

22nd April 2021

Driver

**“The driving is like the driving of Jehu, the grandson of Nimshi;
for he driveth furiously.”**

Bible, II Kings 9:20

The quotation above comes from a biblical account in II Kings of a conflict between Jehu, son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi, and Jehoram, king of Judah. A force of soldiers is approaching Jezreel, Judah's stronghold. Messengers are sent out to see if the army comes in peace. But none of them return. So king Jehoram goes out himself, because he's been told that the forces are coming forward quickly, "driving like the driving of Jehu". The signs of "driving furiously" were interpreted correctly, for it is, indeed, Jehu and his army. "Driving furiously"? What a reputation to have!

As I indicated a few weeks ago, my father was a coach driver, taught me to drive and was one of the safest drivers I've known. No "driving furiously" for him. "Self-taught" as a driver (before the days of proper driving tests), he'd driven trucks in the North African deserts and became a staff-driver for some big-wigs before the end of the War. And he retained his careful driving style all his life. He carried over into his driving for himself and his family the responsibilities of his job – the safety of his 40 passengers. Driving carefully was *always* better than driving furiously.

In the legendary BBC radio programme from the 1940s, *ITMA*, the writer, Ted Kavanagh, had a character saying: "Don't forget the driver." Kavanagh said this was based on "a memory of the pier at New Brighton where Tommy Handley used to go as a child ... A man in a bathing suit ... whined, 'Don't forget the driver, sir.'" Perhaps the man in the bathing suit knew the driver had had a long trip. Or maybe he wanted to organise a "whip round" as a thank you. But his request should be a prompt to us all.

So, when your driver takes care of you – in coach or car, on a routine trip or special occasion – don't whine, but make sure you "Don't forget the driver". He or she is driving carefully for your benefit and delivering you safely to your destination. And if *you're* the driver, don't forget to be careful! Just leave the "driving furiously" bit to Jehu, grandson of Nimshi!

A prayer for today

Loving God, help me to drive my life safely.

And when my driving is too furious, slow me down – please! Amen.

An original reflection by © Tom Gordon Also available at <https://swallowsnestnet.wordpress.com>