

A Strong Spirit in The Day of Trouble

Opening Text: Proverbs 18:14 (AMPC) - *The strong spirit of a man sustains him in bodily pain or trouble, but a weak and broken spirit who can raise up or bear?*

Pain, trouble, adversity come to all of us, one way or another. However, what happens to us, *externally* is not nearly as important as what is going on *internally*: this passage says that a *strong spirit* sustains us in pain or trouble. On the other hand, a *weak and broken spirit* will lead to the opposite outcome.

It seems from this passage that it is crucial that you and I have a strong spirit! God didn't make it optional for Joshua:

Joshua 1:9 - *Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*"

In the NT there are several passages in 2 Thessalonians, Galatians and Hebrews with the same exhortation: "*do not grow weary while doing good*".

Ephesians 6:10 – "*Finally my brethren be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might*".

1 Cor.16:13 – "*Watch, stand fast in the faith, be strong*"

There is no doubt that God wants His people strong. Jesus came to make us strong:

Romans 5:6 - *For when we were still **without strength**, in due time Christ died for the ungodly*

Prov. 24:10 – "*If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small*".

Jeremiah 12:5 – "*If you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, Then how can you contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, In which you trusted, they wearied you, Then how will you do in the floodplain of the Jordan?*"

I want to speak to you today about having a strong spirit and let me just say that this is a process. As we practice the principles I will share today, we can expect to grow in that kind of strength.

Luke 1:80 - *So the child grew and became strong in spirit and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.*

Luke 2:40 - *And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.*

You and I will *GROW* into this strength, gradually.

1. Strength comes from a consistent intake of the Word of God

1 John 2:14 – *“I have written to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.”*

Daniel 10:19 – *“**19** And he said, “O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!” So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”*

2 Chronicles 32:8 – *“**8** With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God, to help us and to fight our battles.” And the people were strengthened by the words of Hezekiah king of Judah.*

2. Strength come from living a lifestyle of faith

Hebrews 12:32-34 - *And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: **33** who **through faith** subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, **34** quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, **out of weakness were made strong**, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

Through faith... out of weakness were made strong! If your faith is strong, your spirit is strong. We should make sure we are always increasing our faith level. A man or a woman who trusts God will never have a weak spirit.

3. Strength comes from living filled with the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 3:16: *“that He may grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man”*

Acts 9:31 – *“Then the churches throughout Judea, galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit were edified”.*

“Comfort” in Greek = “strengthening presence”.

Jude 1:20 – *“Building yourselves up in your most holy faith praying in the Holy Spirit’.*

4. Strength comes from being a ‘regular’ in the presence of God.

Isaiah 40:29-31 - *He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. ³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, ³¹ But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*

Strength comes from waiting on God in prayer and in worship:

a) Prayer

Psl. 138:3 - *“in the day I cried out, you answered me and made me bold with strength in my soul”*

Paul prayed that the Ephesians would have a strong spirit:

Ephesians 3:14-16 - *For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be **strengthened with might** through His Spirit in the inner man [their spirit].*

Paul also prayed that the same for the Colossians:

Colossians 1:10-11 - *that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹**strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power**, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;*

b) Worship

c) A lifestyle of worship

Romans 4:20 (AMP) - *No unbelief or distrust made him waver (doubtingly question) concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong and was empowered by faith as he gave praise and glory to God*

Matthew 21:14-16 – *“**14** Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. **15** But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant **16** and said to Him, “Do You hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes. Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise’?”*

Jesus was quoting **Psalms. 8:2** – *“out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants you have ordained strength”*

There is no discrepancy here: the word translated as “praise” can also be translated as “strength”. In the Hebrew language they are synonymous. In Exodus 15:2, Isaiah 12:2 and Psalms 12:2, 118:14 etc. we find this same expression – *“He is my strength and my song”*. If you have a song, you have His strength!

When Jesus was about to face the cross, the day before He had a Passover meal with His disciples. In **Mt. 26:30**, we read, *“and when they had sung a hymn they went out to the mount of the olives”*. This Hymn is called by the Jews up to this day, Hallel. Hallel comprises in fact of 6 songs where they quote from Psalms 113 to 118. **6 songs: that is a whole worship session!**

As Jesus was about to face the greatest type of suffering in the history of mankind, He praised. Like Jesus, we can draw upon the strength that comes from praising God to face our greatest trials.

Conclusion:

When you feel the pressure of things around you, be strong. When you wonder where to find such strength, remember that there are at least 4 outlets that you can plug yourself in, to access the strength of God:

1. Living in God's Word
2. Living a life reliant and trusting God – a lifestyle of faith
3. Being filled with the Holy Spirit
4. Being a regular in the presence of God through prayer and worship