, is as follows:

*Jas 3:1 "Let not many of you become teachers, my beloved brethren, for as such we shall incur a stricter judgement."*

The question is, what do we want in life? Do we just want to live a simple, ordinary life, or do we want the best?

Do we fully want everything God planned for us? If we do, then *a higher plane is expected of us* - a *stricter judgement* - a *stricter discipline*. Are we prepared for that? Do we want to see the miraculous power of God working in our lives? Do we really want more of God? Do we want to see His hand evidenced in the things we do? Then *a higher plane will be required*.

If we are to *compete with horses*, then we will need to walk in the Spirit every day - to know the voice of God directing us in every decision. We will need to be covered in prayer with every move that we make. Some of us have started a habit of asking a group of people to pray for us whenever we must make important decisions. In this way we have seen God work in a most remarkable manner, delivering us from the trap of the enemy.

My wrangle with the bank was, I believe, as a direct result of quick, foolish decisions on my part, without seeking the Lord's direction - and I was caught in the world's trap. This would certainly not have happened had I been obedient.

The attitude Micah speaks of - to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God - is a winner attitude. While the world around us hates and pulls each other down in a mad scramble to reach the top, we are to care for others - doing justice and loving mercy - and our heart attitude is to be one of humility - submitting to God and obeying His every direction.

Would you like to live on a higher plane? Would you like to *compete with horses* and win? If we do, then the first step is one of *repentance* for having done things in our own way and strength. The second step, I believe, is to

commit our daily activities to the Lord, ensuring that we spend time with Him every day, as we *seek His direction* in our lives. The third step is the difficult one - *we must die!* I don't mean physically. I mean we must die to our own wants and desires and realise that God's purpose for our life is much higher than our own.

There can be *no miraculous resurrection without a death!* Paul said,

*1Cor 15:31 "I die daily."*

He said this in connection with dangers he was facing continually. Rather than run away from the difficulties, he faced them boldly, at risk to his own life. He did it for the sake of the kingdom of God. He *"loved not his own life unto death"*. How far are we willing to go with the Lord? To what extent are we willing to place His purpose ahead of ours? The answer to that question will determine the extent to which we will be able to *compete with horses* and win.

In that time of impossibility, I repented before God for my own disobedience, and called out to Him for help and wisdom to take me through this impossible situation. He heard my cry for help and delivered me from the grip of those evil men. I gained a marvellous, supernatural victory. Praise His wonderful Name!

May you rise to the challenge to *compete with the horses*, and may you experience God's miraculous power at work in your life every day. May you also win!

*Henry D Jackson*