

Strength Made Perfect in Weakness

Contributor: Marian

The dictionary definition of the word 'strength' focusses entirely upon physical strength, and the capacity to withstand pressure. It makes no mention of the deeper Spiritual strength that is to be found in God when we acknowledge that our own strength is gone. God's strength within us will carry us through our darkest hour, assured of His strength in our own weakness. The Apostle Paul understood God-given strength well. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 says,

'And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

All too often we want to be strong in a way that reflects well on us, whilst God wants our strength to reflect well on Him. The Bible records many texts that teach us about the courage we can find when we place our trust in God, yet foolishly we try to live in our own strength, filled with fear when facing uncertainties, forgetting our Saviour has promised never to leave us nor forsake us.

Exodus 12 records how the Israelites have been protected by God and miraculously released from slavery as they are led out of Egypt by Moses. However, by chapter 14, they find themselves encamped by the Red Sea in a vulnerable position which became fever pitched when Pharaoh's army entered the horizon threatening to capture them. All too quickly they had forgotten the mighty miracles God performed during their time in captivity. Imagining the worst scenario – death by the sword or drowning in the sea – they became terrified. Then God showed His power again by opening up the sea before them.

Whenever I read that story, I realise how quickly we too can be drawn into living in our own strength, forgetting all that Jesus has done and the promises He has made. We live within our own limitations and in a moment our world can be turned upside down by circumstances that shake our very foundation. We gaze at the problem and panic, forgetting the strength that God has promised if we will constantly place our trust in Him.

A few years ago my husband and I used a compass to help us find our way through the miles of woodland that surrounded our home. One day, I dropped the compass and within seconds the needle had settled, seemingly on South West. However, I knew that whatever the position of the face the needle would be pointing to the magnetic north. In that moment God said, "When your life is turned upside down, you will find strength if you make Me your magnetic north." Scales fell from my eyes and I saw clearly that however buffeted we are in life, if we make Jesus our magnetic north, we shall know His strength, in every circumstance.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I ask you to breathe again Your strength into my weary soul. Holy Spirit fill me anew and help me keep my focus fixed on Jesus,

especially when my life is turned upside down. Thank You Lord for being my strength. Amen