

## Worship

Raise a Hallelujah - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2XtRuPfaAU>

The Battle Belongs - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=johgSkNj3-A>

God I look to You - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KP1QKueGK-o>

*“And David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in soul, each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.”* 1 Samuel 30:6

After a long time at war, fighting the enemies of Israel while the whole time keeping up appearances with the Philistines, David and his men were absolutely shattered! ... I would imagine this is a common human experience ... being so tired due to life's circumstances, unexpected twists and turns, difficult jobs etc ... What is worse, however, is those times in life when we are absolutely exhausted and something terrible happens to come along and just finish us off!! This is what David and his men were experiencing when they returned to Ziklag to find their wives, sons, daughters and possessions stolen by the Amalekites!

It's interesting to see different peoples' responses in such circumstances, for some, an overwhelming sense of hopelessness and giving up, for some (like David's men) bitterness and anger, prompting unwarranted violence, some with the “I can fix it” – “I'm Superman/Wonder woman” mentality, would start trying to fix everything in their own strength ... However – for David, the man after God's own Heart – He strengthened Himself on the Lord!!!

All these responses to calamitous situations are natural, human, default responses which just “kick in” without prior thought ... psychologically speaking, we have been training our minds our entire life and creating neurological pathways to respond and either fight, flight or freeze! However, in the midst of great distress and war happening all around him, David **CHOSE** to strengthen himself in the Lord. He had spent a lifetime renewing His mind in God's word, in worship, in praise, in faith, in experiencing the Power of God over and over again (Lions, tigers and bears oh my ... and giants!) so that his response was not of this world but from his relationship with his Mighty God, his Strong Tower, his Refuge, his Strength!!

The Lord gives us His strength. He is so gracious and good to us. When we are weak, He is strong – Moreover, when we are weak ..**WE** are strong.

*“But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with*

***weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.***” 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

There is something significant and vitally important in recognising and articulating our own weaknesses, inabilities and insufficiencies before God. Jesus says, “Blessed are the poor in Spirit for they will inherit the Kingdom of God.” Blessed are they who recognise their complete need and dependence on Him and have no strength in themselves – He comes near to the humble but resists the proud.

David was an avid blogger, psalmist and devotional/journal writer ... He was honest before God of his troubles and successes, his joys and pains ... His whole heart was devoted to his God and as a result David had learned in times of desperation when the ordinary man or woman would freeze, fight or flight to strengthen himself in the Lord – To trust Him!

But what does it mean that David strengthened himself in the Lord? We have already mentioned that David had learned to ‘Be transformed by the renewing of his mind’ and surely it is in the mind that the battle rages! The enemy’s lies, the circumstances, voices of people around us, even our own insecurities and doubts build up into either what seems like an insurmountable obstacle or worse ... become the ‘truth’ we believe. David needed to separate himself from all of this and allow his heart and mind to be filled with the word, truth, life, love and presence of God!

What does this look like for us – how do we strengthen ourselves in the Lord?

- **Daily time in God’s Word.** We cannot neglect God’s Word if we hope to fill our minds with truth and learn to discern a lie from the truth. The Holy Spirit transforms our minds as we read and meditate on His Word.
- **Memorise His Word.** Reading and studying God’s Word is vital. But, if we want to truly take on the schemes of the enemy, we need to have God’s Word hidden in our hearts and minds so that we can repeat, pray and speak Truth in the face of the battle – like Jesus in the wilderness, full of the Word of God in defeating the temptation of the enemy!
- **Pray without ceasing.** To strengthen our relationship with Jesus, we must be in continuous honest communication with Him, casting all our cares on Him for He cares for us – learning to trust again with the faith of a child!!
- **Turn up the praise music.** Music has a way of ministering to our hearts and minds like not many things can. Don’t neglect the gift of music and worship in your daily life. Praise destroys the work of the enemy, praise lifts us from a worldly perspective to a heavenly perspective where Jesus is glorified with all power and dominion at the right hand of the Father – interceding for us, fighting our battles!

The Apostle Paul describes it like this:

*<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have*

*done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

*<sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ... (Ephesians 6:10-18)*

**God is for us! ... He is ready, willing and waiting to strengthen each one of us today as we call out to Him, rest in Him and put our trust entirely in Him!**

**Thank You Jesus ... Amen 😊**

**Ending Song ....**

The Blessing - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUtll3mNj5U&t=110s>