



HORSES

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## WONDERS OF HORSES

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*Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat. Habakkuk 1:8*

READ JOB 39:19-25

**I**n our daily reading, God showed Job His greatness by asking Job to consider some amazing features of a horse. We, too, can realize our smallness and God's greatness as we consider the strength and some characteristics of horses He created.

*Speed.* An average horse can travel thirty miles (50 km) per hour, but a racehorse can reach fifty miles (80 km) per hour.

*Vision.* A horse has the largest eyes of any land mammal. It can see better than you can at night, but it is largely color-blind, seeing only blue and green shades. A horse has almost 360-degree vision, although it has blind spots right in front of its face, underneath its head, and also directly behind it. If you walk behind a horse, it can't see you and may kick if startled. Another interesting thing about equine vision is that usually a horse's ear points in the direction the eye is looking. If the

ears are pointing in two different directions, the horse is looking at two different things at the same time.

*Height.* Horses typically are about five feet tall (1.5 m) (measured at the withers, where the neck meets the back). The tallest horse was called Samson (I think Goliath would have been a better name). He was born in England in 1846 and grew to be seven feet, two inches tall (2 m). The smallest mature horse is Thumbelina, standing seventeen inches high and weighing less than sixty pounds.

*Teeth.* A female horse usually has thirty-six teeth, and a male has forty. A horse's teeth take up more space than its brain. It's possible to estimate the age of a horse by examining its teeth. Jerome, an early church leader, wrote, "Never inspect the teeth of a gift horse." (This is the basis of the popular proverb, "Never look a gift horse in the mouth.")

*Digestion.* A horse has only one stomach, unlike cows, sheep, deer, and camels, which have four digestive chambers. It is a herbivore, eating only plants. Its small intestine is about seventy feet (32 m) long. A horse produces about three gallons of saliva a day.

*Longevity.* The oldest horse on record was Old Billy, who lived for sixty-two years (1760-1822). However, the normal life span of a horse is twenty-five to thirty years.

*Sleep.* Domestic horses sleep for three or four hours a day, mostly in short intervals. Horses can sleep standing up by locking their legs. They must lie down to experience a sound sleep, and if they go for several days without sleeping while lying down, they become sleep-deprived and may simply fall over.

*Hearing.* Horses like music, but prefer calming or cheerful types of music such as classical. They become agitated by loud music with a heavy beat. They are able to differentiate between emotions expressed by the human voice.

*Hooves.* Hooves are important for a horse's movement and usefulness. God has made the hoof complex and sensitive. When a horse puts pressure on a hoof, the blood is pushed up its leg and back to the heart.



## USES OF HORSES

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*An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength. Psalm 33:17*

READ EXODUS 14:13-31

Horses have long been associated with royalty. Queen Elizabeth, the current monarch of Great Britain, Canada, and other nations, loves horses. She doesn't ride as much as she used to, but even at age ninety she still rode regularly. She began riding horseback when she was six.

King Ahasuerus of Persia asked his advisor, Haman, what should be done for the one whom the king wanted to honor. Haman (thinking the honor would be his) replied, "Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour" (Esther 6:8, 9).