



THE SECRET OF TRUE STRENGTH!

Reading: Judges 16:1-20. - Samson and Delilah. Ephes. 6 – ‘Armour of God.’

Again and again in the Word of God we are exhorted to ‘BE STRONG...’ The enemy wants to destroy our strength... then he can overpower us and like Samson, we become like anyone else!

Read: Haggai 2:3-5 Isaiah 35: 3-4.

The Lord told Joshua – Joshua 1:1-10... that as He was with Moses, so He would be with him... but there was a need for him to be strong and courageous!!! In fact... VERY COURAGEOUS!!!! This exhortation indicated that there would be a need for that!!!!

A New Year.. 2001, lies ahead of us! Today, more than ever, there is a need to be STRONG! Not physically strong, although people spend much time and money trying to achieve this... but SPIRITUALLY STRONG! We are in Spiritual warfare as never before, and if we are weak, swayed by everything we hear, intimidated by everything we see... frightened by all that is going on around us, then it is not long before we become VICTIMS, instead of VICTORS!!!!

Text: Proverbs 24:10 – ‘If you falter in times of adversity, how small is your strength!’

We certainly are living in a time where there is much adversity! How often we falter, blame others, feel sorry for ourselves... all indicating WEAKNESS and FALTERING!

The key to strength is found in Habakkuk 3:17-19. Adversity will come to us all – persecution, opposition, rejection, hard times, STRESS, DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIPS, FINANCIAL CRISES, etc.....

David the Psalmist said (Psalm 119:28) ‘Strengthen me according to Your Word!’

Everything else changes... Opinions change, Moods change, Governments change, laws change, strategies change. solutions change – therefore our only stability lies in His Word.

Matt. 24:35 and John 12:48. The Word of God endures forever!

HOW CAN I INCREASE MY STRENGTH? TEXT: Ephes. 6:10.

1. INTIMACY WITH HIM

Ephes. 6:10 - ‘Be strong in the Lord’

You cannot rely on yourself, your abilities, your achievements... Supernatural Strength can only be attained **in the Lord!**

Daniel 11:32 emphasizes this: ‘The people who KNOW THEIR GOD, will be strong and do exploits!’

RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM is essential. There are NO SHORTCUTS!!!

Phil. 4:13 ‘I can do ALL THINGS through Him, who strengthens me.’

Isaiah 40:31 ‘They that wait upon the Lord RENEW their strength!’

Spiritual weakness comes through NEGLECT!

illus: David anointed as King.

2 Sam. 3:1 – David grew stronger and stronger

House of Saul grew weaker and weaker!

2 Sam. 5:10 – David became more and more powerful because the Lord Almighty was with him.

2 Sam. 5:19,23 – Secret of his success!

Some Athletes get disqualified, instead of relying on genuine strength to win, use steroids!

Spiritually, NEVER depend on man-made ‘helps’ to give you Supernatural strength to ‘run the race’

It is not special programs or the success found in some other church....It must come from within... through relationship with Him. KNOW your God!

2. DEPEND ON THE ANOINTING OF GOD BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Ephes. 6:10 - ‘Be strong in the Lord and **in His MIGHTY POWER!**’

Ephes. 3:16 – ‘Out of His glorious riches **He may STRENGTHEN YOU with power through His Spirit** in your inner being!’

John 7:37-39 – ‘**... out of your innermost being will FLOW RIVERS OF LIVING WATER!**’

Ephes. 3:20 – ‘...according to the POWER that **IS AT WORK** within us.’(read from verse 16)
Zech. 4:6 – ‘Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ saith the Lord.

Feelings are unimportant. Don’t rely on your feelings, as they are of no consequence! They can vary, and yet we place a lot of importance on them. It is the release of His Mighty Power from within us that is important and effective!

illus: 2 Kings 13:14 & 20. Elisha.

Double anointing to Elijah – yet got sick and died!

Buried in a tomb. NOTE: No feelings in that condition!!!!

No great shakes... goosebumps... shaky hands, etc. DEAD!

Power of God had so filled his life that there was still power in his bones!

Corpse thrown into tomb, on impact with his bones, jumped to life!

Note: The power in his bones did not HEAL HIM, yet performed a mighty miracle!

Sometimes as God’s servant, you get sick spiritually. Often feel ‘dead’! But if you are filled with His Spirit the anointing ABIDES! The Spirit of God is more powerful and wonderful than you ever imagined!

Read: 2 Cor. 4:7-10 + 16-18 (The key!)

Note: When Jesus died (Matt 27:52) the power of God was so strong and at work in Him, that even though He died in weakness bearing our sin, an incredible thing happened... an earthquake occurred and the power of God was so strong that many holy dead people were raised to life!!!!

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE MIGHTY POWER OF GOD!!!

You might only be a jar of clay, but when full of the Spirit of God, you can be dynamic!!!

3. **KNOWING ALL THIS, WHAT THEN IS THE HOLD-UP?**

a. Unconfessed sin.

Isaiah 59:1. - Sin separates us from God. Holding sin in our hearts, and never dealing with it, becomes the hold-up. Not only the sins that are obvious, but the secret sins of our hearts! Things need to be dealt

with e.g. Unforgiveness, hatred, anger, lying, cheating, being devious etc.

Good news: The blood of Jesus cleanses from ALL SIN... if we repent!

Note: Need to forgive ourselves, not walk in condemnation, not walk under a cloud of guilt, but accept the atoning work of Calvary!

Time to deal with feelings of UNWORTHINESS & CONDEMNATION!

Remember, all we receive is by God’s GRACE given to us. Unmerited favour, undeserved!

If you feel you are worthy or deserve a strong anointing... then you have PRIDE and this becomes a problem!

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

If you have been attacked and have held back because of unworthiness or condemnation, then be comforted by looking at those God chose and used. By His fore-knowledge He KNEW they would fail, yet He still chose them. He could see the end from the beginning...

ABRAHAM... ISAAC... both lied about their wives being their sisters (not admitting they were married to them!)

JACOB... was a cheat, and got the birthright and blessing under false pretences!

KING DAVID... committed adultery, stealing another man’s wife, then even murder!!!

New Testament... Jesus chose problematic, ordinary people... and used them!

b. UNBELIEF is one of the biggest hold-ups to seeing His power released!

We call ourselves believers... but so often tend to believe earthly viewpoints, evidence, diagnosis, prognosis and place these things above the Word of God. BELIEVER YES.... BUT WHO ARE YOU BELIEVING???

Ephes. 1:18-20 ‘His incomparably great power to us who BELIEVE...

John 14:12 ‘He that BELIEVETH...’

Mark 16:16 ‘These signs shall follow them that BELIEVE...

John 7:37-39 ‘...He that BELIEVETH, out of his innermost being..’

Mark 11:22-24 ‘When you pray BELIEVE that you receive..’

James 1:6 ‘But when he asks, he must BELIEVE and not doubt...’

c. LETHARGY, BACKSLIDING, WAXING COLD...

Facing the new year... aware that there will be a soon return of our Lord Jesus Christ... it is time to get serious about Spiritual things. Amazing how we can have ambition and goals in the secular part of our life, yet when it comes to Spiritual things, we just drift! We make all sorts of excuses! IT IS TIME to AWAKE out of sleep.... and apply ourselves to Spiritual things, knowing that Jesus said 'In the LAST DAYS the love of many will wax cold!

A steam engine: In a station, with many coaches attached. Marvel at the beauty and size, but unless there is power to move them, they are ineffective, just ornamental. When that steam engine has been stoked, the fire is blazing and the water starts to boil giving off steam,.. there can be a lot of noise.. but it will get places as it pulls out of the station yielding to the directions given by the engine driver!

A jumbo jet: Crew can be on board, everything in place, but only when it is full of fuel and 'switched on' do the engines roar, the throttle is pulled out, and it soars into the sky on its way to a specific destination!

Time to make sure there is fuel... Ephes. 5:18 : 'Be, being filled with the Spirit...' Like the steam engine and jumbo jet... the more you are used, the more you need to be filled with His precious Holy Spirit!