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Chariot II. Greco-Roman Antiquity and New Testament

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[1182] In the Greco-Roman world a large number of wagon types existed; apart from war chariots and racing chariots many types of wagons were used for [1183] daily transport. The Roman age profited especially from Celtic technology. The unspecific term ἄρμα that appears in the NT refers to a traveling-chariot (Acts 8 : 28–29, 38; cf. Gen 46 : 29) as well as to a war-chariot (Rev 9 : 9; cf. Joel 2 : 5; 1 Clem 51 : 5). The Ethiopian eunuch's chariot was probably rather more the relatively comfortable *raeda* with four wheels than a fast and light two-wheeled cart like *cisium* or *essedum* (insofar we are allowed to speculate about Ethiopian wagons of this age). Interestingly enough the NT texts do not allude with their description of the heavenly throne (Rev 4 : 1–6; 20 : 11; Heb 8 : 1; Matt 25 : 31) to the well known Jewish imagery of the divine chariot, the *merkavah*.

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