

Chapter 10 - #2 – “Strength in Weakness (2 Cor. 12: 8-10)

(Link to this section in the online eBook - <https://generationword.com/braceforimpact/10.html#2>)

BRACE FOR IMPACT | Prepare Your Soul

PROMISES OF EMPOWERMENT IN SUFFERING, DELIVERANCE AND PROVISION

#2 – STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS (2 Corinthians 12:8-10)

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 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 about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- 2 Corinthians 12:8-10

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians about a specific affliction. It could have been physical, mental, or emotional. It could have involved opposition from unbelievers, Satan, or his own sin nature. Three times Paul went to the Lord in prayer and made the same request. Three times the Lord said something to the effect of, “No”. However, the Lord also graciously explained that, “My grace is sufficient.”

There was no need to resolve Paul’s present affliction or weakness, since God was manifesting his divine power in that situation - instead of letting him rely on his own limited human power.

There is human strength that can manifest as:

- power of the will, such as determination
- physical strength such as endurance running
- power of the intellect, such as unraveling the mysteries of chemistry

We would all like to excel in these and similar areas of strength for several reasons - our own benefit, service to others, and even to fulfill the Lord’s purpose for our lives. So it is natural that when we lose the power of our will, our physical strength, or our intellect we will seek the Lord to have our human power restored. If we desire greater self-determination, physical power, or intelligence we

definitely should seek God’s help. And we are right to do so, since we are told in Scripture to bring all of our needs and requests to the Lord:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

- Philippians 4:6

Despite this command, sometimes the Lord’s plan is not to give you greater human strength, but to give you instead confidence that he is working alongside your limited human ability to achieve his purpose. I suppose it would be much like standing trapped against the Red Sea with the Egyptian army rushing out to destroy you - and all you have is a staff. In Moses’ case, the staff was not nearly sufficient to do what was needed, so the Lord came alongside him and his staff and parted the Red Sea.

It is very important for us to consciously realize that the very next verse - Philippians 4:7 - does not say, “And, behold, the Lord shall pour out all the things you asked for and fulfill every request you made.”

Philippians 4:7 promises instead that in response to you making your requests known to God, “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” In other words, go to the Lord in prayer in your time of need, trust him, and refuse to leave the stronghold of God’s rest that is identified here as “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding”. This place of “faith rest” or “peace that passes understanding” will guard your soul from being conquered by the fears of this life.

Remember, God’s power is made perfect in your weakness. The Greek word for “perfect” is a form of the word *teleo* which means

“to bring to an end”, “to complete”, “to fulfill”. God’s power is fulfilled and completed in our weakness.

It is no wonder that Paul rushes to rejoice in that place of rest when he celebrates God’s provision saying: “I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me” (2 Cor 12:9). Paul was secure in the strong tower of his soul in God’s rest.

#3 – EVERYTHING LEADS YOU TO GOD’S GOODNESS (Romans 8:28)

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

- Romans 8:28

As has often been pointed out, this verse does not say “all things are good.” Paul is saying instead that “God is working for the good in all things” and he is doing this for those who love him and are in line with his plans and purposes. To benefit from God’s working for good in all things we must love God and be able to process things according to his purpose. We are going to have to remain in the place of faith rest while trusting God’s promise that he is good and will work out all things for good. “All things” would include even things that we consider to be bad or we know to be evil. In all things God is working for the good of those who love him.

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

-Romans 8:37

This promise is one of the foundation stones of the fortress of your faith rest tower. Independent of whether things are good or bad -

and independent of whether or not you have perfect understanding of a situation - you can know for certain that God is currently active to use this very moment in your life for your good. This fact needs to be solidly established in your soul before the storm of life hits. Then, when the various storms of life do strike, you will be able to stay in God’s rest while looking out the window of your strong fortress at the winds and the waves - all the while knowing that even in the midst of this turmoil the Lord is working for your good as his plans and purposes move closer and closer to completion.

There is, though, a clear condition in this verse. A person is disqualified from the benefits of God’s good work in all things if that person does not love God, or if that person’s will is not in line with God’s calling and purpose.

#4 – RESCUED FROM EVERY EVIL ATTACK (2 Timothy 4:17-18)

*The Lord stood at my side and gave me strength,
so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all
the Gentiles might hear it.*

And I was delivered from the lion’s mouth.

*The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me
safely to his heavenly kingdom.*

To him be glory for ever and ever.

- 2 Timothy 4:17-18

Paul wrote this verse in 67 AD when he was an old man and a prisoner of the Roman Empire, being held in the Mamertine Prison in the city of Rome. The Mamertine Prison was originally dug as a cistern around 625 BC to access a spring of water. By Paul’s time it had been converted into a dungeon where prisoners were held or detained until their court case was finalized.

2 Corinthians 12:10 -

1352 [e]	2106 [e]	1722 [e]	769 [e]	1722 [e]	5196 [e]	1722 [e]	318 [e]	1722 [e]	1375 [e]	2532 [e]				
diō	eudokō	en	astheneiais	en	hybresin	en	anankais	en	diōgmois	kai				
10 διὸ	εὐδοκῶ	ἐν	ἀσθενείαις	,	ἐν	ὑβρεσίν	,	ἐν	ἀνάγκαις	,	ἐν	διωγμοῖς	,	καὶ
Therefore	I take pleasure	in	weaknesses		in	insults		in	hardships		in	persecutions		and
Conj	V-PIA-1S	Prep	N-DFP		Prep	N-DFP		Prep	N-DFP		Prep	N-DMP		Conj

4730 [e]	5228 [e]	5547 [e]	3752 [e]	1063 [e]	770 [e]	5119 [e]	1415 [e]	1510 [e]
stenochōriais	hyper	Christou	hotan	gar	asthenō	tote	dynatos	eimi
στενοχωρίαῖς	ὑπὲρ	Χριστοῦ	ὅταν	γὰρ	ἀσθενῶ	τότε	δυνατός	εἰμι
difficulties	for	Christ	when	for	I might be weak	then	strong	I am
N-DFP	Prep	N-GMS	Conj	Conj	V-PSA-1S	Adv	Adj-NMS	V-PIA-1S

1. Weakness – *astheneiais* – /as-then-i-ah/ - “weakness, frailty”
 - a. Used to say “want of strength, weakness, illness, suffering, calamity, frailty”
 - b. Matt. 8:17 “he took our infirmities and carried away...”
 - c. Luke 5:15 – “...to be healed of their sicknesses”
 - d. Romans 8:6 – “helps our weakness; for we do not know...”
 - e. Hebrews 4:15 – “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.”
2. Insults – *hybresin* – from hubris - /hoo-bris/ - “wantonness, insolence, an act of wanton violence”
 - a. Used to say “insult, injury, outrage” and “damage, loss”
 - b. Acts 27:10, 21 – “damage” to the ship
3. Hardships – *anankais* – from anagke - /an-ang-kay/ - “necessity”
 - a. Used to say “necessity, constraint, compulsion” and “there is need to” and “force, violence”
 - b. Matthew 18:7 “For it is inevitable that stumbling blocks”
 - c. Luke 21:23 – “for there will be great distress upon the land”
 - d. 2 Cor. 6:4 – “in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses...”
 - e. 1 Thess. 3:7 “in all our distress and affliction”
4. Persecutions – *diogmois* – from diomos - /dee-ogue-mos/ - “persecution”
 - a. Used to say “chase, pursuit” and “persecution”
5. Difficulties – *stenochoriais* – from stenochoria - /sten-okh-o-ree-ah/ - “narrowness of space, difficulty”
 - a. Used to say “a narrow space, great distress, anguish”
 - b. Romans 2:9 – “There will be tribulation and distress for every...”