

What Does the Bible Say about Technology?

Yellow means the section is optional

Intro

- In a conference full of presentations on the use of technology to learn about and promote the Bible, it may seem a little odd that I have reversed the focus here by asking how the Bible helps us to learn about technology.
- So I'll start by explaining how I came to ask the question and why I think it is important
- I'll give a quick overview of Biblical references to technology and the types of technology the Bible assumes as part of its cultural backdrop.
- But the main part of the talk will be about half-a-dozen key lessons we can learn as technologists about how our particular craft can be a holy calling.

Background and motivation

Who am I?

1. I bring greetings from my home church in Sydney. Berowra Uniting Church is a small suburban gathering of about 120 people. It is part of the Uniting Church in Australia, which was formed 34 years ago when the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational denominations merged. It is the third largest denomination in Australia, after the Roman Catholics and Anglicans.
 - My congregation sent me off with prayer and I carry the message of God's grace to you from our church.
2. Family
 - Two kids aged 11 and 13
3. Career
 - Software development with Digital Equipment Corporation
 - Senior Lecturer in Computer Science at University of Natal
 - VP Information Architecture with CorVu Corporation
 - General Manager (APAC) for Rocket Software
 - Global Manager of Knowledge Management with Coffey International
 - "In between jobs"

Why this question is important

I'm not the first to think about a theology of technology. Google and Amazon will find you many references. Thinking through Christian attitudes to specific technologies and to technological progress in general is an important task if we are to avoid being rail-roaded by that so-called progress.

Among the Christian writings about technology, you will find many *opinions* based on a Christian worldview, and often some isolated references to particular Biblical verses to back up those opinions. But from my reading I could not find any comprehensive study of what the Bible itself had to say for itself. That seemed to me a fundamental starting point. Not retro-fitting a pre-conceived theology but searching the Bible to understand *its* assumptions and attitudes, *its* advice and warnings about technology.

On the surface, the Bible might seem like an unlikely place to find much at all about technology. But as we'll see, there are significant comments that can guide our approach as Christian technologists.

Process

So I spend several months ...

1. Scanning the entire Bible for any references to technology
2. Organising those references into key themes

What is technology?

Before I outline what I discovered, let's form some clarity on what we mean by "technology". And just to generate some thought, I hope you don't mind me showing a cheeky picture by one of Australia's leading cartoonists, Michael Leunig.

[Show cartoon]

[Expand: 5 quotes on screen]

I take it that most of us here today not only make extensive use of technology but would consider ourselves technologists: we push the boundaries of current technology and design and implement new technology for specific human ends.

Biblical references to technology

What examples of technology or commentary on technology can you recall in the Bible?

I'll pause for a minute to let you think about the task yourself.

[Feedback]

Technology in Biblical times

An obvious comment to start with is that the technology in Biblical times did not include the internet or mobile phones. So what would have been the "new-fangled gizmos" between 2000BC and 100AD?

[List of categories on screen]

- Woven cloth, alcohol, metal work and wheeled carts all *pre-date* the writing of the Bible
- There were Chariots in Mesopotamia around 2600BC
- Bronze, cast iron, water clocks, spoked wheels, catapults and glass all started to be used during the time that the OT was written.
- Around the NT time, cross-bladed scissors were invented. Perhaps mathematicians started thinking systematically about negative numbers. The Romans signalled messages with metal mirrors to reflect the sun. Greeks were toying with a steam engine.

It is no surprise that the Bible mentions these and similar words thousands of times ...

[List on screen]

Putting aside such passing references, I found about 200 other verses or passages in the Bible that relate to the use of technology.

I will give a web link to that list at the end of the presentation.

Some significant themes and principles

OK, so now we've set the scene, I can turn to the main section of this presentation. Based on those 200 Biblical references, let me draw out some themes.

Implied attitude to technology

First, as you might guess, no Biblical prophet stands in the marketplace proclaiming "Hear what the Lord God says about technology". Jesus doesn't discuss the ethics of innovation with his disciples. Paul doesn't list "technologist" as a role within the Body of Christ.

[Expand]

Nevertheless, the Biblical writers accept that technology is a normal part of human existence. Beyond the enormous number of neutral passing references to the technology of the day, we also see numerous verses in which the technology of the day is referred to metaphorically to make a spiritual point. For instance:

- God is a shield around us (Psalm 3:3 and many other places)
- God's word is a lamp (Psalm 119:105)
- God is like a metal refiner (Isaiah 1:25, Isaiah 48:10, Malachi 3:2, Zechariah 13:9)
- The tongue is like a bow, shooting lies (Jeremiah 9:3, Jeremiah 9:8)
- The kingdom of God is like a fishing net (Matthew 13:47)
- A plumb-line provides a standard reference point against which our conduct can be judged (Amos 7:7 - Amos 7:8, Isaiah 28:17)

Although there are no statements about any inherent moral value of technology, I will point out various passages implying that the use we make of technology has moral dimensions.

God's use of technology

God's purposes can be achieved without any need for technology. Although God uses various techniques, no tools are required. God achieves the desired ends by simply speaking things into being. God's word caused the whole universe to be created (Genesis 1, John 1). God's word is sharper than any double-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12) – by implication, God's word is more effective than any technology.

There are times, however, when God chooses to use technology to interact with humans. Perhaps surprisingly, the most common type of technology used by God in the Bible is weaponry, although most such cases are metaphorical. For instance:

- God uses a sword to keep people away from the tree of life (Genesis 3:24)
- God uses Babylon as a sword against Israel (Ezekiel 21)
- Israel is God's weapon (Jeremiah 51:20-23)
- Even Jesus is said to wield a sharp double-edged sword (Revelation 1:16, Revelation 2:12)

Jesus used various technologies: as a carpenter he would have used wood-working tools; he travelled in boats; wore clothes; lived in houses; made a whip. But he didn't need any technology: he could turn water into wine rather than rely on the traditional technique (John 2:1-10); he could walk on water rather than rely on a boat (John 6:19); no doubt he used doors and yet he could pass through a locked door (John 20:19, John 20:26).

Matthew and Mark both mention that Jesus was a carpenter (well, actually Matthew only says he was a carpenter's son). The Greek word translated as "carpenter" only occurs in those two verses.

I wonder if there are any Greek experts in the room who could tell us what word is translated as "carpenter"?

The word is *tektōn* (τέκτων) – from which we get the English "technology".

Jesus was a technologist!

Technology in relation to Redemption

Prior to The Fall, the Bible does not mention any tool. God created a world in which technology was not required. Food was readily at hand, natural shelter was provided, and health was assured. That may suggest that technology is the result of sin and hence, perhaps, that Christians should avoid using it. But I'd like to counter that with some thoughts from John Dyer's blog *Don't Eat the Fruit*.

[Expand]

John spoke at this conference two years ago – are you here today John?

John starts with a standard Biblical model of creation, fall and redemption and then wonders about how that narrative applies to technology. He suggests relevant comments under these 4 headings:

1. Reflection: When a person creates a new tool, the display of creativity and ingenuity glorifies God by displaying the image of God even if the inventor was not attempting to do so. That's an essential part of how all creation reflects God's glory.
2. Rebellion: All technology has the potential to be used for sin. Technology is inseparably tied to humanity's rejection of God. But it emphasises God's grace toward humanity in allowing us to continue.
3. Redemption: Technology is almost always designed to overcome an effect of the Fall. It, therefore, can function redemptively and yet simultaneously represents the inadequacy of our attempts to live without God.
4. Restoration: When technology fails, rather than causing us sadness and grief, it offers us a chance to reorient our hope away from our technology and toward Christ's return. So when you get a blue screen of death or an iPhone lockup, rather than curse in disgust, it should be an opportunity to say, "Come, Lord Jesus, Come!"

Craftsmen

Craftsmen (I don't know if the Biblical terminology includes women or not) are people who use the tools of their trade – be it pottery, fabric, carpentry, metal work or stone masonry – to fashion raw materials into something useful or beautiful. What they fashion might be honouring to God or not. In the latter case the Bible is obviously critical – for instance the condemnation in Deuteronomy 27:15 of craftsmen who make idols, and Paul's response to the opposition of "Alexander the metalworker" in 2 Timothy 4:14.

The skills and the wisdom of craftsmen are bestowed by God, as is made clear in several passages in Exodus (Exodus 28:3, Exodus 35:31), one of which we'll read soon. **Wisdom herself is referred to as the craftsman at God's side (Proverbs 8:30). One of the outcomes of God's craftsmanship is us – "we are God's workmanship" according to Ephesians 2:10. God crafts us with the tools of love, grace, relationships with others, suffering and the Spirit of Christ Jesus within us. We have been manufactured for a purpose and to the extent that our creative workmanship honours God, we are functioning as designed.**

From Exodus 26 to 30, God describes his design for the Tabernacle, and a list of the required furnishings, priestly garments etc. Then, in Exodus 31, God appoints Bezalel as the chief craftsman and Oholiab as his assistant.

[Expand: Verses on screen]

Note the phrases "I have chosen", "I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge", and "I have given skill to all the craftsmen". The role of the craftsman is no less spiritual or less dependent on God than those who serve in other ways. This is reminiscent of the selection of deacons in Acts 6, where even the menial task of handing

out food required candidates who were “full of the Spirit and wisdom”. No less is true of modern technologists. We should still recognise that the abilities with which we serve God were given by God in the first place. To serve God as a computer programmer or engineer or doctor requires us to be filled with the Spirit and wisdom of God.

Bezalel and Oholiab were generalists, who could create artistic designs and undertake work in metal, stone and wood. They also lead and managed other craftsmen. In Exodus 35, Moses extends their mandate to include teaching. We continue to recognise leadership, management and teaching as important roles for technologists. The best technologists not only design and create, but also pass on their knowledge and act as role-models who show how a true craftsman brings glory to God.

Craftsmen are honoured in the Bible to the extent that they apply their skills to God’s glory. Their use of technology for that end is repeatedly encouraged.

Design and construction

In the Old Testament accounts of Noah’s Ark (Genesis 6) and the Tabernacle (Exodus 25 - Exodus 31), God dictates a detailed design but says nothing at all about the construction methods. The design of Solomon’s temple was communicated in a slightly different form: in 1 Chronicles 28 we are told that David gave his son Solomon written plans “that the Spirit had put into his mind” (v12). “The hand of the Lord was upon me and he gave me understanding in all the details of the plan” (v19).

In each case, it can be assumed that God expected the people to make whatever use of technology was appropriate to achieve the goal. Perhaps this is no surprise, but we should not overlook the fact that there could have been other approaches. God could have made tools unnecessary, or provided all the tools that were necessary. God could have specified exactly what to do rather than leave so much open to Noah, Moses and Solomon’s initiative. But God’s typical approach when acting in the world is to delegate. God lets us know the goal and an ethical framework, even the wisdom and resources, but then relies on our initiative to work out the details.

The construction of the Tabernacle was a major undertaking, both technically and politically: the Biblical account spans 16 chapters, from Exodus 25 to 40. As we have already seen, Bezalel and Oholiab directed the project, but the work is not just carried out by professionals. Exodus 35 indicates that “all who were willing, men and women alike” brought their gifts and applied their skills to the task.

The temporary nature of the Tabernacle is alluded to by Paul when he describes our bodies as merely a tent that will be replaced by an eternal house in heaven (2 Corinthians 5:1). Even the Temple was temporary. When Jesus’ disciples marvelled at the magnificent Temple, Jesus was not impressed (Mark 13:1-2). Within a generation, the Temple was destroyed. No building (or anything else built by people) is as magnificent or as sturdy as God. From John 2:19-21 we understand that it is only the Temple of Jesus’ body that can be destroyed and yet remake itself.

Paul goes further by describing **us** as a Temple, with Christ as the foundation. The wording of Ephesians 2:19-22 applies that concept to the church collectively as well as to Christians

individually. 1 Peter 2:4-5 says much the same thing – that we, like Jesus, are living stones, being built into a spiritual house. It is implied by both Paul and Peter that the builder is God. Furthermore, God is not only the builder of everything (Hebrews 3:4), but the archetype of the very concept of a builder.

Let's be wise builders, who build on the foundation of Christ. But let us also appreciate that all of our technology and all that we use technology to achieve, is temporary.

Communication technology

According to the story about the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11), people decided to build “a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves.” Clearly, not all construction is carried out for Godly motives.

God's first response to the Tower of Babel is to be impressed with humanity's abilities. But because those abilities have been mis-directed, God deliberately caused people to have diverse languages so we would not understand each other. It's interesting that in the early Christian church, God used the opposite strategy: empowering the apostles to speak multiple languages so that all people *would* understand the news of the risen Christ (Acts 2). In a sense, Pentecost reverses Babel.

The ability to communicate is a basic requirement of social life and the Bible includes numerous references to humanity's development of tools and techniques for communicating.

The fundamental archetype of all communication, and the first mentioned in the Bible, is the word of God (Genesis 1). God speaks and it happens.

In other cases, God uses intermediaries to communicate to humans: through angels, a donkey (Numbers 22:28), dreams, prophets, a disembodied hand (Daniel 5) and ultimately through Jesus (Hebrews 1:1-2). Conversely, as attested throughout the Bible, *we can* communicate to God through our spoken words.

The first reference in the Bible to *writing* is in Exodus 17:14, where God instructs Moses to write on a scroll so that the defeat of the Amalekites would be remembered. Moses also writes on stone – the second copy of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 34:28. About 1400 years later, Zechariah uses a writing tablet (Luke 1:63) and Paul requests Timothy to bring his scrolls and parchments (2 Timothy 4:13). Job wishes that his words could be written on a scroll or engraved so that they would endure forever (Job 19:23-24).

Trumpets are used for communication, especially for signals during battle or to sound an alarm. Moses was specifically instructed to make two silver trumpets with multiple blowing patterns to signify different instructions (Numbers 10:1-10). Paul makes reference to this type of signalling in 1 Corinthians 14:8 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

The Bible mentions a library of government archives in Ezra 6:1. This is reported quite positively, because a document retrieved from that library enabled the returned Israeli exiles to continue rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. This was in 5th century BC, in Babylon and a far cry from today's quick searches on Google!

As a historical aside, the first known example of such a library was the Hittite archives around 1300 BC – in the time of the book of Judges. The Hittite archives probably even included a library catalogue.

Idolatry

Perhaps the most significant risk of technology is that by allowing some degree of control over our environment, technology can lead us to assume that we have no need for God. That leads to idolatry and brings a new kind of enslavement.

Old Testament warnings against idolatry frequently include comments on the **technological** origin of idols. For instance, in the incident when Israel grew impatient waiting for Moses and started to worship a Golden Calf, it is clear that Aaron gathered gold jewellery, melted it, cast it into the shape of a calf, and fashioned it with a tool (Exodus 32:2-4). When confronted by Moses, however, Aaron denies the use of tools. He claims “They gave me the gold, I threw it into the fire and out came this calf!” (Exodus 32:24). This may imply a belief that what occurs naturally is good, but that manufactured goods are not. But more likely, it is simply a denial of responsibility, like a child’s “I didn’t touch it, it just broke”.

I’d like to read a few verses from Psalm 115 that describe the futility of worshipping idols of silver and gold, made by human hands.

[Expand: Read Psalm 115:2-8 from screen]

In the modern world we rarely see this kind of superstitious approach to idols, and yet passages like this remain powerful as commentary on a materialist worldview. The materialist atheist cannot see God in the world and asks us where he is, blind to the fact that God is sovereign. They can manufacture all manner of goods, even computers and robots. But such creations are a poor imitation, not really seeing or speaking or hearing or smelling. Of course, in this age, the manufactured goods are far more sophisticated than the idols of old, and computers can indeed perceive and respond to the environment. Nevertheless, they are mere machines, lacking the inner life of humans. Those who believe otherwise end up suggesting that we too are mere machines: perfectly fulfilling the prediction in verse 8. And even if they were to succeed in making machines with human powers, they would be no closer to understanding the God who made heaven and earth nor being open to God’s blessing (Psalm 115:15).

Isaiah adds to this by explicitly posing the question of whether any idol could be greater than God (Isaiah 44:6-20). Yahweh is the first, last and only God. A blacksmith or a carpenter may fashion an idol, but so what? The blacksmith still gets hungry, tired and thirsty like anyone else. The carpenter uses the same wood as his carved idol for kindling a fire to cook on! Can’t he see that the wooden idol he created is a lie? (A sub-text here is that craftsmen and technologists should have a sense of humility about their work.)

Jeremiah uses a humorous picture to say much the same as Isaiah: A craftsman shapes an idol with a chisel, adorns it with silver and then secures it with a nail to stop it falling over – but it is no more powerful than a scarecrow in a melon patch! (Jeremiah 10:3-5).

Furthermore, every goldsmith should be shamed but their idols: their images are frauds;

worthless objects of mockery (Jeremiah 10:14), as is everything in the ancient or modern world that seeks to displace God from the centre of our worship.

Human Responsibility

Tools are subservient to their user. As Isaiah says, an axe cannot raise itself above the one who swings it (Isaiah 10:15). In this context, God is wielding Assyria as a weapon against Israel and it is inappropriate for Assyria – as the tool – to think that they acted independently. A similar point is made in several places (e.g. Isaiah 29:16, Isaiah 45:9, Romans 9:21) about the relationship between a clay pot and the potter. As a more general saying, however, this verse points out that no technology is greater than it's wielder, but merely a tool in the wielder's hand.

Nevertheless, the Bible accepts that accidents will happen with technology (Ecclesiastes 10:9) and that nobody may be at fault. You'll recall that Moses established "cities of refuge" where people could seek sanctuary from revenge. One purpose was for people to escape retribution arising from accidents. Deuteronomy 19:5 describes, as an example, how an axe head might accidentally fly off and kill someone. As long as there is no malice in the act, the user of technology is not to blame for unintended negative side-effects.

Jesus also makes it clear that the *victims* of technological accidents are not to blame, as though the accident was punishment for their personal sin (Luke 13:4 – "Those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no!").

On the other hand, we cannot simply divorce ourselves from the damage that technology may do. Israel's first OH&S policy is recorded in Deuteronomy 22:8: people should build a railing around their roof to prevent anyone from falling off. From this verse and Leviticus 19:16, we could infer a *general* principle that people have a responsibility to pre-empt technological dangers. Modern legal interpretations of negligence and duty of care reflect the same idea.

Lastly, people in positions of power have additional responsibilities in their use of technology. Let me cite two examples:

1. The responsibility to use measuring instruments and standards fairly is repeated in at least 7 places (Leviticus 19:35-36, Deuteronomy 25:13-16, Proverbs 11:1, Proverbs 20:10, Proverbs 20:23, Amos 8:5, Micah 6:11)
2. The responsibility to not deprive others of the technology they require to make a living. For instance, Deuteronomy 24:6 points out that one should not take someone's millstone as security for a debt.

What next?

That brings to a close the main themes from my study, with the exception of the topic of military technology which we may discuss at another time. But now, a few final comments to wrap up ...

WikiChristian

The full results of my Bible study, including a comprehensive list of verses relating to technology, have been written up on the WikiChristian web site. Please look up the articles there on technology, and I encourage you to contribute your own observations.

Funding for South Africa

I hope it's not inappropriate to drop in a brief sales pitch here.

Last year I ran a three day seminar on faith and technology for church leaders in Africa. The aim was to inform churches about current trends in technology, show how the internet is being used as a mission and ministry tool, and to generate some critical thinking about Christian responses to technological progress.

I have been invited to repeat that course this year, but the organisation managing the event does not have the money to fund it. If any of you come from organisations that fund educational programs like that, please speak with me later.

Final observation: the role of Christian technologists

Finally, I would like to thank my wife for being so fantastic ... wait a minute ... that's not my handwriting ... how did she ...?

OK, here we are ...

As technology advances, the temptation to believe that we can solve all our problems via technology grows stronger, and the perceived need to trust God diminishes.

In good times, it becomes easy to fool ourselves into thinking that we achieved technological Utopia by our own cleverness. Perhaps more than ever, humanity in the 21st century thinks that our technological creations are making a perfect life for us. But in reality, we accept something far inferior to the abundant life that God intends. This is exactly what God said of the Israelites in Jeremiah 2:13 – God offers a spring of living water, but we are content with broken cisterns of our own creation.

We might imagine that our money makes us impregnable like a well-built castle (Proverbs 18:10-11) or that military superiority will protect us (Isaiah 31:1), but in the end security only comes from trusting God. Israel often found that by trusting God they could overcome enemies who had superior technology: walled cities (Deuteronomy 3:4-6), chariots (Judges 4:13-16) and giants with swords (1 Samuel 17).

How often does humanity show our arrogance by seeking power and control through technology? But the Lord has a day planned when all arrogance will be brought low.

There should be no doubt that God is greater than any technology. Everything was created by the power of God's Word. That divine Word is sharper than any double-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12) and provides the cornerstone of our faith. As Psalm 20 says, "Some trust in chariots [i.e. human technology] and some in horses [i.e. the natural world], but we trust in the name of the Lord our God" (Psalm 20:7).

I pray that all of **us** will seek to be like Bezalel: crafts-men and -women who are filled with the Spirit of God. I pray that we will design, implement, lead, manage and teach as though being a technologist were a holy calling, building on the foundation stone of Christ, to the glory of God. Amen.

Questions?

Appendix: Military technology

There are probably more references to military technology in the Bible than any other category. References to swords, shields, spears and arrows litter the Old and New Testaments, with the same sense of acceptance, though not always approval, as other types of technology. There is no comment or assumption that military technology is inherently bad.

The first mention of a weapon is the sword wielded by an angel to keep people away from the Tree of Life (Genesis 3:24). Many verses represent God as metaphorically wielding weapons, for instance:

- God is a shield to us (Psalm 3:3 and half a dozen other Psalms)
- God's arrows discipline us (Psalm 38:2) and shoot down evil-doers (Psalm 64:7)
- God has tens of thousands of chariots (Psalm 68:17)

Chariots

Chariots were advanced technology at the time and receive several notable mentions:

- The wheel is first mentioned in conjunction with Egyptian chariots (Exodus 14:25)
- After the Israelites had moved into the Promised Land, they were unable to displace some groups "because they had iron chariots" (Judges 1:19) although shortly afterwards they routed an army with 900 iron chariots (Judges 4:13 - Judges 4:16)
- God uses a chariot of fire to take Elijah away (2 Kings 2:11)
- Solomon had 1,400 chariots (2 Chronicles 1:14), at least some of which were imported from Egypt and resold to other nations (2 Chronicles 1:17).
- Philip ministers to an Ethiopian eunuch in his chariot (Acts 8:26 - Acts 8:40)

Moral neutrality?

The same materials can have different technological applications. Indeed, the same technology can be used for both war and peace, for good and for evil. For example, the prophets Isaiah and Micah both looked to a future peace in which people will beat their swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:3). On the other hand Joel saw a time when the reverse would be needed (Joel 3:10).

Paul refers to our bodies as weapons that can either be instruments of wickedness or of righteousness (Romans 6:13, see Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words on the interpretation of "instruments" as weapons). People are like tools that, in the cosmic war, are used to advance one side or the other. Our bodies, as technology, are not neutral, nor mindlessly forced into service: Paul calls us to choose the purpose to which we will offer ourselves.

Paul repeats a similar message in 2 Timothy 2:20 - 2 Timothy 2:21. It is unimportant whether we are made from gold and silver, or from mere wood and clay. In either case we can choose to become an instrument for either noble or ignoble purposes.

The New Testament writers present a more non-violent attitude than the Old Testament, undermining any belief that God's kingdom should be imposed by military force.

When Peter uses a sword to protect Jesus, Jesus rebukes him (Matthew 26:51 - Matthew 26:53, Luke 22:50, John 18:10). (This seems a bit strange in Luke's account because he records Jesus as asking for two swords to be brought along – Luke 22:36 - Luke 22:38.)

Paul is clear that the weapons used by Christians are not the weapons of the world (2 Corinthians 10:3 - 2 Corinthians 10:5). We are to put on the spiritual rather than physical armour of God, and that includes only one offensive weapon – “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:13 - Ephesians 6:18) and that is “sharper than any double-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12).

Technological superiority

1 Samuel 13 describes how the Philistines don't allow the Israelites to have blacksmiths and charged the Israelites a fee to sharpen their garden tools. This is an example of restricting an enemy's technological abilities for military advantage. Dominant nations still benefit from technological superiority, creating a cycle in which technology provides a power advantage and that power allows the technological superiority to be maintained.

Nevertheless, the Bible points out that military technology is not what decides a battle. Our trust in technology to save us is not always warranted.

- David beat the more heavily equipped Goliath with a stone and slingshot (1 Samuel 17)
- “Some trust in chariots and some in horses but we trust in the name of the Lord our God”(Psalm 20:7). Woe to those who do trust in chariots rather than seek God (Isaiah 31:1).

Miscellaneous references

Other references to weapons include:

- A tent peg was used as an offensive weapon by Deborah (Judges 4:21).
- Siege ramps are mentioned first in 2 Samuel 20:15, but also in 2 Kings, Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. It seems likely that these ramps were simply piles of dirt.
- A mighty army is described as having arrows that are like skilled warriors – an early form of intelligent weaponry! (Jeremiah 50:9)